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AUTHOR Taylor, JoEllyn; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Intended to enable teachers and other school staff members to implement the Responsive Reading Program, a comprehension-centered program for kindergarten to third grade children, this guide is divided into a brief introduction and five major sections. The second chapter discusses the theoretical background of the program and the skills or strategies needed in reading, the third chapter describes how teachers implement the program, and the fourth outlines ways of assessing children's present abilities as a basis for planning appropriate activities. The fifth chapter gives examples of suggested classroom activities for four levels: the prereading learner, the beginning reader, the developing reader, and the independent reader; while the sixth chapter describes methods for internal and external assessment of the program. The appendixes are abstracts of three articles: "The Challenge of Individualized Reading Instruction," by Lyman C. Hunt, Jr.; "The Role of Prediction," by Frank Smith; and "Making Sense: The Basic Skill in Reading," by JoEllyn Taylor. (MM)

READING IN THE RESPONSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

By
JoEllyn Taylor

With
Julia Cheever
Jean Monroe
Francione Lewis
Joanne Yinger

Coordinated by
Jean Monroe

Edited by
Julia Cheever

Francione Lewis, Director
Responsive Education Program
Far West Laboratory for Educational
Research and Development
1855 Folsom Street
San Francisco, California 94103

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Revised, 1981

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The many, many CHILDREN I have known who have shown me what excellent minds they bring to the act of reading, if we will but acknowledge this self-teaching ability and nurture it with a language-rich environment.

J. Taylor, 1981

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1. INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to enable teachers and other school staff members to implement the Responsive Reading Program, a reading program for kindergarten to third-grade children. The program is a comprehension-centered approach based on the use of certain reading strategies aimed at achieving comprehension. It is not primarily a phonics-centered approach, although the use of phonics is integrated into the program.

The book is designed principally for teachers and teaching assistants, but it can also be used by reading specialists, resource teachers, curriculum directors, coordinators, teacher trainers (staff developers), principals, parents and others who are concerned with planning and conducting elementary school reading programs. Teachers who have become familiar with this guide should be able to use Responsive procedures in the teaching of reading and plan, conduct, and evaluate Responsive reading activities.

This reading approach was developed as part of the Responsive Education Program, a national Follow Through model for elementary school education developed with the support of the U.S. Office of Education. The methods for teaching reading have been shaped by the goals and principles of the Responsive Education Program. It is not necessary to implement the entire Responsive Education Program in order to use the reading program, however.

Briefly, the Responsive Education Program is a set of teaching processes and procedures that apply to all curriculum areas. The program has three goals that are humanistic and long-range rather than behavioral in orientation. The goals are:

1. To support children's cognitive growth by promoting the development of problem-solving abilities, the mastery of academic skills, and the development of the capacity to think creatively and critically.

2. To support children's affective growth by fostering the development of healthy self-concept. A healthy self-concept is defined as a realistic but basically positive view of oneself and confidence in one's ability to learn and grow.

3. To support children's social growth by promoting the development of culturally pluralistic attitudes. Children are encouraged to understand and value ethnic and cultural diversity and to learn to interact equitably in a pluralistic society.

Teaching is based on the assumption that the knowledge and experience children have previously gained--from home, community, and school--are assets that provide the foundation for future learning. Learning activities are geared to take advantage of children's intrinsic motivation to learn, which we believe to be the most effective way of promoting learning, instead of relying on external behavioral rewards and sanctions. This approach is carried out by ensuring that material is interesting and useful to learners, building on what they already know, giving them increasing responsibility for their own learning, and enabling them to learn skills in the context of real-world use.

The Responsive Reading Program, which was initiated in 1974, combines Responsive procedures with content of a specific curriculum area. The program staff, located at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in San Francisco, has developed and refined the program on the basis of its use and testing in 14 school districts in 13 states.

The materials used in this program are those found in most classrooms, including readers, sets of stories and a variety of other written materials. For teachers who wish to or are required to use basal readers, the chapter on student activities gives suggestions on how to integrate the use of basal readers into the program.

How to Use This Book

As the table of contents indicates, we have divided this guide into five sections.

- Chapter 2, The Skills of Reading, discusses the theoretical background of the program and the skills or strategies needed in reading.

- Chapter 3, The Role of the Teacher, describes how teachers implement the program.

- Chapter 4, Gathering Information about Children for Use in Planning, outlines ways of assessing children's present abilities as a basis for planning appropriate activities.

- Chapter 5, Student Activities, gives examples of suggested classroom activities for four levels: the pre-reading learner, the beginning reader, the developing reader, and the independent reader.

- Chapter 6, Program Assessment, describes methods for internal and external assessment of the program.

The chapters are interdependent, but they need not be read in this order. People who use this book may wish to browse through it first to decide on the sequence that suits them best.

2. THE SKILLS OF READING

In this chapter, we describe the process of reading and the skills or strategies needed in reading. As background, we will first discuss the theoretical basis of the Responsive Reading Program and the relationship between reading and language.

Reading and Language

Reading is viewed in this program as part of the more general area of language development. The theoretical foundation of the program is drawn from research on language and developmental psychology as well as from studies of what good readers actually do when they are reading.

Language can be broadly defined as any medium by which human beings communicate with themselves and others. While we are concerned here with verbal language and its two forms, oral and written language, many other media of communication, such as music, art, and pantomime can also be classified as language.

Reading is a language process, the means by which we receive language in its written form. The other three language processes are speaking, listening, and writing. Figure 1 on the next page shows the relationship among these processes. Reading and writing are the means of receiving and transmitting written language, while listening[1] and speaking are the two parallel processes for oral language.

	Receive	Transmit
Oral	Listen	Speak
Written	Read	Write

Fig. 1. Relationship among language processes.

The four language processes are used to reinforce and complement one another in the Responsive Reading Program. Classroom activities frequently draw on more than one language process, instead of teaching each process in isolation. For instance, after children read a story, they might tell or write about their favorite character or make a short oral or written report for a social studies project. We believe that this approach enhances skills in each area and increases children's motivation to read.

In addition, since knowledge of oral language precedes the development of written language skills, children's oral language is used as a bridge to their acquisition of reading (and writing) skills. For instance, children at the beginning reading level might dictate a short story in their own words and then either read it or watch the text on a blackboard or chart while others read it. It should be noted, however, that recent research has shown that children's awareness of written language begins at a very early age, if written language is defined to include such items as food labels, traffic signs and billboards. Thus, it is appropriate to think of oral and written language development in tandem, to some extent.

The Nature of Language

Our method of instruction is shaped by several concepts about the nature of language.[2] The most basic of these is that since the purpose of language is to communicate, the primary goal of reading is the comprehension of meaning. Comprehension of ideas being expressed in written language is the basic reason for reading in the first place. Without understanding, looking at and just pronouncing words are empty processes. Like listening, reading involves receiving the ideas and statements of another person, all the while thinking about what they mean.

Two other important notions in our program are relatively new ideas about language processing. One is the premise that the mind receives and interprets language

holistically, or in whole segments, rather than one word at a time. For instance, the mind's language bank can handle "car-here" and fill in "the" and "is" to make complete language sense. Similarly, the mind can take a partially inaudible announcement, such as "Fli--- four fif-- from Chica-- arriv--- Gate fi--" and fill in the blanks to produce a comprehensible statement.

Another relatively new premise is the notion that not all words are of equal importance in conveying meaning. Some of the words in a sentence carry much more information than others. The mind leaps to those concept carriers and dismisses items of lesser importance.

These two statements differ from a notion implied by many traditional reading programs: the idea that language is interpreted one word at a time and that all words are equally important. Moreover, since the specific words of a statement can vary considerably while still conveying the same meaning, strict adherence to a standard dialect is not essential to effective communication.

Language Learning

Almost all young children seem to develop the use of oral language quite naturally. Research and simple observation provide a set of theories as to how they do so, including why they are motivated to learn, the content of what they learn, the methods by which others teach them, and how their progress is measured. Our program applies these same points to learning how to read. The four factors are as follows:

Motivation. The development of oral language appears to be naturally motivated. Once infants begin to observe that the exchange of sounds and intonations among persons produces a response, they feel motivated to learn the language they hear in order to communicate with others in their world. Similarly, a natural motivation to learn to read can be encouraged by ensuring that the material is useful and interesting to the students.

Content. Young children who are learning to talk speak about matters that have personal meaning, such as their questions, feelings and wants. Likewise, the content of material used in reading instruction should be meaningful to the learners. The printed text should be in whole language that makes sense and is predictable, be relevant to the children's experience, and be expressed in a familiar structure.

Instructional methods. Experienced language users--adults or older children--help the young learn to speak in three different ways, although the users may not be consciously aware of the methods.

One such technique is modeling: all language users within the hearing environment of learners model language in meaningful ways. This constant flow of information gradually embeds the organizational patterns of language in the listener's mind. It would be unnecessary and confusing to explain these generalizations to young children, yet the children learn.

A second method is emphasizing meaning. Although they may be unaware of the process, language users help learners acquire language by supporting the meaning rather than the technical accuracy of the learner's communication. When an infant produces one word (e.g., "milk"), language users praise it and translate it to represent the complete sentence (e.g., "I want some milk."). Young language learners are permitted and expected to progress through a gradual acquisition process, which is often termed "successive approximations."

A third method is providing a positive supportive response to young users' language.

Similarly, in reading instruction, we advocate having competent readers model effective reading strategies, emphasize meaning, and support learners in using their own resources (common sense based on their own language background and life experiences) to grasp the meaning of written language. The competent readers may be either teachers or students.

Assessment. Finally, the criterion for measuring progress in the development of oral language is whether a child is gaining command of the language to the degree that he or she presently wants or needs it. Likewise, learner assessments in reading instruction should emphasize common-sense, total-language abilities--e.g., does the child understand what he or she has read?

These points result in an approach to reading that is quite different from that of many traditional programs. They indicate that the traditional isolation of letters and words and the use of rules and generalizations to talk about reading are counterproductive to the strategies actually required of readers.

Asking children to learn abstract rules before they become familiar with the concrete applications violates the natural sequence of language acquisition. Furthermore,

Jean Piaget's work in developmental psychology indicates that young children cannot deal with abstractions in the way that adults can.[3] Those who appear to do so may be merely reciting words to please adults. Young language learners acquire rules by imitating their use rather than by hearing abstract explanations, and can apply rules without ever articulating them.

Purpose of Reading

As we mentioned above, the central purpose of reading is comprehension of an author's meaning. More specifically, effective readers use reading to serve a variety of objectives ranging from acquiring practical information, as in a menu or road sign, to the more subjective experience of reacting to an author's message in poetry and other literature.

The process of comprehending an author's message is affected by the particular purpose and the context of the reading. Effective readers have different mind sets, expectations and strategies when reading menus and TV guides for desired information than when they become personally involved in the hopes and frustrations of other humans while reading a novel or long poem. A person's response to a written text can range from careful analysis of the text for specific information to a general appreciation of the tone or mood created by vivid language that describes a topic having great personal meaning. Moreover, the content and nature of what a given reader comprehends is influenced by the experience, previous knowledge and background that the reader brings to the author's message. In many instances, a "correct" interpretation of a text could vary widely.

The purpose of reading in a given situation affects the degree to which the reading could be termed construction or reconstruction of thought. To some extent, reading (like listening) is always a matter of constructing one's own ideas on the basis of what one reads or hears since the author's and reader's background, beliefs, use of language, and so forth, do not match exactly. However, some purposes and situations call for a fairly complete reconstruction of an author's message, which must be presented in basic, mutually understood language, as in road signs, recipes, and TV guides. Other purposes and situations, such as the reading of poetry and other literature, are clearly suited to construction of a reader message, and much of our reading falls somewhere between these two points. Figure 2 on the next page illustrates the range of possible reading purposes.

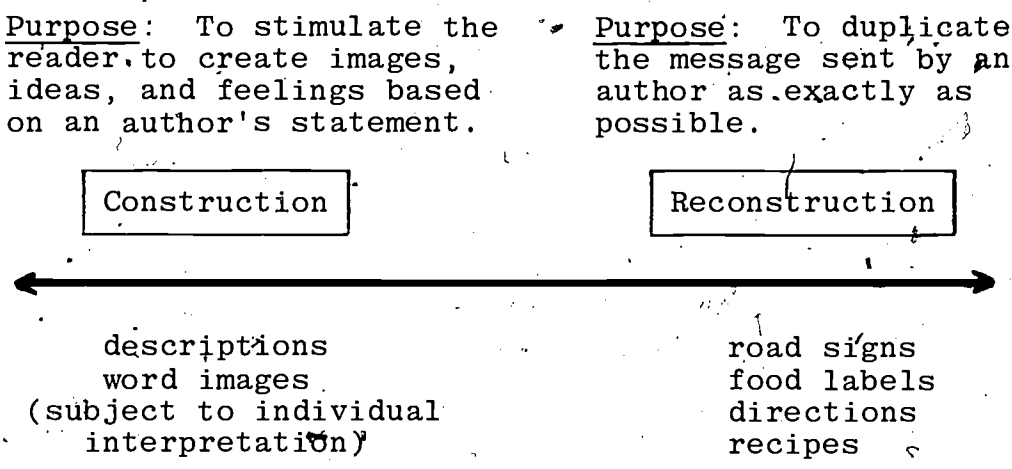


Fig. 2. Range of reading purposes.

As a result of these views, classroom activities in our program take account of the purpose of reading in a given situation and attend to children's individual responses to the material being read. The emphasis on comprehension also results in considerable amounts of silent reading and less reading aloud, especially among the more proficient students, since this is the way in which reading is usually employed in daily life. Oral discussions and activities frequently precede and follow the reading of stories in the program.

The materials used in the classroom include an extensive variety of printed matter, often collected in part by the students themselves. Since reading is a tool rather than an end in itself, instruction can be carried out with a variety of content. The choice of materials can play an important role, however, in helping students develop the view that reading is a useful and pleasurable activity. Consequently, the materials in a classroom using our program are likely to range from informal and brief kinds of written matter, such as magazines, newspapers, joke books, recipes and menus, to more formal and structured kinds of texts, such as literature and social studies and science materials.

Self-Concept and Language Expansion

The introduction in Chapter 1 of this guide noted that the Responsive Education Program has three goals:

1. To support cognitive growth by promoting the development of problem-solving abilities, the

mastery of academic skills and the capacity to think creatively and critically.

2. To support affective growth by fostering the development of healthy self-concept.

3. To support social growth by promoting the development of culturally pluralistic attitudes.[4]

The relevance of the first goal to the Responsive Reading Program is obvious. The other two goals also apply, and it is important for teachers to be aware how they shape the reading program.

A healthy self-concept is defined as the ability to see oneself realistically and have confidence in one's potential for learning and growth. We believe that such a view of oneself plays an important role in the development of reading ability. The child who can perceive herself to be a successful reader is over "half way there."[5] The child who expects to be able to read or who says, "I can already read lots of things" is more apt to develop effective reading strategies than the child who expects failure or has not even considered reading as a worthwhile activity. This notion supports spending considerable time and effort on building children's personal motivation to read and helping them to see how capable they already are in reading and related tasks.

A central element of the goal of supporting cultural pluralism is to provide learners with as many useful options as possible. In the area of reading and language, the program advocates helping learners expand their language use to become aware of and competent in a variety of options.

The concept behind language expansion is that there are a variety of ways to express any given thought. Different options may serve different purposes. The options may be to choose various styles or degrees of formality within one dialect or language, or they may be to use several dialects or languages, such as standard usage, native language or dialect, local dialect, individual dialect (idiolect) or Biblical English. A repertoire of language options can increase a learner's understanding of others' use of language and enable the learner to function in a variety of situations.

To help children expand their use of language, we advocate that teachers give them opportunities to be exposed to a variety of language options in meaningful contexts. In addition, variations in usage should be treated as different, not better or worse. If standard

American English is not the child's native dialect, it is presented as another form of language that will serve many useful purposes. The child's own language or dialect is respected and is used as a bridge to the development of competence in reading and using standard English.

The Process and Skills of Reading

With this background in mind, we can turn to what happens during the act of reading and the skills needed in reading.

Reading as a Problem-Solving Process

Studies of the actual behavior of readers have shown that reading is a problem-solving process in which the reader goes through the steps of predicting, confirming, and comprehending written messages.[6] This process is usually unconscious among adults, but an effective reader is constantly bringing his previous knowledge of language and experience to bear in the text to anticipate the substance and structure of the material. After making a prediction about a word or phrase, the reader tests the guess by judging whether it makes sense in the context of the rest of the material and whether it results in a familiar structure of language.[7]

If the guess is confirmed by passing these tests, the reader accepts it and in the third step, comprehension, incorporates the guess into the process of developing meaning. If the guess fails either test, the reader makes a new prediction and subjects it to the same criteria. The reader repeats this correction strategy until the prediction is confirmed.

In making predictions, a reader draws on three different elements of language:

1. The meaning, or context, of the surrounding material.
2. The structure, or grammar, of the material.
3. The phonetic sound symbols, or graphic cues, of the text.

Our program emphasizes the use of all three elements to gain comprehension during reading. The third element, phonics, is important, but it is most effectively used when employed in conjunction with the other two elements.

Experienced readers tend to use phonics as just one piece of information in the analysis, with the other two serving first to narrow the field of possibilities. This sequence can be illustrated by a hypothetical analysis of the following sentence:

"Ten trucks were on the freeway."

Upon encountering the word trucks, the reader can use information about the surrounding meaning and structure to narrow the range of options to something that appears on a freeway (an interpretation based on context) and to a plural noun (a grammatical interpretation). The reader can then use knowledge of sound/symbol relationships to select the word "trucks."

It is much more difficult to approach the word trucks with only phonetic strategies and put together t-r-u-c-k-s with no additional verification. In this example, tracks, tricks and tucks don't make sense, and the reader would waste time by moving in a strict word-by-word sequence.

While some reading programs focus on phonics as the principal skill to be used in reading, our program emphasizes the use of contextual and structural clues, and treats phonics as an additional set of clues to be used together with the other two elements. We recommend that practice in phonics be based on segments of whole, meaningful language rather than a series of isolated letters and symbols. The instruction should keep the perspective that as in oral language, the overall goal of reading is the comprehension of meaning.

Miscues

Studies have also shown that competent readers consciously and unconsciously often substitute logical synonyms for words in the printed text.[8] For example, a reader may substitute another name for a name that is unfamiliar or difficult to pronounce, or substitute the word "said" for such more specific words as "exclaimed" or "replied." Such substitutions are sometimes termed "miscues." If the synonym makes sense, the reader can proceed smoothly. The two points made earlier about language processing--that the mind receives language holistically and that words are of varying importance--explain why readers are able to continue smoothly when making logical substitutions.

Although this practice occurs frequently during silent reading, a teacher may be aware of it only when

it occurs during children's oral reading. Such substitutions or miscues are often caused by a difference between the reader's oral dialect and the author's dialect. The difference may be due either to a smaller amount of life experience and/or less elaborate language, or to different life experience and language. The latter variable can take the form of a different group dialect, individual dialect, or even child dialect--structures based on incorrect applications or overgeneralizations of rules (e.g., "The mouses jumpeded up firstest."). In either case, substitution of a logical synonym often indicates that the reader has successfully grasped the author's meaning.

Strategies for Effective Reading

In keeping with the points outlined above, successful readers--both adults and children--appear to use certain basic skills or strategies during reading, although these strategies are not commonly identified as such during traditional reading instruction. The strategies are:

1. Being willing to guess. If the reader encounters a word he or she can not recognize or pronounce, the reader takes a chance and makes a response that may or may not be identical to the word or phrase text, but in keeping with his or her interpretation of the context so far. The grammatical structure of the sentence, phonetic clues, and context can be used to make the guess.

2. Self-correction. If the reader finds after testing the guess does not make sense, the reader changes it to the word or words printed on the page.

3. Making effective substitutions. The reader makes a logical substitution for a word he or she cannot recognize or pronounce. If the substitution makes sense the reader continues smoothly. One way of making effective substitutions is using one's own dialect, whereby the reader substitutes words, pronunciations and/or grammar from his or her spoken dialect that makes sense to him or her in these instances, in contrast to what is printed on the page. This change could be accomplished by insertions or deletions as well as substitutions.

4. Persisting, continuing to read. The reader maintains a rather regular pace through the text, perhaps pausing at times, but not enough

to cause interruption in thought or forgetting of ideas.

Our program emphasizes helping children learn to use these strategies. The section on "coaching" in the next chapter will describe these strategies in more detail and give suggestions of ways teachers can help children learn them.

Program Objectives and Learner Outcomes

A reading program implemented according to the above framework is directed at the attainment of the following program objectives for children (by the end of four years of participation in the program, from kindergarten through third grade):

1. The child demonstrates the ability to comprehend, on first exposure, paragraph narrations appropriate to his or her maturity level. This ability is demonstrated in one of the following three ways:

   a. Retelling the story. (In the case of a retelling, the child correctly identifies the basic subjects and/or themes of the narrative, the development of ideas and actions, and the major characters.)

   b. Responding to comprehension-focused multiple-choice test items.

   c. Completing a post-reading "cloze" exercise (an activity in which the reader fills in a missing word) based on the text.

2. The child employs a variety of strategies to gain comprehension in reading. The strategies include being willing to guess, self-correction, making effective substitutions for words or phrases the child cannot recognize or pronounce, using own dialect, and maintaining an adequate reading pace.

In keeping with the goals of the Responsive Education Program, fulfillment of these two objectives would be manifested in the following learner outcomes. The child:

1. Perceives himself or herself either presently or potentially as a capable, effective reader.

2. Uses reading effectively and naturally as a source of information and pleasure.

3. Derives meaning based on or triggered by written language (ranging from construction to reconstruction of an author's message).

4. Uses a range of printed materials for a variety of purposes.

5. Uses reading in conjunction with other language processes in natural, complementary ways.

The next chapter will describe the characteristics of instruction and the role of the teacher in a classroom that is directed toward implementing this program.

3. THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

In this chapter, we describe the role of the teacher in implementing the concepts discussed in the previous chapter.

Often, teachers are already conducting some of the activities described here, such as gathering information about the children's background and interests, writing down their language to show that what they say is valuable or encouraging them to browse through the books in the classroom library. However, teachers may view this type of support as supplementary to the real business of the classroom, whereas our program places high priorities on these activities and sees them as crucial to the success of a language and reading curriculum. The teaching techniques described in this guide are intended to enable teachers not only to use the activities suggested later in this book, but also to develop their own activities in keeping with the principles of the program.

Overview of the Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher in the Responsive Reading Program can be summarized as follows. The teacher's role is to:

- Encourage children's development of all four language processes (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and use the four processes to complement and reinforce one another.
- Show children their present oral language is valued by listening intently and responding to ideas being expressed, and encouraging other students to do the same.

- Model competent, positive uses of all four language processes.
- Observe (assess) children's present language strengths and areas of confidence as a basis for planning appropriate reading activities.
- Use children's present language abilities (oral and written) as a bridge to the development of reading abilities.
- Provide comprehension-focused reading activities that are appropriate for the children's present level of skill. The activities should be based on children's existing language abilities, should be geared toward effective reading strategies; and should enable the children to experience success in the use of the strategies.
- Create a classroom setting that produces a natural need for diverse and flexible uses of reading and other language processes, and make a variety of materials available.
- Relate reading activities to the children's immediate lives.
- Emphasize personal understanding in reading and reading-related materials and provide children opportunities to develop an appreciation of varying interpretations of a text.

Reading instruction, in general, centers on a few basic common-sense techniques that focus on the goal of achieving comprehension. These include:

1. Help the reader make predictions about the story ahead of time.

2. As the reader is reading:

   - interrupt very little unless the reader is not making sense;
   - interject brief questions to keep the reader anticipating, predicting;
   - (when the reader stops before an unknown word) asking the reader to make a guess that would make sense, skip and come back, or determine what kind of word it is and leave it for now;
   - reinforce all meaning-based strategies he or she uses and ignore ineffective means by re-focusing on understanding.

3. After the reading:

   - posing questions that demand interpretation of what was read;
   - helping the reader to apply those ideas to his or her own life.

Students in a classroom using the Responsive Reading Program spend a considerable amount of time actually reading, either in a group or in independent silent reading. Similarly, beginning readers spend time being exposed to reading being modeled (e.g., watching a printed text while a teacher or their peers read aloud, and eventually joining in). Students also participate in reading-related activities that focus on the effective reading strategies. Some examples of these activities, which are used most often with beginning readers and developing readers who need assistance in concentrating on essential reading skills, are as follows:

- Hearing their peers in interest groups read for sense.
- Listening to stories repeatedly at the listening post, and following the story text.
- Joining in choral-fashion group reading of poems, songs, jingles.

- Having stories read to them (at home also) where they could see the text as it was being read.

- Dictating sentences or stories for the teacher to write down on paper or chalkboard so that the children see their dictation develop into a written text running from left to right and from top to bottom.

- Playing a variety of games and puzzles centering on meaning; what would make sense? (e.g., supplying synonyms, filling in missing words).

- Listening to a taped story repeatedly, joining in and finally reading it independently to younger children.

and most important:

- Receiving continued encouragement and emphasis on what they were doing already that constituted good strategies (e.g., having the self-confidence to take risks, dare).

As children become more confident and experienced, they are encouraged to become more independent in their reading, but the teacher continues to monitor their progress and provide guidance and appropriate supplementary activities as needed. The activities listed above

and others are described in detail in Chapter 5, Student Activities, for four different levels: the pre-reading learner, the beginning reader, the developing reader, and the independent reader.

Teachers decide which activities and what kind of guidance to provide students on the basis of information they gather about each child, or assessment. The information gathered includes the children's interests, background and experience as well as their present reading abilities. Chapter 4 describes methods of gathering information and ways of developing recommendations for each child. The importance of information-gathering cannot be overemphasized, since it is through this assessment that the teacher is able to provide appropriate Responsive learning experiences for each child.

The teaching methods and activities we recommend can be used either in a curriculum in which reading is taught separately or in an integrated curriculum in which reading and other subjects are centered around themes or units.

Grouping of Students

Children participate in reading activities in a variety of flexible groupings throughout the day and week, including large groups, small groups and individual activities. Activity groups are usually task- or interest-oriented.

To ensure that each child has a fair opportunity to learn, children are grouped heterogeneously and not according to their ability, ethnicity, sex or age. Traditionally, homogeneous groupings have subordinated certain children and have resulted in those children being labeled negatively and having low expectations of their own abilities. In contrast, heterogeneous groups have focused on the knowledge and experience each child has and have discouraged undue emphasis on children's deficits. This form of grouping enables children to share their diverse knowledge and skills and allows children of different ability and age groups to be a resource to others. Additionally, it gives children the opportunity to seek different modes of accomplishing a task and to work cooperatively with people who may be culturally different or have different skills. Children in heterogeneous groups tend to develop more cooperative than competitive behavior.

The advantage of heterogeneous group experience for the average to slow learner are more obvious than those for the advanced learner. However, there are some advantages for more independent students that warrant illumination. When advanced learners work with less mature learners, they gain security from the contact. Their knowledge becomes more refined when they assist others. As advanced learners explore tasks with less mature learners, they identify more complex problems for their independent pursuit. In heterogeneous group experiences, the self-concepts of all children are enhanced.

In Responsive classrooms, children learn in all sorts of different groupings. The advanced learner will have opportunities to learn in homogeneous as well as heterogeneous groups. In this way all children benefit.

Elements of a Reading Lesson

As we indicated above, a considerable amount of classroom time during reading instruction will be centered around the actual reading of texts. A reading lesson can employ any number of techniques that a teacher believes will work well with the children, but it contains several essential phases:

Selection of Reading Material

Materials should be of interest to the child and in familiar language. They should be at the appropriate level of difficulty. Whenever possible, children are allowed to select a book on their own or from two or three options provided by the teacher.

If you are using a reading text, instead of following the set sequence of stories in the text, take a series or unit of stories and ask the children to browse through and select one that they would like to read. Or, you can do the selecting by choosing one for today that coincides with another current unit of study in the classroom; hooking up to some relevant topic will help enlist the children's motivation.

Pre-Reading Discussion

This phase includes activities such as predicting what the story is about and relating predictions and the title of the story to personal experiences. Use the title

and illustrations to ask the students what they think the story is about. Ask them what makes them think that. Ask them if they have ever had an experience like what they think will be in the story, and so forth.

Reading

For beginners, read the story to the students the first time through the whole story while the children follow the text. After establishing the setting and characters, read the story again and encourage children to read along where they can. Often the teacher will drop out during the reading and allow children to read on their own, coming back in when they begin to get weak and choppy. Developing readers can usually read for themselves either silently or orally. The teacher coaches them to self-correct, make effective substitutions and insertions, use their dialect to attack a word, and skip a word and come back to it when it makes sense.

Post-Reading Discussion

Ask students to compose responses that demand comprehending the story, such as:

- Retelling the story.
- Describing the main character and his or her important actions.
- Creating a sequel.
- Comparing this story with events in their own lives.
- Creating a different ending and a different title.

Vocabulary Development

Check key ideas, terms, concepts presented in the story after the reading and discussion. Ask students about major items to learn from their interpretation. Ask questions such as:

- "The father talked about a tantalizing fruit. What does that mean to you?"
- "Find the part of the story that supports your guess about the word tantalizing. What words prove your answers?"

- "Find one new word for you and tell us what you think it means. Where else might you find that word?"

Follow-Up Application Activities

Follow-up activities are intended to enable children to use the ideas and concepts of the story in another way. Examples of such activities are:

- Finding the new words in science, social studies, and mathematics materials.
- Creating puppet activities around theme of story.
- Building picture dictionaries.
- Dramatizing or pantomiming the story read.
- Making up songs to go with the main theme of the story.
- Using new words in a song.
- Writing a new ending to story.
- Making a painting related to the story.
- Reading the story again to a partner.
- Reading the story into a tape recorder.
- Making up a crossword puzzle with words from the story.
- Writing a news bulletin about the story.
- Writing a play about the story in another setting or era.
- Designing clothes for the characters in a story and relating the setting to a social studies unit.
- Finding all the words that begin with a letter the reader had trouble with and make a word bank.
- Developing a secret code of new words.
- Developing a word family bank of new words.

Word-Attack Skills

Phonetic and structural analysis generally take place after reading and are related more to spelling than to the development of reading skills.

To illustrate these phases the example below shows the way they would occur in a typical beginning reading lesson.

A Typical Beginning Reading Lesson

Teacher Behavior	Student Behavior (five to six children)
Selection of Reading Material	
Teacher guides the children's selection of a short story that is of common interest to all members. If a basal text is being used, the children select which story in the book or section to read next.	
Pre-Story Discussion	
T: "Why did you choose this story? What do you already know about (topic)?"	*Several responses*
T: "From the title, _____, and your browsing through the pages, what do you think the story will be about?"	*Several responses*
T: "When we finish reading, I'll ask you to each help tell the story as if you were talking to someone who had not read the story and to think of one important question (or idea, or character you'd like to be, or part you'd like to change, etc., with the focus always on meaning) to ask us about the story."	
Story Reading	
T: "I'll start reading the story and anyone who wants to help	*Children who can do so read along with teacher*

Teacher Behavior	Student Behavior
can read along with me." (Begins reading at an easy but not plodding pace.)	
T: Continues reading until enough children join in to enable the teacher to phase out and the children to take over (usually after one or two pages). This is encouraged by pausing in places where the context helps children decide what can be supplied to finish a thought, e.g., "All at once big clouds came and it started to. . .	*More capable readers take hold as soon as characters, setting, etc., are in place.* . . . *rain."*
T: Joins back in unobtrusively if a new section or idea is introduced where the context is insufficient. Phases out completely as much as possible.	*Children continue reading*

Note: When children take over a large part of this task themselves, the teacher listens carefully for examples to point out later of positive self-correcting and effective substitutions that don't disrupt meaning. However, if readers do make "miscues" (or substitutions) that don't make sense and don't hear themselves make such errors, the teacher may need to perform "instant replay" and ask for something that makes sense to them (unless they explain why the first miscue makes sense). Minimal intervention is valued to keep up the flow of language, but some may be necessary to help students focus on seeking meaning. Teachers can reread the preceding line and come up to the word or phrase in question and have students fill in. They can also direct students' attention ahead in the text for clues to what the unknown could be. It is a matter of reminding students of the many resources they have for figuring out the unknown. (For additional discussion of this type of teacher support and intervention, see the section on coaching techniques later in this chapter.)

Post-Story Discussion

T: Asks for spontaneous discussion of story.	*"I liked it." "That was good." "That wasn't very funny," etc.*

Teacher Behavior		Student Behavior
T:	"Who wants to begin telling the story, in your own words?" Involve the whole group, letting the children decide the order in which they will participate. If incongruencies occur, pose them for the group to solve, asking them to refer back to the story text, if necessary.	*Children take turns until the whole story is recreated in their own words.* *Child finds part of the story to prove his or her point.*
T:	"Now, take a little while to think or even look back, and decide on one question to ask us about something very important to you in the story."	*Children ask their own questions.*
T:	(If time) Asks additional questions related to ideas already expressed by children. Probes further into reasons why certain things that happened that were unstated in the text might have occurred.	
T:	"Think for a moment about whether anything like this has ever happened to you." (A story plot can give rise to many variations, but some question is posed to stimulate integration into the children's own lives.) Pause. "Some of you might like to tell us. Others may want to draw it later, or just think about it."	*Student response might be talking, drawing, painting, writing, dictation, etc.*
T:	"Think about what might have happened after this part of the story ended. Make up the next part." The story plot will help to shape an application question or task, which calls for using these ideas in another way. (This can become an independent assignment for partners or	*Several responses*

Teacher Behavior	Student Behavior
individuals, to be written, drawn, dictated, etc.) This is a good opportunity to relate this story or these characters with others encountered by the children.	

A typical lesson with more advanced readers would be similar, except that the children would read the story by themselves, either alone or reading aloud to partners. If the children read with partners, the teacher can pair readers who would benefit from one another's skills. For instance, a child who is good at grasping meaning but less proficient at recognizing individual words might be paired with a child who is good at using phonetic cues.

As in the beginning lesson, children would retell the story in their own words, attaining group agreement on the retelling, and would ask each other questions during the post-story discussion. Application activities geared to the maturity of the children would also be conducted.

Helping Children Learn to Read by Reading

Much of our program's approach can be thought of as helping children learn to read by reading. Self-taught readers have provided considerable insight in this area, leading us to try their practices in a planned fashion.

Just as young children hear large amounts of oral language spoken around them and then join in, producing whatever they can, and gradually approximating and duplicating their models, a similar holistic approach is experienced naturally by a beginning reader who has the same opportunity. When children are provided frequent non-threatening situations in which they can watch reading being modeled (live or on records or tapes), in which the content is of interest to them, and in which they can look at a printed version of what they are hearing, they have all the pertinent information they need as to how reading is done. Repeated pleasant experiences of this sort, motivate them to join in as described above, and do what is called reading before they are able to talk analytically about what they are doing. When the process occurs naturally, children don't recall how or when they learned to read. "I just know how," some report.

As in other areas, such as walking, bike riding, and singing, some children seem to take to reading more easily than others. Some do benefit from direct instruction, but even then the teaching is more a matter of additional opportunities to do reading, not talk about it. For example, once children are joining in freely in reading with their peers or tape recordings, an adult can assist the children in seeing relationships. After story reading, the adult might say, "Let's read the first page again. There are six words, 1-2-3-4-5-6. Which words are just alike? Which word begins as your name does?" Similarly, on pages with chorus-type refrains, the adult might say, "There are four lines, 1-2-3-4. Which lines are just alike?"

When children do begin to relate sounds and symbols based on recognizable words that have personal relevance to them (such as their own name, family and friends' names, favorite food labels), they generalize these notions to the increasing amount of language that they face and become familiar with. That is, they do not need to be specifically re-taught the idea of sound/symbol relationships with every one of the 26 alphabet letters, blends and all other possible combinations before they can start reading at a beginning level. There is a snowball effect.

Nurturing a high motivation to write in young children helps them begin to resolve many of the unknowns. The need to write and the accompanying necessity to be understood causes a child to see the refinement in sound/symbol relationships, which is often imposed prematurely on the act of reading. Reading does not require an understanding of all these refinements; in fact, it can be slowed down by over-attention to them.

Repeated, pleasant experiences of shared reading can produce students who are not frightened of the notion of reading, who are highly motivated to do it because of the enjoyment and new information it offers, and who are steeped in the expectation that reading should make sense, no matter who is doing it and in what situation. These are the characteristics that help children help themselves to become readers. They have tasted what it is like. They have had positive experiences in using their own inventive problem-solving strategies to figure out unknowns. They know they can do it, and from then on, it will only become more satisfying.

The greatest service we can provide these readers is to continue our confidence in them and provide them with easy access to a vast array of printed materials. Regular informal discussions with them about what they are reading helps them reflect on stories and characters

and relate them to their own lives. By asking, "Why might the author have written that story?" we help to broaden readers' perspectives on what they read. By posing concerns relevant to their lives, we can watch them seek reading in many forms (TV guides, catalogs, phone books, craft books, encyclopedias, short stories, mysteries, plays, poems, newspapers, captions) to serve a wide variety of purposes in their daily lives. They become effective at using reading as a rich resource in their learning and living.

These results can follow naturally when children are helped to learn the importance of reading to their lives and to see how reading is quite easily within their grasp, if they but use the strengths and skills they already possess.

Some children need more direct instruction, for any of a variety of reasons, some of which, such as low self-esteem, may originate outside the realm of reading and language. This more direct instruction, which we term "coaching," is discussed below.

Coaching Techniques

The term "coaching" is used here to denote a role similar to that of a sports coach, in contrast to a conventional image of someone serving to instruct another. Football coaches cannot execute the plays and maneuvers themselves, but can only guide from the sidelines. On keeping with our program's notion of producing independent readers, the coach does not impose solutions or demand repeated drills. Rather, the coach provides a series of contexts in which various reading skills are needed by virtue of the situation itself, and at the same time maintains a very supportive climate. Intervention occurs only when needed, to remind the student that reading should be focused on comprehension. Even then, intervention is sparing. The primary message at all times is,

"You are a good thinker and already have many good ways to figure out how to read things. There will be times when you don't understand what an author is saying because you don't know about that subject, but that doesn't mean you aren't a good reader. As a rule, I won't need to interrupt you when you read and you won't even have to read out loud to me because, if we select the stories well together, you will always be able to tell for yourself whether it makes sense or not."

This philosophy results in relatively little traditional type instruction unless students already have severe inhibitions, fixations on print only, or no confidence in themselves because of instruction or other personal reasons. In these cases, a higher degree of intervention is sometimes needed. That will be described here, but is offered with the notion that this kind of teaching is usually recommended only for a short term. However, the discussion will also offer ideas that can be modified and used in occasional, informal ways to assist in reading development.

The discussion of coaching is divided into three parts. In the first part, we describe the way coaching techniques would apply to the various elements of a reading lesson. The second part discusses the way coaching techniques can be used to support the specific reading strategies discussed in Chapter 2. The third part gives an example of when a teacher would want to intervene to "coach" during a student's oral reading of a text.

Coaching During a Reading Lesson

The concept of coaching would apply to the elements of a reading lesson in the following way:

Selection of reading material is extremely important to the success of a beginning reader (see the discussion in the next chapter on choice of material in using the Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence). A different text can result in an entirely different reader, so this step deserves considerable time, attention and willingness to change the selection if the reader wants to. None of us reads our best when we don't like what we are reading.

Pre-reading discussion is carried out in much the same way as described earlier in this chapter, with the addition of a preface referring to this reader's particular strengths and needs, e.g., "When we read yesterday, you did such a fine job of reading the ending of nearly every sentence. You might want to read that way again

today. Or, the story might be one where you want to do something different."

Options here include such variations as:

1. "As you listen to me read, join in wherever you can; I'll phase out whenever you're reading all of it."

2. "After I read a couple of pages, you'll probably be able to read with me, then I'll read a page and you read a page--we'll take turns."

3. "As I'm reading, I'll stop often just a bit, for you to finish the rest of the line."

4. "In this story some parts are repeated a lot. When we get to those the second time, you can read those by yourself."

If possible, the child selects or invents an option he or she would like, but text itself plays a significant role. Hence, choices are sometimes changed later.

During the reading. In whatever option is chosen, a priority is placed upon the smooth flow of language (if an adult reads parts of the text) but a pace is used that young readers can follow. When the reader is reading alone, certain decisions about intervention must be made. (The term "intervention" may imply a stronger behavior than is desired; here it simply means interrupting what the student is doing and/or offering general guidance to aid the student in the act of reading.) Many variables come into play in the teacher's decision about when and how to offer guidance.

Much depends upon the confidence level of the student and the rapport between student and teacher. When a student is extremely hesitant to risk and make errors, frequent interjections from a teacher can be seen as further confirmation that "I'm not a good reader." That student might be better helped by read-alongs, live or with tapes, until he or she has gained sufficient confidence to do some shared or independent reading.

When the confidence level is adequate, the teacher can tell the student, "Usually, I don't want to stop you when you're reading, but if you seem to have lost track of the thought or seem to need to think again about something, I might stop you. Other times, I'll just ask a quick question to see what you are thinking as you're reading." This statement will help the student feel comfortable and not associate the interruption only with "mistakes."

During the reading, then, the teacher listens carefully and only when changes disrupt meaning does he or she ask the student to re-read that part, or inquire about the meaning, or re-read that part to the student, leading him or her to the point of concern. Sometimes, teachers even prefer <u>not</u> to follow the text, but just listen for sense. Some students find this more comfortable than having an adult monitoring the text closely.

Whether students readily supply their own acceptable substitutions for words and ideas, or whether they result from a teacher stopping the student to rethink what he or she just read and make a change, the teacher is progressing through a series of approximations over time. In initial sessions it is enough that a student is willing to risk a guess at all and supply a word that makes sense.

sandwich
"I was eating a hamburger."

Many school-age readers who lack confidence are hesitant to guess at all and are helped by such suggestions as:

> "All good readers change words when they read. When you come to something you don't know, put in something you think will make sense, and then try it out. If it doesn't work with the rest, go back again."

In the act of reading itself, some students are aided by hearing such interchanges:

"What <u>kind</u> of word do you think goes there?"

"Food."

"OK. Try a food and see if it works."

"I was eating a hot dog."

The first level of encouraging substitutions is thus just asking for a word that will make sense. Next, when a student has been doing that successfully, a teacher might praise his or her progress and say:

> "When you read today, and didn't know something, you put in very good substitutes. Let's go back and look at just a few."

sandwich
"I was eating a hamburger."

"Will you read this part (whole paragraph) again and think of even another word that could go there. See if you can think of one that starts the same as the word you see."

Freed from the reading, the reader can brainstorm other possibilities and perhaps think of hot dog.

A third level of guidance follows the same procedure but has the student attend to more of the graphic information.

"See if your guess can start and end the same as the word you see there."

This direction is seldom needed since students usually supply the term at the preceding level, if they know the word in their own language. (This is to say that often a miscue or substitution results from a lack of knowledge of a word, not from a lack of reading ability.)

Once such techniques are tried, teachers can invent similar methods. For instance, teachers who have used the "instant replay" concept have developed several variations. Some teachers re-read the sentence the way the student reads it, saying "blank" for the unknown word. Frequently, this replay causes the reader to come up with not only a sensible word, but most often, the exact word. Another concept learned by teachers through use is the importance of pausing--giving students time to think for themselves before jumping in. Self-correction is a natural process for students when they feel confident and are given sufficient time to do it.

The key factors in coaching are simply to have the teacher devise ways or situations in which the student needs to use and does use positive strategies for getting meaning: willingness to guess, self-correction, logical substitutions, and maintenance of a reasonable pace through the print.

Post-reading discussion. This discussion can be similar to the one described earlier in the example of a typical beginning reader lesson. Its purpose is to emphasize tasks that have the reader locate portions of texts to prove a point, etc. A few comments about the student's progress are usually helpful, especially if they highlight the strengths the student shows in oral

reading. Then the teacher can ask the student how he or she feels about reading.

If a basal text is being used, it may list "new words" associated with each story. We believe here that the practice of isolating "new words" from the text is not only unnecessary but also harmful, since it focused on words, not language. It suggests to students that they are incapable of reading independently and that effective reading is a matter of knowing "words." Instead, if teachers must record students' progress on this basis, the words can be handled during this post-reading discussion. With no attention given to the words before the reading, students might be asked after the story, "Were there any new words or ideas that were new to you in the story? What were they? Find them. What do you think they mean (using the context as a clue)?" In this process, it is often discovered that only some or none of the new words were thought of as new by the students, when encountered in context, but some other ideas or words might be more deserving of discussion for clarification.

This is to say, reading is not a matter of "knowing the words." When students have experiences they can relate to the content, when they have the language to describe them and repeated opportunities to relate printed language intuitively to what they are hearing, the reading of print on the page is a holistic process, not a one-by-one linking of pieces. Paying undue attention to the pieces or process is similar to distracting a person who is trying to hammer a nail into the wall by directing him or her to look at the hammer. The hand will respond with what it needs to do if the eye remains on the nail. A focus on comprehension will allow the mind to do what it needs to do with print.

A note about assessment. The discussion of the Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence in the next chapter will clarify this issue, but it should be noted that assessment from the teacher's point of view can take place within the discussion and tasks described above. For instance, if the individual assessment of a child reveals that he or she is not yet regularly demanding that her reading make sense, the teacher would focus on continued assessment of this issue when listening to that child's reading and talking about the story. With a child who usually reads for meaning but gets bogged down by a need to know every word, the teacher would observe the child to assess him or her for progress in that area. (Can he or she keep thoughts flowing by supplying substitutes for unknown words?)

Coaching in the Use of Effective Reading Strategies

Coaching techniques can be used in a variety of ways to help children employ the specific reading strategies described in Chapter 2 of this guide. Some of these methods were illustrated in the preceding description of how a teacher would use coaching techniques during a reading lesson. In the discussion below, we repeat the definitions of the reading strategies and give some further examples of how coaching can be used.

The strategies are:

1. Being willing to guess. If the reader encounters a word she cannot recognize or pronounce, she takes a chance and gives a response that may or may not be identical to the text, but is in keeping with her interpretation of the context so far.

car
"We were riding in the _____."

Students who lack confidence may need encouragement from the teacher to risk guessing a word that would make sense.

2. Self-correction. After making a change from the text (miscue), the reader regresses and repeats that portion or more, and corrects the reading to the words on the page.

school
"We went home after skating/at the rink."

This marking signals that the reader's exact words were: "We went home after school" (pause) "at" (stop to go back) "after skating at the rink." The reader realized that "school at the rink" was not going to make sense, so he regressed and made another try, this time supplying the exact word printed. Allowing the silence, for the beginning reader to think and review, is extremely important in helping establish this strategy as a regular habit.

3. Making effective substitutions or insertions. The reader deviates from the text in ways that do not change the meaning in any significant way. On the basis of the information the reader has at that point, the deviation serves the same approximate purpose as the word in the text, retaining the main thought of the passage.

light
"Her sweater is pale yellow." (substitution)

that
"I didn't know he was going." (insertion)

To establish this strategy for regular use with students hesitant to take risks and guess, it is sometimes desirable to do one or more of the following:

a. In a copy of a short story, blank out a few highly predictable words. The student must guess what would fit in those slots. They usually are surprised at their high percentage of accuracy and see the worth and importance of thinking while reading as opposed to being over-dependent on sounding out each letter.

b. Underline words in a short story for which the students are apt to have ready synonyms. Students must substitute a word or phrase each time they encounter one of the underlined words.

c. When students read orally to each other, for example, in partners, have only the reader follow the text while the partner listens and questions only when sense is disrupted by the reader's choice of words.

It should be noted, however, that this strategy should not be carried to the point that word choice does not matter. Every word is slightly different from others, causing some linguists to dispute the term synonym altogether. At a later time, much can be done to help students to revise their own writing and to re-write other authors' work to gain an appreciation of the fine nuances created with slight changes. The techniques suggested above are intended to free the beginning reader in establishing the very important overall search for meaning in print. Even effective adult readers constantly use this practice in most of their daily reading.

4. Using own dialect. The reader substitutes words, pronunciation and/or grammar from his or her own spoken dialect for what is printed. This response could take the form of a "trade," merely substituting a word or phrase, or it could be an insertion or omission. In any case, the end result is that the meaning is similar to the original text, but is in the reader's own dialect. Especially when beginning readers use such an alternative, it is a positive sign that they realize that text should make sense to their own ear. The phenomena of idiolect (individual dialect) and "kid dialect" are included here as well.

be *pin*
"I was writing with my pen."

can't *inta* *Valentime*
"We cannot go into the Valentine party."

y'all
"Thank you for the ride."

5. Persisting, continuing to read. The reader maintains a reasonable pace if at all possible to keep the train of thought. When an unknown word appears, the reader uses various means to manage to keep going, including the effective substitutions and insertions discussed above. The reader also reads ahead to gain more context before making a guess, skips words temporarily and keeps going for more information, and tries out different guesses. Whenever the thought is sufficiently disrupted, the reader returns to the last known point and re-reads that portion to get back into the context. Just as in learning to ride a bicycle, a certain momentum is necessary for the activity to be productive, so persistence to keep moving and searching is a good sign in a beginning reader.

Reading Practices to Discourage

The strategies listed above are habits an instructor would want to reinforce, encourage, even introduce to the beginning, struggling reader. The following are practices to discourage. Sometimes discouraging these practices can be accomplished indirectly merely by emphasizing the positive strategies. Other times it may be necessary to point out ineffective strategies following the reading of a passage and discuss the reasons why they are not helpful.

1. Ineffective substitutions, insertions. The reader deviates from the printed text in ways that change the meaning. The origin of the choice of any particular item may vary, but frequently a substitution will have graphic similarities to the word(s) in the text and/or sound similarities. In addition, it is implied that the reader continued beyond that point without improving the deviation, or it would have become a self-correction or an effective substitution or insertion. The problem lies in the reader's inability or lack of desire to make sense of the text.

hope *skatting* *rake*
"We went home after skating at the rink."

2. Critical omissions. The reader omits words or phrases necessary to understanding the passage. Sometimes this omission occurs after a long pause to ponder and other times it is just within the normal pacing.

"They came to a big (forest)."

The omission of the term forest there is critical to the story. Meaning is incomplete with the object in that sentence. A temporary omission while reading on to gain context (e.g., "There were many redwood trees.") would be regarded as positive, but a permanent omission of such an item would be undesirable. Omission of the word "big" in this sentence would not be considered critical. The sentence is complete without it and the concept big is already implied to some extent in the term "forest."

3. Intonational changes. The reader disregards or changes intonation patterns, causing the oral reading to sound as if meaning is lost. Examples include running through punctuation marks, substituting others, and changing the emphasis within words or phrases.

"They had ice cream, cake and milk. After
the party, they went to a movie."

(Omission of the first comma and period; insertion of a period after "party," causing a capital letter on "they.")

It should be noted, however, that such miscues are frequently made on unrehearsed reading, so major changes in meaning cannot be automatically assumed. The mind sometimes makes the corrections without needing to repeat the text orally.

4. Stopping and losing the thought. The reader pauses or stops for long periods, resulting in what appears to be a loss of comprehension. Usually the pause is due to anticipation of what the reader regards as difficult words, lack of confidence or lack of interest. The cost of this delay is often more than the actual time spent, since it can result in a general slow-down and lower morale and energy and discourage the reader.

Where long pauses are a severe problem, the material is probably unsuitable for the reader, or certain motivational issues need more attention before actual reading can begin. Reading along with tapes or a live reader

(assisted reading) can help give the reader a "taste" of the feeling one is striving for, of having sufficient momentum to keep a thought alive and moving forward.

Example of When a Teacher Would Intervene

To illustrate when a teacher would want to intervene to guide a child's reading, an example of a student's oral reading of a text and a teacher's response is given below.

The markings superimposed above each line of the text show the student's actual performance when reading the passage aloud. The numbers are keyed to the subsequent description of the actions the teacher took--either encouraging the student to continue without interruption or intervening because the student was using ineffective strategies.

The New House

start (1) *building* (2)
We watched three carpenters begin to build

(3) *now* *block* (4) (5)
a new house on our street. It was exciting to

used
see how fast they made all those boards to

(6)
suddenly look like the shape of a real house.

In
Before two days they had enough done so we could

here (7) *live* (8)
tell where the kitchen and living room were

too (9)
going to be and where the front door would be.

Teacher encourages continuation without interruption	Teacher intervenes because reader's history and present behavior give evidence of lack of paramount attention on seeking meaning
1.& 2. Effective substitution	
3. Self-correction	
4. Effective substitution	
	5. Long pause and critical omission. T: "Let's read more of the sentence and see what might go there. It was (blank) to see how fast they used all those boards. What might go there?"
6. Omission that does not disrupt meaning	Student: "It was fun to see, amazing to see, exciting to see. . ." (With a beginning reader, any reasonable substitution will suffice for now, to complete the thought.)
	7. T: "We could tell here the kitchen. Does that make sense? (repeat) We could tell _____."
	Student: "We could tell where the kitchen. . ."
	8. T: "Kitchen and live room. Does that make sense? Kitchen and _____."
	Student: "Kitchen and living room. . ."
9. Insertion that does not change meaning and more closely resembles reader's oral language	

As such instruction continues over several sessions, it is likely that the readers will begin to monitor their own reading more effectively and notice for themselves when meaning is lost. In sum, this is the goal of reading instruction: to install or reinstate the monitor for meaning. Achieving this goal, however, comes very easily for some students, but very slowly for others, especially if their former instruction emphasized less important, mechanical aspects of the reading process. In such cases, the teacher (or any competent reader) can assist the developing reader by legitimizing the use of the larger, important problem-solving strategies, increasing confidence and providing psychological support.

A dialogue similar to the one above would occur repeatedly to introduce such a reader to the various kinds of options he has open to him when facing unknowns and to increase the self-motivation and confidence to want to read increasing amounts of material, to gain the experience and practice necessary for independence.

Classroom Materials and Environment

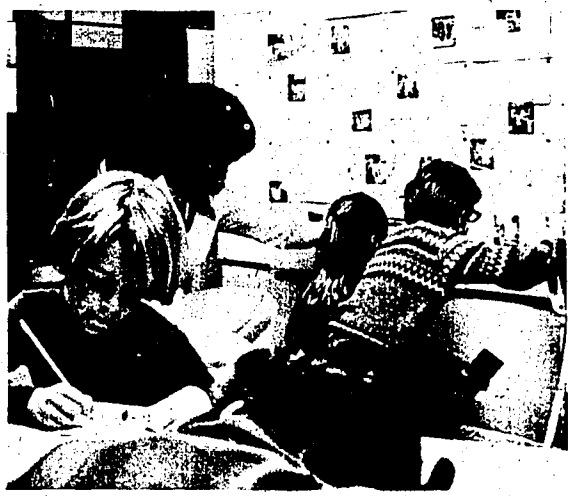
The major objective to keep in mind when setting up the classroom is to provide an environment that encourages maximum communication in oral and written form. Achieving this objective involves the "orchestration" of various components of the physical environment: use of wall space, special equipment, materials, and room arrangement.

Use of Wall Space

The use of wall space takes into account such factors as:

- Current study projects
- Frequent child participation in making and displaying products
- Eye-level access by students
- Meaningful purposes, such as providing information, displaying projects, and stimulating interaction
- Frequent changes to capture attention and to remain timely

It is desirable to avoid teacher-made or commercial displays, irrelevant information for children, above eye-level displays, and retention of the same bulletin board over several months. Children can be involved to a high degree in choosing and setting up wall displays and are likely to feel an investment and pride of ownership in the classroom when they participate in this way.



Special Equipment

The recommended equipment is similar to that which is usually available in elementary classrooms:

- record player and records
- listening post and earphones
- film projector
- slide projector
- overhead projector
- typewriter (used?)
- language master
- tape recorders and tapes--blank and pre-recorded stories, commercial and/or self-made

The one difference may be that the use of tape recorders is usually considerable, so having more than one with multiple earphones is important if it is at all possible. The inexpensive cassette-type of tape recorder is satisfactory and children can manage them easily.

Materials

Materials are also likely to be much the same as those already being used in classrooms:

- Wide variety of printed materials (paperbacks, magazines, newspapers, menus, TV guides, hobby books).
- A basal series (if used in the school).
- Supplementary texts, readers, especially literature sets.
- Varied writing materials (different papers--lined/unlined, various pens, pencils).
- Arts and crafts materials.

Room Arrangement

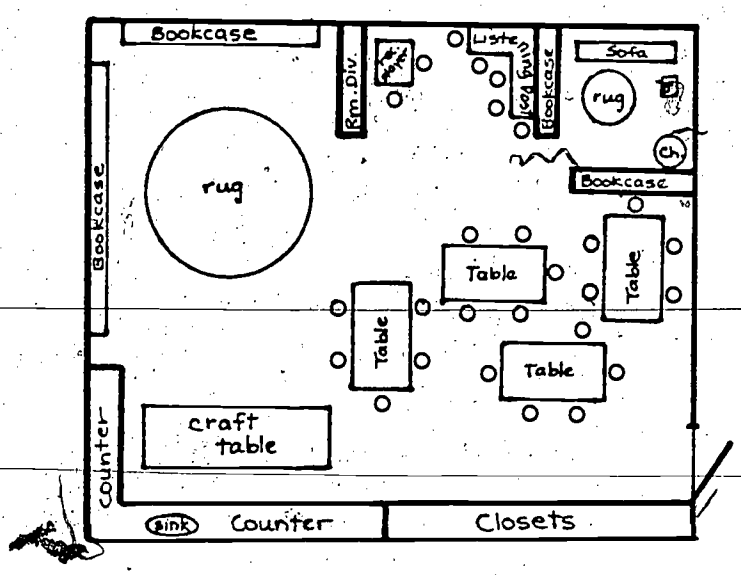
The basic guidelines for room arrangement are variation, flexibility and fostering of communication. Usually a room arrangement such as the following would be supportive of this reading program:

- Children's desks or tables in conversational-type groupings (five to six children facing each other).
- Various types of working areas for large- and small-scale activities, active and passive activities, individual work, and total-group sessions.
- A comfortable, inviting library area with a wide variety of printed materials, furniture and rugs inviting pleasure reading and browsing, and well organized and easily accessible materials.
- Resource areas throughout the room with self-explanatory, readily available materials for independent use (e.g., writing materials, math materials, arts and crafts materials).
- A quiet listening area containing a record player, listening post with earphones, and tape recorder with cassettes.
- A filing system containing a definite space (folder, box, shelf, file) for each child,

simple and well-organized, for ready access for teacher and child to refer to, add to, etc.

- Attractive display areas to accommodate children's collections and other special objects related to current study projects.

An example might be:



4. GATHERING INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN FOR USE IN PLANNING

One of the most important elements of the Responsive Reading Program is gathering information about children, or what might be termed assessment of their present reading abilities. It is with this information that the teacher is able to plan appropriate activities and guidance for each child in the classroom.

Information-gathering begins at the start of the year with a preliminary assessment based on observations and an informal interview with each child, and then continues throughout the year. In addition to further observation and interviews, the principal means we recommend for gathering information throughout the year is the Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence (TIRC), an instrument developed for measuring children's reading abilities in accordance with the principles of this program.

The information gathered from these and other sources should be kept in an individual folder for each child to provide a reading profile of the child for the teacher's use in planning. New information gathered throughout the year will add to the profile and provide a record of the child's growth in reading.

The material in each folder could include:

1. Biographical information and notes on the child's interests and hobbies.
2. Observational data.
3. Notes from the informal reader interview conducted at the beginning of the year.
4. TIRC data.

5. Work samples (including both written work and tapes of oral language and reading).

6. Other data such as test scores and inventories.

The first section of this chapter describes observation techniques and the interview suggested for the beginning of the year. The following sections describe the TIRC and the two final sections discuss synthesizing assessment and instruction and formulating a plan for the year.

Discovering the Learner at the Beginning of the Year

We recommend that during the first week or so at the beginning of the year, teachers gather information about each child's reading ability through observation and an informal interview. The information should be recorded in the individual folders kept for each child.

The greatest emphasis during the first few days should be on developing rapport with children as individuals and helping them feel comfortable and productive in the classroom situation. During this time, however, considerable observation and informal assessment can take place in the course of normal activities.

Observational Data

Observations of children can take place during both structured and informal activities. Teachers can use a log or notes to record the following kinds of information:

1. Does the child voluntarily select books or other printed materials to look at or read during free time?

2. Does the child appear to enjoy stories independently and/or in a group, and likes reading or being read to?

3. What kind(s) of books does the child select?

4. Does the child appear to handle books and other written materials in a way that shows familiarity with English language print (front to back, top to bottom, left to right, etc.)?

5. Does the child voluntarily share any ideas or comments about books he or she looks at or reads?

6. Is there any indication that the child is aware that one reads for meaning, that is, that a book tells a story to be understood and/or enjoyed by the reader or listener?

Observations of this kind should also continue throughout the year.

Informal Interview Data

We also recommend asking questions such as the following during a casual conversation with each child, to obtain information about the children's views about reading and about themselves as readers.

1. What books do you like best (to read and/or listen to)? Why?

2. Do you read or listen to stories at home? Who reads to you?

3. Why do people read?

4. Whom do you see who reads (both in and out of school) and what do they read?

5. What do you already know how to read? (Signs, labels, songs, rhymes?)

6. What else would you like to read or read better?

7. When you are reading and don't know something, what do you do?

8. Who do you think is a good reader? What does he or she do that makes him or her a good reader?

9. Tell what goes on in your head when you read.

Teachers may find it helpful to use the forms given at the end of the section to record the answers to the questions. The forms are presented in two versions, one for beginning readers and one for readers. They can be photocopied so that there will be one for each child.

Not all of these questions will be appropriate for any particular child, but in general, questions such as these bring out children's present feelings and level of understanding about reading. The responses to these kinds of questions are important in relation to the intended learner outcomes described at the end of Chapter 2. From these answers, a teacher can begin to find out:

- Whether the child perceives himself or herself as a present or potential reader.
- Whether the child is motivated to read or to learn to read.
- Whether the child sees reading as a tool for gaining information and pleasure, rather than an end in itself.
- Whether the child who has reading experiences knows about or can use strategies that focus on making sense out of print, as opposed to being preoccupied with accurate decoding that goes beyond the goal of comprehension.
- What materials will appeal to this child.

Most students, when they enter first grade, can already read a variety of signs, labels, slogans, names, and so forth. If a child perceives himself as unable to read anything, however, such information is important. The teacher may wish to begin by helping the child discover the many things he can read, rather than let him continue to think he's starting from zero, which is also behind everyone else.

In another case, a child may be able to read some materials but is handicapped by the notion that each word is of equal importance and every word must be pronounced correctly for acceptable reading. That child might be helped if she relaxes her attention to the print and sees that a book or passage may be viewed as a dialogue between author and reader.

Teachers may also wish to use the first level of the TIRC described in the next section at the beginning of the year.

Beginning Reader Interview (Adapted from work by Carolyn Burke and Duane Tovey)

Name _____ _____
Today's Date

_____ _____ _____ _____
Birth Date Age Sex Placement in Family

_____ _____
Grade or Level/Teacher Parent(s) Occupation(s)

1. What books do you like best? (to read and/or listen to) Why?

2. Do you read/listen to stories at home? Who reads to you?

3. Why do people read?

4. Whom do you see who reads (include out of school) and what do they read?

5. What do you already know how to read? (include signs, labels, songs, rhymes)

6. What else would you like to read or read better?

Description of the child's behavior during the conversation (confidence, fluency, ease, self-initiation, enjoyment).

Reader Interview (Adapted from work by Carolyn Burke and Duane Tovey)

Name _____ _____
Today's Date

_____ _____ _____ _____
Birth Date Age Sex Placement in Family

_____ _____
Grade or Level/Teacher Parent(s) Occupation(s)

1. What books do you like best? (to read and/or listen to) Why?

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3. Why do people read?

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5. What do you already know how to read? (include signs, labels, songs, rhymes)

6. What else would you like to read or read better?

7. When you are reading and don't know something, what do you do?

8. Who do you think is a good reader? What does he or she do that makes him or her a good reader?

9. Tell what goes on in your head when you read.

Description of the child's behavior during the conversation (confidence, fluency, ease, self-initiation, enjoyment).

Introduction to the TIRC

Within our program, an individual assessment tool is needed to assess students' present competencies so that an appropriate teaching plan can be formulated for them, and to document the students' progress over the year. In keeping with the goals and objectives of the Responsive Education Program, this instrument should assess within a natural situation that uses the skills in question, highlights students' existing assets, and credits divergent responses that emerge from a variety of cultural backgrounds (as opposed to seeking one right answer). These criteria do not add up to a brief assessment process that can be carried out in a perfunctory manner.

The need to test within a realistic reading situation requires an instrument that focuses primarily on comprehension. Only tests containing whole texts should be used since tests of sounds or words in isolation cannot evaluate understanding. While several standardized tests of comprehension do contain complete passages of text, confining a child's assessment to one or a few nationally standardized text selections may severely penalize students with backgrounds and experiences different from those underlying the content of the passage and/or the author's manner of presentation. This situation calls for variation in content so that reading skills, not background or experience, will be the matter being assessed. While many schools, districts, and states will require some tests of the nature described above, our program requires the addition of an individual assessment that is consistent with program philosophy.

An evaluation procedure that follows along the lines of miscue analysis satisfies these criteria. As we stated in Chapter 2 of this guide, the term "miscue" refers to any reader response that differs from the printed text. While miscue is a neutral term, however, it nevertheless carries a connotation of respect for the deviation, as a response that required at least some thought. It is cue-related; that is, it is based upon logical reasoning and related information. Unlike the word "mistake," which implies rejection, this term calls attention to the language strengths the student is using while reading (e.g., search for meaning, knowledge of syntax, sound/symbol knowledge).

The instrument described here, the Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence (TIRC), is based on the concepts of first, focusing on comprehension to assess whether students

demand meaning, and second, using miscue analysis when necessary to determine where a student might need guidance and coaching. It was developed by JoEllyn Taylor in 1976 and was derived from the "Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues" developed by Kenneth Goodman in 1973 under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education.[9] Field tests have shown that the TIRC captures pertinent information in a brief period of time (approximately 20 to 30 minutes for experienced users). It serves both to document progress and give specific direction to subsequent programs for students. This information is used in combination with other knowledge about the reader that can be obtained in observations, conversations, interviews, and a variety of informal situations.

The assessment procedure comprises three levels of analysis:

LEVEL A. To assess comprehension from independent reading

Can the student retell a story adequately after reading a story independently?

LEVEL B. To assess comprehension and semantic acceptability of an oral reading performance

Can the student retell a story after oral reading? How many of the sentences produced during oral reading are semantically acceptable?

LEVEL C. To identify specific behaviors and strategies used in an oral reading performance

What does the student do to construct meaning and to lose meaning while reading orally?

For many students, the informal Level A assessment will suffice to determine that those being evaluated can construct meaning from printed language stimuli that closely resemble the author's believed intention. Whether their oral performance would exhibit a highly effective profile or not, these students are reading for all intents and purposes. They would not warrant further analysis in this system, but would instead be encouraged simply to read more and enjoy it!

Level B is used when the retelling on Level A indicates that the student did not comprehend what he or she was reading. The student reads and retells a second story, and the teacher records both the reading and the retelling on tape. If the retelling of the second story is also inadequate, the teacher examines a sample of the oral reading together with the retelling in an attempt to discover whether the oral reading includes any ineffective behaviors that might account for the inadequate results. The teacher uses a copy of the story to mark all the deviations (miscues) the reader made, and to code each sentence as to whether the reader's oral version of it makes sense (is semantically acceptable).

Briefly, how much of the time was the reader trying to construct meaning from print and how much of the time was he or she settling for less than sense? Each text sentence is classified in this way, and the total number of sentences in each category is added up and converted to a percentage. The information obtained in this analysis enables the assessor to recommend certain potentially helpful instructional techniques and/or to point out the need for a yet deeper analysis.

Level C would be used for a more detailed analysis of the same oral reading performance obtained in Level B. It goes one step further by examining the deviations (miscues) for the methods the student used to gain or lose meaning. By knowing how often and in what ways the student tries to make sense of printed materials, the teacher can plan a subsequent program that will build upon existing strengths. Such an analysis can also be used to help the reader become aware of his or her own effective strategies. The effective and ineffective behaviors are summarized and used as a basis for recommendations for subsequent reading experiences for the student (with and/or without an instructor).

Level A of the TIRC

Level A, the simplest component of the TIRC, assesses students' comprehension by examining their retelling of stories they have read independently. The one-page form used to record information at this level is given on the following page. At the end of this section, we give an example of a story that a child read, a transcription of the child's retelling of the story, and the way a teacher completed the form for this assessment.

TIRC, Level A
Assessing Comprehension
Through Retelling

Student _____ Age ____

Text _____

Listener _____ Date ____

1. Describe the conditions of the uninterrupted reading experience (silent/oral; private/into a tape recorder; to a listener, etc.).

2. The Retelling

a. How much similarity is there between the author's version and the student's account?

☐ Great ☐ High ☐ Some ☐ Little ☐ None

Comments and examples (unity of discourse, identification and development of characters, events, plot, theme, etc.):

b. Describe the delivery of the retelling (student's level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.):

3. Additional information:

4. Recommendations:

The five steps that occur in this procedure are:

1. Arrange for the student to read a story.

2. Inform the student about the retelling procedure.

3. The student reads.

4. Conduct the retelling.

5. Analyze the retelling.

This first level of analysis simply examines the major question of the student's reading competence: Is the reader interacting with the author via the message the author conveyed through written language? This assessment need not involve ever hearing the student do the reading itself, since reading is normally a silent process. Therefore, the diagnostic portion of this first level of analysis is an assessment of what the student retells of the story just read. If the student actually prefers to read the text aloud or wishes to tape record it, fine, but that is not necessary at this stage. We are trying to duplicate the most normal circumstances possible from which to evaluate his present competence in interacting with print. Keep this foremost in mind in planning the whole experience. The retelling will be tape-recorded so that you can listen to it later to judge the student's understanding of the story.

1. Arrange for the student to read a story

This step includes the following procedures:

Establish rapport and explain the task. As may be obvious, good rapport between student and examiner is necessary for valid assessment and maximum benefit for the student. In addition, you need to tell the student the reason for this task in terms she can understand: "I'm finding out how all the kids in the class read at the beginning of the year"; "Your mother asked me to listen to you read"; etc. Try also to obtain the student's own opinion of her reading ability. "What kind of reader do you think you are?" (The student's own perception of herself as a reader is sometimes more influential than her actual ability. Also, when her competence increases, so must her own positive estimate of it, so she can use her skills when and wherever needed.) "Do you like to read?" "When do you read (and how often)?" Explain that she will just read in whatever way she usually does (silent, oral, etc.) so you can find out whether she understands what she reads.

Teaching the retelling task. Since the retelling performance is used as a significant indicator of comprehension, it is important that the student not be penalized for unfamiliarity with the task itself. To prevent this, it is suggested that you teach the task to students (groups or individuals) in a non-threatening context, before it is used for actual diagnosis.

The content for the retelling could be (1) a story that has just been read to the class, (2) a TV program watched last night, (3) a walk the class took together, and so forth. What is important is that the student have full confidence that he already knows what happened and is just retelling it, as if anew. He needs to understand clearly that he should tell everything he remembers, since you are seeing how close to the original he comes.

The addition of the tape recorder for the retelling may require extra time for some children. Your goal is for the student to be comfortable with the taping process, prior to regular assessment, so you cannot attribute her performance to nervousness.

Select a story. The selection of the story is a very important step in this process. It is only logical that we all would be apt to read better with material that is of interest to us and is written in language that is familiar. This is especially true of the student still learning to read. Therefore, to assess reading and not (1) background of experience or (2) oral language competence, one must select a story within the range of these two variables.

Secondly, the specific selection will have to do with your purpose for the assessment. You may be doing this to: see if the student can read anything at all; see if he can read new material in his area of interest and language use; see if he can read "on grade level"; see if he can read material in subject or content areas (or any other specific body of written language); or gauge the reader's competence for other purposes. These purposes are discussed below.

- Can the student read anything at all?

  For this assessment you may allow her to read even a familiar book or more than one. (Road signs, ads, songs, menus, food labels, and so forth are also helpful for this purpose. These can reveal very helpful additional information to you even though they do not lend themselves to an actual "retelling.")

- Can the student read new material in her area of interest and language use?

  For this purpose, you and the student will select a story unknown to her, but within her area of interest and language command. You can browse a book collection with her, helping by announcing titles and having the student browse pictures to decide. It can take a few attempts to arrive at an appropriate story, but it should be of sufficient length to tell a complete story or chapter. The length of the story (in one sitting) should be within the comfortable attention span of the student. You would usually select a story reflecting language and a topic appropriate to this age student, but again, this may vary with the purpose of the diagnosis.

- Can the student read "on grade level?"

  From our experience the term "grade level" has little meaning, or has such different meanings depending upon the source of authority, that it is not a very helpful distinction. For instance, designating window as a second-grade word seems rather absurd, since much depends upon whether the student has encountered that term in his own experience. A given student may be able to read motorcycle, helicopter or submarine far more easily than the word window, so to assign words grade levels is very experience- and culture-related. However, if your diagnosis MUST address this issue, you may need to have the student select an unfamiliar story to read from what is considered to be a "grade level" text for her. In other respects, follow the suggestions for the preceding part.

- Can he read material in the content areas in which he must perform?

  Again, you will aid the student in the selection by citing titles, etc., but here you would confine the choice to the particular subject area or topic in question. Follow the procedure suggested above.

- There may be other purposes for which you wish to assess the reader's competence. The selection of the material will be determined in part by that purpose, but we suggest that the student participate in the selection to enlist her optimum participation.

It is dangerous to assign a high degree of confidence to ONE diagnostic experience. It will always be safer to have two or three samples upon which to base any judgment.

While it may appear that undue attention has been paid to the first step, story selection, it has been done deliberately. As you work with students in this way you will only increase your appreciation for the importance of the content itself. The story alone can transform a heretofore "poor reader" to an effective reader, and vice versa. (You will find an example of this in the sample cases given in this chapter.)

2. Inform the student about the retelling procedure

Before the student reads, she needs to be aware of the entire process. She should know that she is to:

- Read a whole story independently (probably silently or privately by herself, or to someone, if she prefers).

  Throughout the reading she is to do her best, doing whatever she does to figure things out when she reads by herself. Ask her what she usually does when she doesn't know something. Through her statements and your additions, help her to be comfortable with substituting words, guessing or even skipping when necessary. In whatever way possible, help her to feel confident that all good readers use those techniques; that it is not "cheating," but rather, using good means of solving the problem.

- Use all the time necessary to read the story and think about it, and then come back to you and tell you the whole story, or just as much as she can remember without looking back at the book. This retelling will be tape recorded as she says it to you.

3. The student reads

The student reads the story independently in an environment in which no interruptions will occur and no assistance will be given.

4. Conduct the retelling

- Remind the student of the request to retell the story. Formulate the task into as natural an experience as possible for this student, e.g.,

"Tell the story as if you were telling it tonight to your brother at home," or similar directions. The important point here is that some students don't take the task seriously (since you know the story) unless they know that you are counting all the things they can remember from the whole story. Be sure she understands that you will listen to the tape later to see how much she can tell. You might conclude the directions with, "Now, please tell me everything you remember in this story."

- Begin the tape with the student's name, age, today's date and the story title.

- During the retelling, take brief notes (if possible) to remind you of follow-up questions to ask later (to define non-words, complete unfinished starts, answer "why" questions, clarify any questionable parts, etc.).

- Try to listen to the student's entire self-initiated discourse, being sure he has had time to tell everything he remembers. Even though you should not indicate any evaluation of what you hear, be supportive of the retelling by listening attentively and openly accepting all of his perceptions. Even when he appears to have finished, pause to give additional time for him to think quietly about anything else he wants to add.

- When he indicates quite definitely that he is finished, begin to ask open-ended questions based on what he has already said, using his same pronunciation for all words. You may not give any new information, e.g.:

  You said _____.
  Why did they do that? or
  Can you tell me any more about that?

  What happened { before / after / when } _____ (something he said)?

  Can you explain _____ (non-word or concept you wish to clarify)?

- If the student mentions any seemingly incorrect information, check it out later in the retelling with further questions without implying he was wrong.

- If it seems appropriate, ask the student directly if she felt she understood the story. This is as important as your estimate of her confidence. Thank the student for participating and turn off the tape recorder. Note: You might discuss how she felt about the procedure, what she liked, didn't like, so as to gain information for modifying future tapings of retellings. Students need to feel comfortable to perform well, so any insight gained toward aiding that can improve the validity of the performance and its subsequent analysis.

- Before proceeding to judging the retelling, sidetrack a moment to consider: Do you feel this is a representative sample from this student? This event may not be worthy of further analysis if conditions prevented the reader from performing as well as possible.

  Was the reader:

  - not interested in the story
  - not feeling well
  - extremely tense
  - tired
  - other?

  If any of the above detractors, or others, were operating, you may decide that this is not a fair representation of the reader's performance, and that you need to have her read a second story and record the retelling before you pursue an analysis.

5. Analyze the retelling

Use the form for Level A of the TIRC to record your analysis of the retelling.

Item 1. Record the exact setting in which the student read the story. Was the reading silent or oral? Was it done alone or with an audience? If the latter, who was the audience? Was the setting comfortable, non-threatening? If not, describe the potential distractors, interruptions, whatever. Mention any factors that might have affected the reader's comprehension in any way.

Item 2a. Listen to the whole retelling. It may be necessary to take careful notes or transcribe verbatim (on some occasions) to be able to assess it adequately. Capture the highlights under "comments and examples," noting:

- How did she identify and develop the characters?
- Did she include the major events?
- Does it hang together as a whole story? (Primarily for older students, ages 8 or 9 and up)
- Does she formulate a succinct plot statement and/or a theme?
- Does she make interpretations, additions of her own, beyond the author's story?

On the basis of these concrete examples, and another look at the story as a whole, make a judgment as to how great the similarity is between the student's account and the author's story.

Is there: great similarity? little similarity?
high similarity? no similarity?
some similarity?

Item 2b. As you listen to the delivery of the account, what general impression do you get from the tone, pace and use of language? Does the student sound confident and in control of the content? Does she appear to have gotten involved in the topic to the degree necessary to understand the story? Did she appear to enjoy the retelling or just tell it in compliance with the request? Describe evidence of enthusiasm, boredom, etc. Also, record her response to the question about whether she felt she understood the story.

Item 3. If there is any other information that seems pertinent to analysis and further planning for this student, make note of it here. If the student told you what kind of reader he considers himself and how much he reads, enter that here, also.

Item 4. Recommendations. Since the decision to designate the student's present reading adequate or inadequate rests primarily on Item 2a, similarity to author's version, it is important to consider the information carefully. Only experience and more than one assessment of the same reader will help you to become comfortable and confident about the process.

It is important to try to separate the student's present perceptions or misconceptions of the world from anything caused by or related only to the act of reading. That is, if she had been told this story orally and had retold a certain portion "incorrectly" but in keeping

with her understanding of reality, the same retelling from silent reading would not have been a function of reading. This possibility again supports the importance of the selection of reading content.

In the work to date on this retelling task, it is a common phenomenon to have a student misinterpret some information from a story. Rather than "reading wrong" or not understanding, the student may actually be progressing in developing this particular concept and be more sophisticated in his knowledge than when he explained it in simpler though accurate terms. This is a caution to avoid penalizing a reader for apparently inaccurate interpretations that are actually concepts in the process of development. The point is, did the reader process the visual stimuli sent by the author in the best way that he could, that is, on the basis of his own experience, language and knowledge of the world? If he did, that is all we can expect.

Therefore, a retelling given a rating of "great" or "high" similarly would indicate an acceptable reading performance (for the present purposes of the student just learning to read). Either of those ratings simply indicates the continuation of additional reading of interesting material, together with supplementary activities such as those suggested in Chapter 5. The more "miles through the print," the more proficient the reader is likely to become.

A rating of "some," "little," or "none" usually indicates a need for further analysis. If the student is failing to understand more than half of the story, roughly, there is reason to explore what strategies he is or is not using when confronted with print. In this case, proceed to Level B and select a second story that he will read orally.

Any of the activities suggested in Chapter 5 could be appropriate for children with a rating of "great" or "high" similarity, but those listed for Level IV, the independent reader, might be most appropriate.

Example of a Completed Level A Form

The following pages give an example of a story that was used for this assessment, a transcript of a nine-year-old child's retelling of the story, and a completed Level A form.[10] The story is "The Old Man, His Son, and the Donkey."

Story Used for TIRC Assessment

THE OLD MAN, HIS SON, AND THE DONKEY

An old farmer and his son were taking their donkey to town to sell. They had not gone far when they saw some girls at a well.

"Look at them!" said one of the girls. "Summer's here and the day is hot. And those two walk when they might ride. What fools they are!"

All the girls laughed at this.

The old man heard them laugh.

"Get up and ride," he said to his son.

So the son got on the donkey's back. The old man walked.

Soon they came to some men in a field.

"Look at that!" one of the men shouted.

"That big boy rides while his poor old father must walk."

The old man heard their words.

"Get right down," he said to his son. "I will ride."

The son got down, and the old man got on the donkey's back.

"It feels good to ride," the old farmer said. "It wasn't right for me to walk."

Soon they came to a woman and her children walking on the road.

"Will you look at him!" the woman said, "That man rides while his poor little son must walk."

The old man heard her words.

"Get up here with me," he said to his son.

The son got up on the donkey in back of his father.

Soon they saw a man and his wife standing by their house.

"Is that your donkey?" the man asked the old man.

"Yes, it is," said the old man.

"How can you be so mean?" asked the wife. "The two of you up there on one poor little donkey!" Then she went on to say, "Two big people like you could carry him."

"Very well," said the old man, "we'll try that."

The old man and his son got off the donkey and tried to pick him up. The old man picked up two legs, and his son picked up the other two legs.

But just then, some more peoole came by. And when they saw the old farmer and his son, they all started laughing.

"Oh, oh, oh!" they laughed. "Look! The fools are carrying the donkey!"

The donkey didn't like the noise and didn't like to be carried. So he pulled loose and ran out into the fields. The old man and the son tried and tried, but they couldn't catch him. So now they had no donkey to sell.

At last, the old man turned to his son.

"Son" he said, "You cannot please everyone. If you try, you only make a donkey of yourself."

Transcript of Retelling of "The Old Man, His Son, and the Donkey" by Lisa, Aged Nine

ST: Um, I think two girls and two boys were um...was on a donkey riding...and they asked the old man if that's his donkey...and and...I can't remember the rest.

T: OK, you said there was a donkey though and you said two girls and a man. Do you want to say any more about them? Like...anything else the two girls did?

ST: Well, they asked the man...is it his donkey?

T: And what did he say?

ST: Yes! (Singing in the background begins)

T: And did the man say or do anything else?

ST: What did you say?

T: Yes, that's going to confuse us, isn't it? (reference to music in background) ...Did the man do or say anything else?

ST: No.

T: What about the donkey, what happened to the donkey in the story?

ST: Well...um...he got carried on his two...em...his four feet...

T: By whom?

ST: By the old man...

T: And why did he do that?

ST: I...I forgot...

T: Why would they carry a donkey?

ST: Cause he's...um...cause um...cause he was tired...

T: OK, anyone else in the story?

ST: Yea, a lady and some children...

T: And what did they do?

ST: The lady was riding on the donkey, or horse and the children were laughing.

T: And where did they go...or what did they do?

ST: I can't remember...

T: How did this story end?

ST: Em...I forgot...can't remember.

T: I think also the singing is...is loud...Would you rather be in doing that and we do the rest later...

ST: ...Rest later.

[Later, off microphone, the student was still unable to add any more to her original re-telling.]

TIRC, Level A
Assessing Comprehension
Through Retelling

Student Lisa age 9
Text The Old Man, His Son and the Donkey
Listener J Taylor date 7-76

1. Describe the conditions of the uninterrupted reading experience (silent/oral, private/into a tape/to a listener, etc.).
   - oral reading into a tape with an adult listener
   - story selected from 3 choices
   - student already used to taping process

2. The Retelling

   a. How much similarity is there between the author's version and the student's account?

   ☐ Great ☐ High ☐ Some ☒ Little ☐ None

   Comments and examples (unity of discourse, identification and development of characters, events, plot, theme, etc.):
   - very brief spontaneous narrative with no real plot developed
   - characters not well developed
   - no complete events recalled, no sequence developed
   - no sense of story emerged

   b. Describe the delivery of the retelling (student's level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.):
   - cooperative but had little to tell
   - not eager to do the re-telling, hasty to finish (not only due to distraction, but readily used that as an out)
   - never sounded as though she "took hold" of content, either in reading or re-telling, never really involved

3. Additional information

4. Recommendations
   - Try to locate more appropriate content for a second assessment
   - Analyze this one at B Level, (since a tape was made) to determine how much she seeks meaning

jet 7/15/77

Level B of the TIRC

Level B of the TIRC assesses the student's performance during oral reading as well as the student's comprehension as shown in his or her retelling of the story. The purpose of examining the oral reading is to attempt to determine whether the student is seeking comprehension while reading, and in what ways the student might need guidance from the teacher.

Both the oral reading and the retelling will be tape-recorded for this assessment. To carry out the assessment, a teacher will use a copy of the story as a worksheet and a one-page form for recording information. The form for Level B is given on the next page. At the end of this section, you will find an example of a worksheet used to record the oral reading of a story, and a sample completed form.

The seven steps used in Level B assessment are:

1. Select a story.
2. Inform the student of the procedure.
3. Tape the reading and the retelling.
4. Analyze the retelling.
5. Mark the worksheet.
6. Analyze the oral performance.
7. Make recommendations.

These steps are discussed below.

1. Select a story

Select a story unknown to the reader, but of interest to him. He should be involved in the selection. Since the purpose of the diagnosis is to uncover his present strategies for dealing with printed language, the selection should represent appropriate reading matter for him, that is, material commensurate with his reading needs in everyday life (be that school, home, or other situations). Note that since analysis of the oral performance is based on tracing the logic of the miscues, there will be no data for analysis if there are no miscues. This means that if a reader is being referred for potential help,

TIRC, Level B
Assessing Reading Through Retelling and Semantic Acceptability of Oral Performance

Student _____ Age ____
Text _____
Listener _____ Date ____

A. Retelling

1. How much similarity is there between the author's version and the student's account?

☐ Great ☐ High ☐ Some ☐ Little ☐ None

Comments and examples:

2. Describe the delivery of the retelling (student's level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.)

3. Does the student tell a whole integrated story? Yes Partial No

B. Oral Performance: To what degree does the student demand meaning? As performed by the reader, does this sentence make sense?

	+ Yes, within the story context	0 Only within this sentence	— No, it does not make sense	? Can't decide; n more informatio
TALLY				
Totals:				
% :				

C. Recommendations for future learning experiences:

☐ A deeper level of analysis is recommended, such as:

the diagnosis must involve material sufficiently difficult to bring the perceived problem to the surface. It may take more than one attempt to locate an appropriate story for this purpose.

You will need a second copy of the story being read, so you can follow along (unless the student prefers to read the story in private with the tape recorder). This second copy is the one on which you will mark the miscues while you listen to the tape later. Since writing during the student's reading is frequently interpreted as taking note of negative behavior, this is usually not recommended. Once students understand that a teacher jots notes about all kinds of behavior as an aid for asking questions later, however, it is then possible to aid your memory by taking minimal notes during the reading.

2. Inform the reader of the procedures

The student needs to be aware of the entire process, from the start. She should know she is to:

- Read a whole story aloud while it is being taped.
- Read without any help from anyone. Throughout the reading she is to do her best, doing whatever she does to figure things out when she reads by herself. Ask her what she usually does when she doesn't know something. Through her statements and your additions, help her to be comfortable with substituting words, guessing or even skipping when necessary.
- Retell the story immediately after reading it, to show how much she remembers from what she reads.

A friendly supportive climate should be maintained throughout the taping. While you must remain neutral and may not indicate whether a student's responses are appropriate, it is important to do everything possible to promote the student's own best problem-solving strategies.

Most students are unfamiliar with this process. They are not used to reading an entire story, uninterrupted, and many have been previously penalized for guessing. Therefore, to obtain the very best performance, the ground rules of the evaluation must be made clear to the student. She deserves an "up front" statement to the effect that we are doing this to see how much you understand of what you read and how good your guesses are when you don't know something. Rather than frightening her about being "wrong," assure her that most readers make

good guesses when reading to themselves and that's what you expect her to do here. Getting all the words right is not expected; just the best guesses possible. Emphasize the point that no one knows every word he comes to, so all good readers make guesses that make sense in the story.

Since these instructions alone are good guidelines for reading, many readers read better as soon as they can carry out these basic suggestions. The first diagnostic experience is sometimes the best reading the reader has ever done. Others need a few or several such experiences to bring out their best performance. Mention that if you write notes while the student is reading or retelling, it is not because she did something wrong; it's to remind you of something to talk about later.

3. Tape the reading and retelling

Begin the tape with the student's name, age, date and story title.

Tape the uninterrupted reading of the story. Upon completion of the story, thank the student and ask him to close the book.

Conduct the retelling according to the directions given under Step 4, conducting the retelling, for Level A. Tape the retelling.

4. Analyze the retelling

Use the first part of the form for Level B of the TIRC to analyze the student's retelling of the story.

Items A1 and A2. For these items, follow the directions given for Step 5, analyzing the retelling, for Level A.

Item A3. This item is used to determine whether the student produced a complete unit, story or account. On the one hand this question could be answered first in this set of three to give you, as rater, a perspective on how you feel about the retelling as a whole. Second, you would rate it as to its similarity to the author's version. This question remains in third position, however, because its other role is to answer: When the student did not retell what was considered to be a reasonable approximation of the author's story, did she at least produce a complete unit that holds together to tell a tale or make a statement? Circle "Yes," "Partial," or "No."

5. Mark the worksheet

Using your own copy of the story as a worksheet, listen to the tape of the student's oral performance and mark all miscues. Each reader response that is different from the text should be indicated on the worksheet so that you will be able to analyze the logic behind the miscues.

The goal of your marking is to capture a record of the reading performance as accurately and efficiently as possible. Ideally, all reader deviations should be noted in some way for retrospective examination. A variety of marking systems can be used, but it is important to have a system that will be mutually understood and consistent when the material is used by more than one person. Therefore, the list on the next page offers a set of suggestions for a system of marking miscues. Any types of deviations not on this list can be indicated in any self-explanatory fashion the teacher chooses. (The sample worksheet given at the end of this section gives an example of the way the markings would be used for a particular story.)

6. Analyze the oral performance

Using the second part of the form for Level B, you will now analyze the degree to which the student demands meaning during oral reading. The analysis will consist of examining each sentence of the recorded oral performance to see whether the student tried to make sense while reading. The readings of the sentences will be classified into the four categories shown on the form, and the number of sentences in each category will be converted to a percentage to give an indication of the student's search for meaning.

This step is the first instance within the TIRC of analyzing a student's oral reading to discover how effective the reader appears to be at constructing a message conveyed through print. As we emphasized earlier, a reader's oral rendition does not always represent what is going on inside the reader's mind, so it is difficult to make clear-cut generalizations on the basis of oral performance. However, this degree of analysis has been made necessary by an indication of less-than-adequate comprehension at Level A of assessment, and oral reading performance is the best basis available for attempting to understand where the breakdown is between author as sender and student as receiver of the written message.

Within this step, you will first determine the semantic acceptability of each sentence, and then tabulate the information.

Suggestions for Marking Reader Deviations (Miscues)

1. Substitutions are indicated by writing the substitution above the corresponding part of the text.

   I passed the

2. Omissions are indicated by circling the portion omitted.

   One day (when) Larry...

   ...pleased with (himself)

3. Insertions are indicated by an insertion sign plus writing the insertion at the appropriate point.

   I bet ^you they would.

4. Reversals are indicated by the curved line associated with transposed portions.

   (said/he)

5. Corrections are indicated by a sustained line the length of the regression, beginning with a circled letter "c."

   ©my
   May I...

   Over-corrections (correcting unnecessarily) are indicated similarly with "oc" being circled.

   ©Bill
   Billy came with...

6. Repetitions are indicated by underlining the portion as many times as it was repeated without change.

   ...children with their

7. Lengthy pauses are indicated by a vertical slash line at the point of pause.

   ...of finding/parents.

8. Non-words (either substitutions or insertions) are indicated by reproducing the word phonetically and preceding it with a sign (ŧ). Phonetic spelling can also help to capture any other deviant pronunciation of words known to be a word or not.

   ŧtheare
   ...had tears in his...

9. Dialect variation is indicated by inserting a "d" over the item(s) and writing out the substitution or insertion.

   ⓓescaped
   The bird escaped...

10. Intonational change is indicated by deleting or inserting punctuation or other markings to reflect the rendered version.

    ...me stay here." If I had..

11. Repeated miscues are indicated by writing "RM" over the item.

    ŧorphanRM
    Orphan

12. Any indication that the reader was dissatisfied with his or her response and/or aware of a loss of meaning is recorded.

    ≠

Other distinctive deviations shown by the reader can be indicated in any self-explanatory fashion, often invented spontaneously. The goal is to mirror the reading performance as it occurred.

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Determine the degree of semantic acceptability of each sentence. Now, examine each sentence unit of the text and the oral reading to assess the apparent degree of meaning sought by the student. If the student corrected or made changes in the sentence while reading, the final state in which the sentence was left is what is evaluated.

Compound sentences of the text are treated as two sentences. This procedure is to prevent penalizing the student for producing one complete thought (one-half of the compound sentence) adequately, but losing meaning on the other half.

Code each sentence directly on the worksheet in some manner comparable to the following:

+	The sentence is semantically acceptable (makes sense), in the total text thus far.
0	The sentence makes sense only by itself or in that immediate portion of the text.
−	The sentence is semantically unacceptable (does not make sense).
?	Evaluation questionable. A decision cannot be made easily based upon the information available.

Of each sentence, then, ask, "When read as a complete sentence the way the reader left it, to what degree does it make sense, even if individual words are different from those on the page?" This question must be answered with consideration to the relative importance of words to the total story so far. For example, a sentence might read, "He wore a black coat." If the exact color of the coat has not been emphasized as important to the interpretation of the story, an oral rendition of "He wore a blue coat" would be judged semantically acceptable (+). If the context had indicated that the exact color was important, then the above rendition (substituting blue for black) would be judged semantically acceptable (0) within that sentence only. On the other hand, a rendition of the sentence as "He wore a block coat" would be judged semantically unacceptable (−).

Synonyms are usually labeled + (semantically acceptable). Omission or substitution of minor details would

usually receive the + or 0 designation. Omission of major items (noun, verb, object) would usually receive the semantically unacceptable (−) designation. The sample case given at the end of this section provides a range of examples to clarify the use of these three categories.

The final category, ?, is helpful because it saves time and energy that might be needlessly spent on deciding whether to use +, 0, or − when there is insufficient, conflicting or ambiguous information. For instance, the occurrence of a miscue that is actually an English word, but one rarely heard or used by young children, always raises the question as to whether it is a non-word to the child, even though adults recognize it as a word. If this determination cannot be established easily, the ? category is an efficient means of handling the situation.

You can code each sentence (as +, 0, −, or ?) either directly onto the worksheet, as shown in the example at the end of this section, or you can tally the number of sentences in each category on a separate page.

Tabulate the information. The coded information is then tabulated on the form for Level B to compute totals and percentages. Tally the number of sentences in each category and then compute the percentage of the total number of sentences for each category.

7. Make recommendations

The final step is to examine the total percentage in each category to decide whether the oral reading performance indicates that the student actually demands meaning sufficiently already and merely needs more reading practice, or indicates a clear need for a certain type of practice or reading experience. Or it may be that unresolved questions remain that require a deeper analysis at Level C of the TIRC to examine in greater detail what the student is doing when she retains or loses meaning while reading orally.

It is assumed that if the student produces an adequate retelling (rated "great" or "high") this assessment may supersede the first one made at Level A. In that case, additional reading, not further analysis, may be the most obvious recommendation. Analysis at Level B may not even be necessary.

If analysis at Level B is warranted, the following are the parameters of what is usually considered an acceptable oral reading performance (keeping in mind that the oral performance may not be a mirror of what is actually happening in the reader's head).

+	0	−
(semantically acceptable sentences within story context)	(semantically acceptable only within sentence itself)	(semantically unacceptable)
at least 40%		no more than 40%
combined, equal at least 60%		

If the percentage of semantically acceptable sentences falls outside these limits (below 40 percent acceptable sentences and above 40 percent unacceptable sentences), we recommend proceeding to analysis at Level C of the TIRC. This rating would mean that the reader is demanding meaning less than 40 percent of the time, so a more careful look at the behaviors (both those seeking meaning and those not) may help the teacher provide situations which provoke the reader to construct meaning. Specific suggestions on how the teacher can help students whose ratings fall outside these limits are given later in this chapter in the section on "Recommendations" following the discussion of Level C.

If the percentage of semantically acceptable sentences is within the adequate range, the oral performance would lead one to believe that the reading was adequate. Since the assessment of the student's retelling has not concurred, however, the difficulty may lie elsewhere. This is a more unusual circumstance, but there are readers who are very skilled in decoding phonetic clues, so that their oral reading appears to be acceptable, but who do not demand meaning of what they are reading, perhaps not even really attending to the content, so that good author ⟷ reader interaction fails to take place. In such cases, activities that emphasize meaning as being of utmost importance are what are needed.

Some examples of activities that could be undertaken for such students include the following:

Pre- and post-reading meaning-centered activities and discussions. Before the student reads any given story, the teacher and student agree on a major question that this story might answer (based on the title and illustrations). The student then reads silently with that question

as a focus, and the student and teacher discuss the story after the reading, answering the initial question.

Or, if the student reads aloud to you or others, meaning-centered discussion can take place spontaneously throughout the story, for brief periods. For this student, emphasis should be placed on what makes sense and the why of actions and situations, not on accuracy of words or other mechanics.

Careful selection of reading material. For this student to be capable of demanding meaning of every sentence, the text must be about a familiar topic and in familiar language. She must expect it all to make sense, so it must carry that potential for her.

Retelling task. The student begins to associate some form of retelling with many of the stories he reads. The retelling can be made orally to a teacher or peer, can be written, can be at home or school, etc.

All of the activities suggested above are designed to help the student make a habit of demanding meaning, that is, so he reads nothing without asking, "Does this make sense, what does it mean?" These activities can work in combinations and be modified or extended, but basically the student needs to learn that reading must be meaningful, that just pronouncing words is not reading.

There may be times when a reader's oral performance is borderline and you wish to analyze a bit further. You might discover some already present effective strategies to draw to the reader's attention and reinforce, or have him listen to the tape with you to evaluate the total effectiveness. In other words, the cut-off points and recommendations suggested here are still just general guidelines, to be adapted to fit specific instances.

Student-dictated material to be read back. The student dictates her own story, and reads it back immediately and on subsequent days. Whenever there is doubt about a word or idea, the teacher's questions focus on the idea expressed or the train of thought--not the single word.

Oral and written cloze exercises. The student completes a sentence begun by another reader (you or another) or in writing. There is no one right answer. Whatever makes sense in that particular context is acceptable.

Examples of Completed Form and Worksheet for Level B

Examples of the way a worksheet would be marked to show oral reading performance and a completed Level B form for a worksheet are given on the following pages. The story on the worksheet is "The Old Man, His Son, and the Donkey."

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THE OLD MAN, HIS SON, AND THE DONKEY

An old farmer and his son were taking (1)-
their donkey to town to sell. They had (2)+
not gone far when they saw some girls (3)+
talking. "Look at them!" said one of the girls.
"It is very hot and the day is hot. (4)-
And those two walk when they might ride." (5)-
What fools they are!" (6)+

All the girls laughed at this. (7)+

The old man heard them laugh. (8)0

"Get up and ride," he said to his son. (9)-

So the son got on the donkey's back. (10)-

The old man walked. (11)+

Soon they came to some men in a field. (12)-

"Look at that!" one of the men shouted. (13)-

"That big boy rides while his poor old (14)+
father must walk."

The old man heard their words. (15)-

"Get right down," he said to his son. (16)+

"I will ride." (17)+

The son got down, and the old man got (18)-
on the donkey's back.

"It feels good to ride," the old farmer (19)0
said. "It wasn't right for me to walk." (20)0

Soon they came to a woman and (21)+
her children walking on the road.

"Will you look at him!" the woman (22)-

said. "That man rides while his poor (23)-

little son must walk."

The old man heard her words. (24)+

"Get up here with me," he said (25)-

to his son.

The son got up on the donkey (26)-

in back of his father.

Soon they saw a man and his wife (27)-

standing by their house.

"Is that your donkey?" the man asked (28)+

the old man.

"Yes, it is," said the old man. (29)+

"How can you be so mean?" asked the (30)-

wife. "The two of you up there on one (31)-

poor little donkey!" Then she went on (32)-

to say, "Two big people like you

could carry him."

"Very well," said the old man, (33)+

"we'll try that."

The old man and his son got off the (34)-

donkey and tried to pick him up. The (35)-

old man picked up two legs, and his son

picked up the other two legs.

But just then, some more people came (36)+

by. And when they saw the old farmer (37)-

and his son, they all started laughing.

"Oh, oh, oh!" they laughed. "Look! (38)+ (39)+

feels
The fools are carrying the donkey!" (40)?

The donkey didn't like the noise (41)-

then not
and didn't like to be carried. So he (42)0

lots forept
pulled loose and ran out into the fields.

em
soon
The old man and the son tried and tried, (43)-

the ©
but they couldn't catch him. So now they (44)-

new
had no donkey to sell.

---

em
tried as soon
At last, the old man turned to his son. (45)-

got
"Son" he said, "You cannot please (46)-

will
everyone. If you try, you only make (47)-

for
a donkey of yourself."

TIRC; Level B
Assessing Reading Through Retelling and Semantic Acceptability of Oral Performance

Student Lisa age 9
Text The Old Man, His Son and the Donkey
Listener J. Taylor date 7-76

A. Retelling

1. How much similarity is there between the author's version and the student's account?

☐ Great ☐ High ☐ Some ☒ Little ☐ None

Comments and examples:

see Level A, Lisa

2. Describe the delivery of the retelling (level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.):

see Level A, Lisa

3. Does the student tell a whole integrated discourse? Yes Partial (No)

B. Oral Performance - To what degree does the student demand meaning? As performed by the reader, does this sentence make sense?

	+ Yes, within the story context	0 Only within this sentence	- No, it does not make sense	? Can't decide Need more information
TALLY	𝍸 𝍸 𝍸	𝍸	𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸	𝍸
Totals:	15	4	27	1
% :	32 %	8 %	58 %	2 %

C. Recommendations for future learning experiences:

more appropriate reading material within her experience and language

☒ A deeper level of analysis is recommended, such as: Level C
Then compare responses on more suitable content.

Level C of the TIRC

Level C of the TIRC provides a more complete analysis of the oral reading performance used in Level B. It examines the means by which the reader appeared to obtain or lose meaning by analyzing the deviations (miscues) made in relation to the text as printed.

A form for Level C can be found on the next page. At the end of the section, we have given examples of a completed worksheet and form for Level C.

The eight steps to be followed in administering Level C are:

1. Select a story.
2. Inform the reader of the procedure.
3. Tape the reading and retelling.
4. Analyze the retelling.
5. Mark the worksheet.
6. Analyze the oral performance.
   - Degree of semantic acceptability
   - Presence/absence of specific behaviors
7. Summarize strengths and concerns.
8. Make recommendations.

Steps already completed if Level B was administered.

Steps 1 through 5 and the first part of Step 6 are the same as for Level B. The directions for those steps are not repeated here since the teacher would usually have already completed them.

There may be occasions when experience with a reader has indicated a need for Level C analysis even though Levels A and B have not been completed formally. It is then appropriate and efficient to do all analysis using the Level C form.

TIRC, Level C
Assessing Reading Through Retelling and Characteristics of the Oral Performance

Student _____ age ____

Text _____

Listener _____ date ____

A. Retelling: What degree of understanding of the text is evidenced in the student's retelling?

1. Does the student tell a whole integrated discourse?
Comment and examples: Y P N

2. How like the author's version is the student's account?
Comment and examples: G H S L N

3. Describe the delivery of the retelling (level of confidence; degree of involvement, etc.):

B. Oral Performance - In what ways and to what degree does the student demand meaning?

1. Semantic acceptability of each sentence:

+	0	−	?	TOTAL
				%

2. Attempts to make sense by:

freq some never

a. self-correcting
b. using own dialect
c. making effective substitutions, insertions
d. being willing to guess
e. persisting, continuing to read

never some freq

f. over-correcting

3. Appears to change meaning by:

never some freq

a. making ineffective substitutions, insertions
b. making critical omissions
c. making intonational changes
d. stopping and losing the thought

C. Summary and Conclusions - What are major characteristics of the student's performance; what are the implications for instruction?

1. Strengths -

2. Concerns -

3. Recommendations -

- ☐ a. MORE uninterrupted reading
- ☐ b. Locate more appropriate materials
- ☐ c. Have student listen to own tape and self-assess
- ☐ d. Use student-dictated material
- ☐ e. Pre/post meaning-centered activities
- ☐ f. Oral and/or written cloze exercises
- ☐ g. Oral and/or written retelling of stories
- ☐ h. Need deeper level of analysis
- ☐ i. Other

6. Analyze the oral performance for presence or absence of specific behaviors

Parts 2 and 3 of Item B on the form refer to analyzing the oral performance for the presence or absence of certain behaviors. By examining the probable logic behind each of the reader's deviations from the original text, we can surmise some of the strategies, techniques the reader presently uses (or at least used in this story).

Examine the marked worksheet to look for any or all of the following effective reader behaviors and indicate the degree of use as you see it ("frequently," "some" or "never").

Strategies by which the student attempts to make sense are marked in Part 2 of this item. These include:

a. Self-correcting. The reader changes a miscue to the word(s) printed on the page.

b. Using own dialect. The reader substitutes words, pronunciations and/or grammar from his or her spoken dialect that make sense to him or her in these instances in contrast to what is printed on the page. This could be accomplished by insertions or deletions.

c. Making effective substitutions, insertions. The reader makes deviations that do not change the meaning.

d. Being willing to guess. The reader takes a chance and gives a response that may or may not be identical to the text, but is in keeping with his or her interpretation of the context so far.

e. Persisting, continuing to read. The reader maintains a rather regular pace through the text, perhaps pausing at times, but not enough to cause interruption in thought.

f. Over-correcting. The reader goes back and corrects a substitution, deletion, or insertion that was already appropriate in that it made sense, and did not change the meaning to any significant degree. While a reader probably makes such corrections out of a motivation to make sense, it is unnecessary, therefore inefficient. Consequently, it is assessed in the reverse of the above behaviors (i.e., "never" over-correcting is positive, "frequently" is negative).

Self-correcting, over-correcting and the use of one's own dialect can be readily observed by their codes on the

marked worksheet. The others require examination of the worksheet and listening to the tape.

Strategies frequently found to be ineffective and/or inefficient are recorded in Part 3. These include

appearing to change meaning by:

a. Making ineffective substitutions, insertions. The reader makes deviations that change the meaning.

b. Making critical omissions. The reader omits words, phrases necessary to the understanding of the story, e.g., "They came to a big forest." Omission of the word "forest," with no substitution, is one such example. Omission of the word "big" would in most instances not be a critical omission.

c. Making intonational changes. The reader disregards or substitutes intonation patterns, so the oral reading sounds as if he or she is losing meaning. Examples include running through punctuation marks, substituting other punctuation, and making intonational changes within words or phrases.

d. Stopping and losing the thought. The reader stops or pauses for long periods (as if the next word(s) is/are difficult or unknown), resulting in what appears to be a break in thought.

All of these items require some interpretation of the marked worksheet. None of these changes can be designated as absolutely negative, because the oral reading does not always mirror the total experience. However, on the surface these behaviors appear to hinder comprehension so it is helpful to make note of them in the case that they do represent the reader's actual strategy. Changes in intonation, especially, have not been found to be accurate predictors of loss of comprehension. This finding reinforces the notion that an oral reading performance often takes "practice" to be suitable for an audience. Readers frequently self-correct and compensate along the way without informing the audience of the adaptations necessary for gaining meaning.

7. Summarize strengths and concerns

Using all the information now available on this student's reading performance, jot down notes on the apparent strengths and any cause for concern.

Item C1. Strengths. This is extremely important information. If the reader presently exhibits any

meaning-seeking strategies, she has some notion of the purpose of reading. These are the behaviors to be especially drawn to his or her attention for continued, increased use. It is helpful to know whether the behavior was frequent, seldom or even appeared to occur by chance. If the reader does seem to process information in an effort to understand a message, that impression should be reflected here. In sum, what are all the indications that provide evidence of the student's search for meaning? The student's use of the three systems of language (meaning, grammar, sound/symbol relationships) as clues to unknown words should also be noted here.

Item C2. Concerns. There may be reason for concern if the reader settles for nonsense or less-than-sense. As we mentioned earlier, however, this behavior is not always a negative sign. Some readers correct in their minds only and the oral performance does not reflect it. Only the retelling or probing questions reveal the "silent corrections."

However, to arrive at this stage of analysis, you found an unsatisfactory retelling; so if there is concrete evidence at the oral level of meaningless reading, it should be indicated here. When the reader deviations were unacceptable, it should be indicated as to why--failure to use meaning cues? Grammatical cues? If visual cues dominate inappropriately, that should be indicated. In sum, what evidence is there that the student does not know or loses track of the purpose of reading--constructing meaning? If he or she fails to use any of the three cueing systems (meaning, grammar, sound/symbol), it should be noted here.

8. Make recommendations

Introductory note. Underlying any specific suggestions for individual student activities is the concept of the student's own discovery of meaning in reading. The most helpful teacher role is primarily one of creating optimum conditions for communication between author and reader to take place. This role usually has more to do with assuring the selection of appropriate material, holding pre-reading discussions that reveal the reader's knowledge and predictions, and holding post-reading discussions for verification, interpretation and application than it has to do with the conventional image of "teaching reading." When the stage is set with a reader (listener) matched appropriately with an author (speaker) through language and experience, the student's own interaction with the text usually elicits effective strategies to carry on the communication we call reading. That is, when the student demands that the text

make sense because she wants to know, she will usually naturally substitute for unknowns, regress to correct- when a substitution fails to make sense, and make changes to make the language more like her own dialect. When these meaning-getting strategies can be developed naturally as a function of a relevant, real reading experience, this is, of course, preferred to more imposed, directed procedures. This natural self-discovery also includes self-assessment whereby the reader judges her own results--Do I understand what I'm reading?--and evaluates the oral performance by listening to herself reading (on tape).

There are circumstances, however, that obscure or inhibit this natural discovery process. For instance, years of failure in reading can destroy or diminish the student's confidence, motivation and exercising of existing talents. This situation may cause a teacher to feel the need for more direct techniques, such as those given below. Keep in mind, however, that often, helping to reinstate personal confidence and motivation may be the most significant aspects of a teacher's role in reclaiming educational drop-outs. When other conditions are positive, the reader primarily teaches himself--through reading, reading and more reading. Perhaps, all a teacher really can do is to help instate, reinstate or reinforce a student's demand for meaning.

As we indicated earlier, the student's perception of himself as a reader is a significant factor in his actual performance. If he revealed a low opinion of his reading ability, a major part of a teacher's recommendation would be to help him see the strengths he does have and acknowledge his progress all along the way. In an ongoing program where there is opportunity for pre/post testing, perhaps the most important indication of lasting growth will be the student's change from saying "I'm a poor reader" to "I'm a good reader." This guide is concerned with the activities that take place between those two points. It is important for the teacher to keep this view as a focus. The student should "own" the concern, assume responsibility and take credit for progress.

Developing recommendations. Recommendations for each child should be developed individually on the basis of that child's strengths and weaknesses. Since there is an obvious danger in establishing overgeneralized, predetermined recommendations for individual cases, the suggestions below offer only a few basic principles to indicate the kinds and range of assistance that might be helpful to individual students at different levels of reading proficiency. These general suggestions can be combined with the coaching techniques described in Chapter 3 and the

student activities given in Chapter 5 to develop specific recommendations for each child.

Readers can be categorized into three groups on the basis of their scores on Part B of Level B or C of the TIRC, concerning the degree to which their sentences make sense during oral reading. The three groups are:

- Group I: Little or no evidence of meaning-seeking strategies. Children in this group have fewer than 15 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category on Part B of the TIRC) and more than 70 percent semantically unacceptable sentences (− category).

- Group II: Some evidence of meaning-seeking strategies. This group includes children who show between 15 and 40 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category) and between 40 and 70 percent semantically unacceptable sentences (− category).

- Group III: Moderate and considerable evidence of meaning-seeking strategies. This group, discussed above in the section on Level B of the TIRC, is made up of students who produce at least 40 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category) and no more than 40 percent unacceptable sentences (− category).

The suggestions below illustrate the kind of assistance that may be helpful to the readers at each level. It should be noted, however, that these categories are not intended to imply that readers should be grouped in this way for teaching. As we state earlier, ability grouping is not an aid to instruction. The view of this program is that the advantages of heterogeneous grouping outweigh those of homogeneous grouping. Groups for classroom activities would usually be formed on the basis of a common interest. The children who would benefit most from the techniques described below would be especially observed and given guidance while they participate in the activities.

Assistance to readers in Group I (little or no evidence of meaning-seeking strategies). This group comprises the students whose score on Part B of the TIRC shows:

- 0 to 15 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category)

- 70 to 100 percent semantically unacceptable sentences (− category)

Methods of assisting children in this category include:

1. Use of language experience techniques.

When a student does not appear to have the basic notion that reading is akin to listening to someone talk or that reading is "listening to print," using his own language and memorized language can serve as a bridge from use of oral to use of written language. Write down his own or memorized language for him to see; read it to him, then with him, gradually phasing out, as you can.

Create cloze exercises out of his material by covering key words he must predict through the use of context. Demonstrate that this is a major strategy he will need in all reading--What would make sense there? You can even fill a space with something that would not make sense, and ask him if that would fit.

You are expanding his world of printed language. He moves from seeing his own spontaneous and memorized language, to seeing and hearing the language of his peers, family and close associates, to seeing and hearing the language of favorite literature in his cultural and age group, to seeing and hearing language in the larger world--trade books, magazines, comics, texts, plays, poetry, and so forth.

2. Use of the student's own taped reading

Inviting the child to listen to his or her own tape, as soon as possible after the reading, can reveal more information to you, and often results in substantial self-assessment, so that the responsibility for analysis does not rest solely with the teacher. As the student listens and watches the same text, he or she is asked to stop the tape if he or she would now change what he or she said. Frequently (if the material is appropriate), the student will either correct responses that did not make sense, or at least recognize the discrepancy. This is how the teacher can then emphasize that reading must make sense. A reader must stop and try again whenever something doesn't make sense or sound like what he or she says or hears.

This technique then paves the way for repeated readings into a tape during which the child will follow the reading with listening to self-assess: "Did I always make sense?" Some children need a teacher or tutor present for some or several such readings, to act as a gentle reminder. After a sentence ask, "Did that make sense?" For children who have become conditioned to produce

responses based solely on the graphic information. This "crutch" (teacher demanding sense) may be helpful to build in the habit of demanding sense 100 percent of the time.

With some students it may be helpful to have them self-assess in this way and to log their progress regularly. For example, the student listens to his own tape and records that out of all 56 sentences, 20 made good sense and 36 did not. The next day, either choosing to read the same story again or reading a new one, he records that he was able to produce 40 of 56 sentences that made sense. We must be careful in this process to not over-emphasize the oral performance aspect of reading. That is, a reader need not pronounce and produce every word accurately for "good reading" to be happening in the mind. However, since this technique would be used only by students heretofore not gaining sufficient meaning, perhaps they require emphasis on producing meaningful units. This technique should not be continued beyond that need, however, as a habit of over-careful oral reading. Remind students that efficient readers do not read every word and don't need to for most general purposes.

3. Reinforcement of existing positive strategies

When a student is using any positive strategies (e.g., correcting, making logical substitutions), it can be beneficial to help her become aware of these positive behaviors and increase their use. An individual conference at which you listen to the tape and follow a marked work-sheet can be very helpful for highlighting the effective behaviors. "What were you thinking here when you changed truck to track?" Get the reader in touch with her ability to correct and to realize that that is a practice all effective readers use. Do the same with appropriate substitutions. Poor or under-confident readers often believe that "good readers" say all the words "right" and never go back, skip ahead, and so forth. All of these effective problem-solving strategies must be legitimized and reinforced in the less confident student. (Some readers use these positive strategies while reading silently, but don't reveal them orally because they have been regarded as negative by someone else. This "license" can improve some readers' performances considerably.) In subsequent readings with the student, then, you can remind her or ask her what she might do since she doesn't seem to know the next word, phrase, or sentence.

Teachers working with students at this level may also wish to refer to the activities listed in Chapter 5 for Level I, the pre-reading learner, and Level II, the beginning reader.

Assistance to readers in Group II (some evidence of meaning-seeking strategies). This group is made up of students whose scores on the TIRC show:

- 15 to 40 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category)
- 40 to 70 percent semantically unacceptable sentences (– category)

The three techniques suggested for Group I may be used in an extended fashion with this group, especially the use of student's own taped reading and the reinforcement of existing positive strategies.

A fourth technique is providing more and more reading experience, with or without direct guidance. For a student already exhibiting some demand for meaning, simply more and more reading of interesting and relevant material will usually produce increasingly positive results. When there is a good match between the reader (listener) and the author (speaker) (e.g., the child who really wants to read to learn what to feed his pet hamster), the student reader will independently develop many of the strategies needed to construct meaning from this particular piece of print.

An additional aid to such students might be to have pre- and post-reading discussions. For example:

- Ask the student to browse the titles and illustrations and predict the possible story content and outcome. Such a discussion (though brief) can bring to the surface the student's present knowledge of the particular topic and predictions about this particular treatment of the subject.
- A silent reading of the story itself could follow (when done in groups, students can read alone, in partners, or small groups, whichever they prefer).
- Student or students return for a post-discussion following the story. At that time, they verify predictions, prove points by reading portions for "evidence," project themselves into the story, create sequels, and so forth.

The activities listed in Chapter 5 for Level III, the developing reader, may also be useful.

Assistance to readers in Group III (moderate and considerable evidence of meaning-seeking strategies). This group includes students whose TIRC scores showed:

- At least 40 percent semantically acceptable sentences (+ category)
- No more than 40 percent semantically unacceptable sentences (− category)

Some students in this group will be those who appear to produce sentences that make sense when they read aloud, but whose retelling of stories shows inadequate comprehension. Recommendations for helping such students were discussed in the preceding section during the description of Level B of the TIRC on pp. 80-81.

Other students in this group will be those whose oral reading makes sense and whose retelling shows adequate comprehension. Assistance to these readers is not extensively addressed here, since our concern has been primarily with less effective readers. This is not to say, however, that such students should be ignored and have no more reading skills to learn or improve. Advanced versions of some of the techniques mentioned for the other two groups are often very appropriate, together with an emphasis on more and more reading. More specific recommendations are made for these readers in the Reading Miscue Inventory Manual (Goodman and Burke, New York: Macmillan, 1972, pp. 118-120) and in publications addressing reading in the content areas, by authors such as Alan Robinson and Hal Herber.

Teachers may also wish to refer to the activities listed in Chapter 5 for Level IV, the independent reader.

A final comment. In general, then, recommendations should logically flow from the information gathered. The questions to ask include:

- Are there strengths to emphasize, build upon?
  - How will the reader become aware of these strengths?
  - What material would be helpful for future reading?
  - Who will select it?
- How much do negative strategies dominate the performance?

- Will it be necessary to address these, or can positives be emphasized and negatives be phased out naturally?

- What material would be most helpful to assure that this reader could get meaning from it, so positive strategies could become habitual?

Write your tentative recommendations, try them, reassess for effectiveness. Keep a record of trials, successes, problems. Concentrate on the question, "How can the reading task itself promote meaning-seeking strategies on the part of the reader?" When in doubt, stand back, reflect and ask, "What does common sense tell me?" and try it.

Examples of Completed Forms and Worksheet for Level C

The following pages give examples of completed forms for Level C of the TIRC. The first example is a completed Level C form for the story presented earlier, "The Old Man, His Son, and the Donkey." Following that, you will find the text of another story used with the same child, "The Little Old Woman and the Pig," together with a transcript of the child's retelling of the story, a teacher's worksheet for oral reading of the story, and a completed Level C form.

TIRC, Level C
Assessing Reading Through Retelling and Characteristics of the Oral Performance

Student Lisa age 9.

Text The Old Man, His Son, and the Donkey

Listener V. Taylor date 7-76

A. Retelling: What degree of understanding of the text is evidenced in the student's retelling?

1. Does the student tell a whole integrated discourse? Comment and examples: Y P (N)

2. How like the author's version is the student's account? Comment and examples: G H S (L) N

see Level A

3. Describe the delivery of the retelling (level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.):

see Level A

B. Oral Performance - In what ways and to what degree does the student demand meaning?

1. Semantic acceptability of each sentence:

+	0	−	?	TOTAL
15	4	27	1	47
32%	8%	58%	2	100 %

2. Attempts to make sense by:

freq some never

a. self-correcting
b. using own dialect
c. making effective substitutions, insertions very few
d. being willing to guess
e. persisting, continuing to read

never some freq

f. over-correcting

3. Appears to change meaning by:

never some freq

a. making ineffective substitutions, insertions
b. making critical omissions
c. making intonational changes
d. stopping and losing the thought

C. Summary and Conclusions - What are major characteristics of the student's performance; what are the implications for instruction?

1. Strengths -

Uses grapho-phonic system to high degree and substitutes mostly on that basis

Sometimes recognizes loss of meaning & corrects

2. Concerns -

Disregards loss of meaning in substitutions and moves on not concerned about important omissions

3. Recommendations -

- ☐ a. MORE uninterrupted reading
- ☒ b. Locate more appropriate materials
- ☐ c. Have student listen to own tape and self-assess
- ☐ d. Use student-dictated material
- ☐ e. Pre/post meaning-centered activities
- ☐ f. Oral and/or written cloze exercises
- ☐ g. Oral and/or written retelling of stories
- ☐ h. Need deeper level of analysis
- ☐ i. Other

Analysis on more suitable material prior to any further assumptions can be made

Do her strategies differ (improve) on more approp. material?

Story Used for a Second TIRC Assessment

THE LITTLE OLD WOMAN AND THE PIG

A little old woman
found a sixpence.

The little old woman said
"Now I can get a pig.
I can get a pig
with this sixpence."

And she did.

The little old woman started home
with the pig.

By and by she came to a stile.

The little old woman said,
"Pig, pig, get over the stile."

The pig said,
"I will not get over the stile."

And he ran away.
He ran, and he ran, and he ran.

The little old woman walked on.
By and by she met a dog.

The little old woman said,
"Dog, dog, bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The dog said,
"I will not bite pig.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman walked on.
By and by she met a fire.

The little old woman said,
"Fire, fire, burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The fire said,
"I will not burn stick.
I will not burn stick.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman walked on.
By and by she met some water.

The little old woman said,
"Water, water, quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The water said,
"I will not quench fire.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman walked on.
By and by she met a big ox.

The little old woman said,
"Ox, ox, drink water.
Water will not quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The ox said,
"I will not drink water.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman met a butcher.

She said,
"Butcher, butcher, kill ox.
Ox will not drink water.
Water will not quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The butcher said,
"I will not kill ox.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman met a rope.

She said,
"Rope, rope hang butcher.
Butcher will not kill ox.
Ox will not drink water.
Water will not quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The rope said,
"I will not hang butcher.

I will not! I will not."

The little old woman met a rat.

She said,
"Rat, rat, gnaw rope.
Rope will not hang butcher.
Butcher will not kill ox.
Ox will not drink water.
Water will not quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The rat said,
"I will not gnaw rope.
I will not! I will not!"

The little old woman met a cat.

She said,
"Cat, cat, kill rat.
Rat will not gnaw rope.
Rope will not hang butcher.
Butcher will not kill ox.
Ox will not drink water.
Water will not quench fire.
Fire will not burn stick.
Stick will not beat dog.
Dog will not bite pig.
Pig will not get over the stile.
And I can not get home tonight."

The cat said,
"Get me some milk.
Then I will kill the rat."

So the little old woman
gave the cat some milk.
And then . . . . . .

The cat began to kill the rat.
The rat began to gnaw the rope.
The rope began to hang the butcher.
The butcher began to kill the ox.
The ox began to drink the water.
The water began to quench the fire.
The fire began to burn the stick.
The stick began to beat the dog.
The dog began to bite the pig.

Then the pig jumped over the stile.
And the little old woman
got home that night.

ONCE UPON
A TIME

Row, Peterson & Company
Evanston, Illinois - Elmsford, N. Y.

Transcript of Retelling of "The Little Old Woman and the Pig" by Lisa, Aged Nine

T: Ehmmm, good for you. That was a nice job. OK, just start telling me everything you remember about this story.

ST: Well, the pig wouldn't get over the sill so the lady wouldn't get home and, the dog wouldn't bite the pig, so the pig would get over and the lady won't um, get home. And so um, so she asked the um, stick to beat the dog so she can get over to get home and she didn't. And then she um, asked the fire to burn the stick because he wouldn't bite, beat, the dog, and the dog wouldn't bite the pig, and the pig wouldn't um, the pig wouldn't go over the sill and so she wouldn't get home. So she asked the water to umm quell the fire so, she can um...get over to get home and he didn't, and so um, and..... and.....

T: You're doing fine...You've got a lot to remember....

ST: Let's see...I can't remember now.

T: You told me there was the woman, and the pig and the dog and the stick...

ST: And the fire, and the water, and the british, and the...I can't remember...

T: And what did the british do?

ST: He didn't um, kill the ork...so the woman wouldn't get over to the house and so she met the...she met the...rat and the rat wouldn't bite um, the...wouldn't bite the...I forgot...

T: Rat wouldn't bite the...

ST. Rat wouldn't bite the um man so then the woman wouldn't get over to go to her house. And...then she met um,...then she met a cat and the cat didn't get ...the cat will get the rat with he got the cat... will um, get the some milk so that the old lady got some milk..., and so the cat caught the rat, the rat got the man, the man got the quell, the quell got the um, the quell got the water, the water got the fire, the fire got the stick, the stick got the dog, the dog got the pig, and then she...then she got over to her house.

T: That was a really lot of things to remember, there. You said the woman couldn't get over the sill. What was the sill?

ST: I don't know.

T: OK, that's what I wanted to see...In some of these stories there are things that kids don't know about and I wanted to know if you knew. What do you think it might be?

ST: It's the...it's a gate with 2 steps to get over...

T: OK.

ST: I think...

T: Can you show me in one of the pictures what it was?

ST. O.K.

T: Let's see way back at the beginning of the story is this. Now, when did you come to the part...

ST: Here.

T: So what would it be?

ST: This. (Points to stile in picture).

T: OK, see...Sometimes we don't know the name of something but you could tell from the picture or tell from the reading what it was. OK, What then was the british? (butcher) What was that?

ST: I didn't understand that one either. I couldn't sound that out...it was a man...

T: OK, and what about the ork? (ox)

ST: It was...it was like a cow with horns.

T: OK...all right...you did very well on those. I wanted to see what you thought they were...Cause they were words that you didn't know so you did the best you could, sounding them out and you still knew what the thing was...OK...What is quell a fire...You said quell? Was it quell you said or qell?

ST: Quell.

T: What does it mean?

ST: I don't know...um...

T: What might it be? You kept using it very well...It was different from the word there but you used it very well...You said, "Quell the fire." What might that be?

ST: That meant take the water and put it over the fire.

T: To do what?

ST: To get the...to get the stick.

T: But why do people put water on fire?

ST: So it won't burn up anyone.

T: OK, that was really good...I think you covered all the parts. If... Lisa, this took a long time to tell the story because you told it just like they wrote it there with the donkey, the stick and on...and on...and on...If you had to tell somebody in your house, somebody in your family, just...just one or two sentences really short, what this story was about, What would you say if you had to say it short?

ST: Umm...(long pause)...I can't remember...

T: What would be a way to say it in a real short way, so you don't have to tell all the parts?

ST: I can't remember...

T: OK, Then, one other thing--and that's OK, that's alright...Do you think, the person who wrote this story,...because there was an author who wrote the story, why might he or she have written it? What kind of thing would they try to teach us?

ST: Um...I don't know...

T: Can you think of any thing they were trying to teach us?

ST: Teach us to read...!

T: OK, but in the story itself...anything they were trying to teach us when they told us about the woman and pig and all those things?

ST: I can't remember.

T: That's alright...that's OK to say that...Thank you for telling the story.

THE LITTLE OLD WOMAN
AND THE PIG

A little old woman (1)+

found a sixpence. (penny)

p. 96

The little old woman said, (2)+

"Now I can get a pig.

I can get a pig (3)+

with this sixpence." (rm penny)

(And she did.) (I) (4)+

p. 97

The little old woman started home (sat) (5)0

with the pig.

By and by she came to a stile. (the sill?) (≠) (6)0

The little old woman said, (7)-

"Pig, pig, get over the stile." (2. or 1. over sill rm)

p. 98

The pig said, (8)+

"I will not get over the stile." (sill rm)

And he ran away. (9)+

He ran, and he ran, and he ran. (10)+

p. 99

The little old woman walked on. (11)+

By and by she met a dog. (the next) (12)-

The little old woman said, (13)+

"Dog, dog, bite pig." (meat ©)

Pig will not get over the stile. (sill rm) (14)+

And I can not get home tonight." (© will thought) (15)-

p. 100

The dog said, (16)+

"I will not bite pig." (© the)

I will not! I will not!" (17)+ (18)+

p. 101

The little old woman walked on. (19)+

By and by she met a stick. (20)+

The little old woman said, (21) 0

"Stick, stick, beat dog. Dog will not bite pig. (22)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (23)+

And I can not get home tonight." (24)-

p. 102

The stick said, (25)+

"I will not beat dog.

I will not! I will not!" (26)+

p. 103

The little old woman walked on. (27)+

By and by she met a fire. (28)+

The little old woman said, (29)-

"Fire, fire, burn stick.

Stick will not beat dog. (30)+

Dog will not bite pig. (31)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (32)+

And I can not get home tonight." (33)-

p. 104

The fire said, (34) 0

"I will not burn stick.

I will not! I will not!" (35)+

p. 105

The little old woman walked on. (36)+

By and by she met some water. (37)+

The little old woman said, (38)+

"Water, water, quench fire.

Fire will not burn stick. (39)+

Stick will not beat dog. (40)+

Dog will not bite pig. (41)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (42)+

And I can not get home tonight." (43)-

P: 106

The water said, (44)+

"I will not quench fire.

I will not! I will not!" (45)+

p. 107

The little old woman walked on. (46)+

By and by she met a big ox. (47)-

The little old woman said, (48)-

."Ox, ox, drink water.

Water will not quench fire. (49)+

Fire will not burn stick. (59)+

Stick will not beat dog. (51)+

Dog will not bite pig. (52)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (53)+

And I can not get home tonight." (54)-

p. 108

The ox said, (55)-

"I will not drink water.

I will not! I will not!" (56)+

p. 109

The little old woman met a butcher. (57)?

She said, (58)-

"Butcher, butcher, kill ox.

Ox will not drink water. (59)-

Water will not quench fire. (60)0

Fire will not burn stick. (61)+

Stick will not beat dog. (62)+

Dog will not bite pig. (63)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (64)+

And I can not get home tonight." (65)-

p. 110

The butcher said, (66)-

"I will not kill ox.

I will not! I will not!" (67)+

p. 111

The little old woman met a rope. (68)+

She said, (69)-

"Rope, rope, hang butcher.

Butcher will not kill ox. (70)-

Ox will not drink water. (71)-

Water will not quench fire. (72)-

Fire will not burn stick. (73)+

Stick will not beat dog. (74)+

Dog will not bite pig. (75)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (76)+

And I can not get home tonight." (77)-

p. 112

The rope said, (78)?

"I will not hang butcher.

I will not! I will not!" (79)+

p. 113

The little old woman met a rat. (80)+

She said, (81)-

"Rat, rat, gnaw rope.

Rope will not hang butcher. (82)-

Butcher will not kill ox. (83)-

Ox will not drink water. (84)+

Water will not quench fire. (85)+

Fire will not burn stick. (86)+

Stick will not beat dog. (87)+

Dog will not bite pig. (88)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (89)+

And I can not get home tonight." (90)-

P. 114

The rat said, (91)-

"I will not gnaw rope.

I will not! I will not!" (92)+

p. 115

The little old woman met a cat. (93)+

She said, (94)+

"Cat, cat, kill rat.

Rat will not gnaw rope. (95)-

Rope will not hang butcher. (96)-

Butcher will not kill ox. (97)-

Ox will not drink water. (98)-

Water will not quench fire. (99)-

Fire will not burn stick. (100)+

Stick will not beat dog. (101)-

Dog will not bite pig. (102)+

Pig will not get over the stile. (103)+

And I can not get home tonight." (104)-

p. 116

The cat said, (105)+

"Get me some milk.

Then I will kill the rat." (106)-

So the little old woman (101) +

gave the cat some milk, (©)

And then . . . . . (102) -

p. 117

The cat began to kill the rat. (before the ©)

The rat began to gnaw the rope. (grow) (103) -

The rope began to hang the butcher. (rake british em) (110) -

The butcher began to kill the ox. (british em core) (111) -

p. 118

The ox began to drink the water. (core) (112) -

The water began to quench the fire. (2 queer 1. quiet) (113) -

The fire began to burn the stick. (©) (114) +

The stick began to beat the dog. (115) +

The dog began to bite the pig. (116) +

p. 119

Then the pig jumped over the stile. (sill em) (117) +

And the little old woman (118) +

got home that night.

p. 120

ONCE UPON A TIME.

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Evanston, Illinois - Elmsford, N.Y.

TIRC, Level C
Assessing Reading Through Retelling and Characteristics of the Oral Performance

Student Lisa age 9
Text The Little Old Woman & the Pig
Listener V. Taylor date 7-76

A. Retelling: What degree of understanding of the text is evidenced in student's retelling?

1. Does the student tell a whole integrated discourse?
Comment and examples: (Y) P N
- From problem to events to resolution

2. How like the author's version is the student's account?
Comment and examples: G (H) S L N
She followed the same format, listing the series of characters and actions, tracing the woman finally to her home. Even the spontaneous part was nearly complete.

3. Describe the delivery of the retelling (level of confidence, degree of involvement, etc.):
She produced a considerable amount of language, willingly and freely. Was sufficiently involved to appear to have command of the text

B. Oral Performance - In what ways and to what degree does the student demand meaning?

1. Semantic acceptability of each sentence:

+	0	−	?	TOTAL
72	5	39	2	118
62%	4%	33%	1%	100%

2. Attempts to make sense by:

freq some never

a. self-correcting
b. using own dialect
c. making effective substitutions, insertions
d. being willing to guess
e. persisting, continuing to read
f. over-correcting

never some freq

3. Appears to change meaning by:

never some freq

a. making ineffective substitutions, insertions
b. making critical omissions only one –
c. making intonational changes
d. stopping and losing the thought

C. Summary and Conclusions - What are major characteristics of the student's performance; what are the implications for instruction?

1. Strengths -
Demands meaning more often than not - makes effective substitutions - self corrects
Conveys attitude of understanding
Has considerable grapho-phonic knowledge

2. Concerns -
When in doubt relies most on graphic information and thus sacrifices meaning

3. Recommendations -
- [x] a. MORE uninterrupted reading
- [x] b. Locate more appropriate materials
- [x] c. Have student listen to own tape and self-assess
- [ ] d. Use student-dictated material
- [x] e. Pre/post meaning-centered activities
- [ ] f. Oral and/or written cloze exercises
- [x] g. Oral and/or written retelling of stories
- [ ] h. Need deeper level of analysis
- [ ] i. Other

Listening to stories, poems could increase her language "bank acct" for better reading – much exposure to the sound of written language; plus continued emphasis on the main ideas of every story – via re-tellings, open-ended questions, etc.

Synthesizing Assessment and Instruction

As was mentioned earlier, after a teacher becomes familiar with assessment techniques such as the TIRC, he or she can adapt them to fit easily into the daily routine and ongoing program. This section will describe one such example of a teacher's merger of assessment and instruction in the natural course of daily events.

The major components of the "synthesis" are:

1. Teacher log on each child, including
   - biographical information and notes on the child's interests and hobbies
   - information from reader interview conducted at the beginning of the year
   - observation data
   - TIRC data
   - work samples (including both written work and tapes of oral language and reading)
   - other data such as test scores and inventories.
2. Teacher/child conferences to discuss above data, as appropriate.
3. Independent reading opportunities for the child.
4. Individual and group opportunities to read and/or discuss issues related to reading.

Information about each child, recorded in the log, is gathered over time, in both informal and formal situations. Much of the information can be gained through informal conversations in the classroom and on the playground. Some occasions will lend themselves more readily to actually "interviewing" a child for information, but often the same data will be accumulated bit by bit in casual conversation.

All such knowledge comes to bear upon any instructional situation, especially those directed or led by a teacher. An example of a typical situation of this type follows. This basic plan could be altered in any number of ways to adjust for size of group, current topic of common interest,

and so forth. An ordinary much-used plan that shows how to turn assessment experiences into teaching moments might go like this:

Sample Lesson

I. Pre-Reading Discussion

- Ask questions re: how title and illustrations might enable children to predict the story.
- Probe for students' present knowledge and ideas on the topic.
- Offer directions for reading the story: "After we read, you'll be asked to

  a) tell the story in your own words, and

  b) think of one question to ask the rest of us about the story.

  While you read, I'm listening for the story to make sense, even when you need to change words or skip some once in a while."

II. During the Reading

- Begin by reading to the children or reading together (choral-fashion reading).
- Drop out (stop reading and let students take over) in places where the text is obvious, then phase out more as it becomes possible.
- After phasing out, listen for:

  a. Meaning-seeking strategies

  1. Self-correcting
  2. Logical substituting
  3. Use of own dialect, language
  4. Indicating dissatisfaction with nonsense
  5. Other?

b. Meaning-loss strategies

1. Substituting words that don't make sense
2. Making critical omissions
3. Making long pauses, so thought is lost
4. Other?

Note: During this student reading portion (parts a and b), a teacher may find it appropriate to use the techniques described as coaching in the previous chapter. However, minimal intervention is still desirable. When the reader truly seeks meaning, the mind will teach itself what to do to achieve that.

- Occasionally ask for predictions of upcoming passages, but not in a way that interrupts the flow of reading.
- Pause at the end to let students reflect on the story and to formulate questions to ask one another.

III. Post-Reading Discussion

- Ask for group retelling, with each child adding a part to complete the story.
- Ask, "What (for you) were the main ideas of this story?"
- Ask students to ask the others their question; the teacher can add question(s) at the end, if desired.
- Ask older students what they think they now do better when they read than before; ask them to select what they will work on next time they read.

IV. Post-Analysis (used very sparingly, usually with older students who have encountered difficulties stemming from previous unhelpful instruction)

- Refer to story and point out instances of effective reading strategies. When possible, ask students which ones they noted.
- When possible, explore further opportunities for good substitutions in this story.
- Review any points about reading as a problem-solving process that are pertinent to this story and situation.

- Present spin-off activities with other stories:

  a. Partner reading; students listen for effective strategies; help each other make sense.

  b. Tape-recorded reading; students re-play and listen for sense/potential changes.

  c. Silent reading of this same story to improve fluency and confidence.

V. Teacher Evaluation of Lesson

- What went well or supported student progress?
- What improvements would help next time?
- Indicate individual gains and needs in student records.
- Construct the tentative plan for the next lesson.

The amount of reading TO, reading WITH or listening TO will vary on the reading independence of the students. Since heterogeneous interest-based groupings are recommended, it is rare that only reading TO (while students watch print) will dominate instruction for very long. Appropriate selection of material allows for a reading WITH mode early in instruction, even with five- and six-year-olds.

To whatever degree students are able to assume some responsibility for the reading, a teacher can focus on instructing them in effective meaning-seeking strategies, so that:

1. The teacher will have information upon which to build increasingly effective reading strategies.

2. Students' reading habits will be shaped (over time) to emphasize meaning, using whatever mechanics and skills necessary to appropriately serve that purpose.

Recent research reveals that students do learn what we teach; that is, they do become aware and adept at attempting (and usually succeeding in) the abilities deemed important by the teacher. This finding supports the use of the type of lesson described immediately above. Use of this type of reading and interaction with students

(in groups especially, but also individually) comprises an efficient and productive use of classroom time.

Teacher education experiences have shown that since these notions about reading differ from conventional ones, teachers need to try these ideas for them to become meaningful. Teachers' observations of student readers have indicated the validity of these notions to the extent that many teachers have used them to change or shape their beliefs and practices in reading. While teachers usually want to know about many techniques (such as those of coaching) at first, they soon find that they need those only in rare instances. When we help readers reinforce or reinstate their natural desire to comprehend, their minds go to work in a variety of ways to achieve comprehension.

Formulating a Plan for the Year

A teacher's plan for the year would be based on the various aspects of the program described in this guide so far--the information gathered about each child, the program objectives and desired outcomes described in Chapter 2, and the teaching techniques described in Chapter 3--as well as the specific activities described in the next chapter. In formulating a plan, teachers may also find it helpful to follow the steps of a procedure entitled the Responsive Process for Facilitating Learning (RPFL), which has been developed by the Responsive Education Program.

The steps of the process are as follows:

- Develop rapport.
- Determine learners' knowledge/experience base.
- Establish a focus for the total group and individuals.
- Provide learning experiences.
- Provide integration.
- Provide application experiences.
- Assess and plan next steps.

These elements provide the structure on which plans for a day, a month and the year can be based. Over a year, a teacher can aim to complete that cycle repeatedly to promote each child's abilities in reading/language.

Beginning in September, the elements could be described in this way:

RPFL	Kind of Experience
• Develop rapport	Informal, small-group discussions about books, reading, interests; emphasis upon supporting children in feeling confident in self-expression and feeling comfortable with peers and adults in various language settings (one-to-one, small groups, some total group).
• Determine learner's knowledge and experience base	Informal discussion between the child and adult on the child's assessment of self as a reader, and on reading interests and preferences. Observation and recording of actual reading behavior as measured by the TIRC.
• Establish a focus	On the basis of the above assessment, or another, an area for emphasis or direction is established through an informal conference with the child (e.g., need for attention to meaning, need for increased fluency).
• Provide learning experiences	Various reading experiences are offered that necessitate the actual use of the skill or strategy being developed (comprehension: students read silently and formulate one question to ask another reader about the story; fluency: students practice a story with a tape recorder in order to read it to an audience).
• Provide integration	Questions or suggestions are posed that help the students examine the experience to find their own personal meaning or value in it ("Find the parts that are the same as what you do and find the parts that are different; under what conditions would you do something other than what Jerry did? Why?").
• Provide application experiences	Situations are posed in which students need to use their new information and knowledge in other ways (comprehension: two students independently read a story and ask each other questions;

RPFL	Kind of Experience
	fluency: students continue to practice additional stories with tape recorders in order to read to others, such as younger children).
• Assess and plan next steps	The teacher and student evaluate whether the activity was completed satisfactorily (Here, the question is one of comprehension: "How do we know that you thoroughly understand the story?" The teacher requests a complete retelling, the student suggests another means, and both are done). The teacher suggests what to do next as a result of this (read another story, this time on a less familiar topic) and the student adds to or modifies the task.

5. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Introduction

This chapter describes a variety of suggested student activities. For the convenience of teachers and others using this book, the activities have been grouped into four categories of reading proficiency:

Level I: the pre-reading learner

Level II: the beginning reader

Level III: the developing reader

Level IV: the independent reader.

Level I refers to kindergarteners, first graders and others for whom formal reading instruction has not yet begun. Level II could include children in kindergarten and first grade, Level III could include second and third graders. It should be emphasized, however, that these levels do not necessarily correspond to a particular age or grade level. Each category could apply to a variety of ages or grade levels.

It should also be noted that these categories are not meant to imply that children should be grouped according to ability. As was stated in the two previous chapters, our program recommends heterogeneous grouping of children rather than ability grouping in most situations. We believe the disadvantages of ability grouping, in general, outweigh the advantages. Many of the activities described

in this chapter can be used with children at varying levels of proficiency. The teacher can adjust the activity to individual children by varying the kinds of questions asked, modifying the amount of independence given to each child, and making other variations in the ways suggested in each section in the remainder of this chapter.

Teachers are urged to choose activities for each child (or group of children) on the basis of the individual children's reading competence, as well as their interests and other knowledge and experience. The beginning-of-the-year reader interviews and the Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence assessment instrument described in Chapter 4 provide ways of learning about children's reading competence.

In using the activities described here, teachers may wish to refer to the discussion of the teacher's role given in Chapter 3, especially sections on Elements of a Reading Lesson (pp. 22 to 28), Helping Children Learn to Read by Reading (pp. 28 to 30), and Coaching Techniques (pp. 30 to 42). The discussions in Chapter 4 on developing recommendations after using the TIRC may also be helpful. While many of the activities suggested here involve an adult directly or at least require an adult to initiate them, this format is not intended to imply that learning to read always requires a teacher. In fact, many of the activities are designed to emulate a common experience of children who learn to read at home--namely, following print while being read to and approaching stories with the expectation that meaning will be understood. The activities have been presented in this way in response to teachers' requesting clear descriptions of what their role can be in assisting reading development in this kind of program.

As soon as teachers are familiar with the activities described here, they can invent ways to incorporate portions or variations of them into several periods of a given day or week. These kinds of activities can "permeate" the entire curriculum program. For example, a silent reading period could be confined to selections from written materials on the current science or social studies unit. Retellings can be encouraged in many informal situations throughout a day to further promote total language development. When group discussions of books are held, they can easily center on social studies or science topics and students can lead them in many instances. These activities can occur at any time of day, with any size of group, on a spontaneous or a planned basis. Teachers are also encouraged to develop their own activities and variations on those described here.

Types of Activities

The previous chapters have indicated that the intention of the Responsive Reading Program is to:

- Stimulate the student's motivation for reading.
- Emphasize comprehension as the primary goal of reading.
- Promote effective use of language-processing skills in a meaningful context.
- Apply the reading task immediately to a purpose that has personal significance.

Numerous activities could be generated to meet these guidelines. Certain general types of activities, however, emerge from observation of natural language environments where oral and written language are used effectively and purposefully. These types are such common uses of language that they are often overlooked as instructional activities. They simply have to do with speaking, listening and reading in keeping with the four guidelines stated above. The activity categories can be described as follows:

1. Oral discussions.
2. Listening to written language presented orally.
3. Independent silent reading.
4. Responding to written material.
5. Practicing comprehension-seeking strategies with written materials.

In the sections that follow, activities are divided into these five categories for each level. At the end of each of the last three sections, there is a discussion on using basal readers Responsively with children at that level.

The Responsive Process for Facilitating Learning

The Responsive Process for Facilitating Learning (RPFL) described at the end of Chapter 4 also applies to individual activities. Teachers may find it helpful to keep this process in mind when conducting activities.

The example below shows the application of the process to one type of activity, oral discussions. Similar lists of procedures could be developed for the other types of activities.

Oral discussions. The general objectives for oral discussion activities are:

- To develop confidence and pride in one's own language.
- To develop understanding and appreciation of oral language patterns different from one's own.
- To increase one's repertoire of vocabulary items and syntax at the receptive and productive levels.
- To build a connection between oral and written language.

Discussion activities will range from informal spontaneous conversations about topics of mutual interest to formal planned statements of the kind one might make on a panel. The number of participants can vary from two to a whole class, but maximum participation and comfort is usually maintained in groups no larger than five or six. Over time, it is important that students participate in a wide variety of different groups of varying size to discuss an array of topics.

RPFL	Kind of Experience
• Develop rapport	Support children in feeling comfortable, using their present language skills, e.g. small groups, familiar topics, attention to ideas (not accuracy of language).
• Determine learners' knowledge/ experience base	Gather information about the children's present oral language strengths, e.g. listen, observe, tape record, keep written records of contexts in which children experience success, frustration, stimulation, challenge in using their oral skills.

RPFL	Kind of Experience
• Establish a focus	Initiate and support self-initiated situations where the emphasis is upon effective communication of ideas, e.g. direct attention to ideas and probe for increasing clarity and understanding, so vocabulary and articulation skills are refined through actual use.
• Provide learning experience	Guide and support oral discussions with a meaningful focus, e.g. discuss a story all have listened to or read; plan a trip, skit, picnic, etc.; conduct informal interviews to share interests, hobbies, favorite songs, games, etc.
• Provide integration	Focus the discussion on thinking and/or telling of the child's personal relationship to the topic, view, problem, etc., e.g. ask, "How is that like you?" "Which did you like best?" "What would you choose?", etc.
• Provide application experiences	Carry the discussion to the next phase where children use the ideas and concepts in their own situations, e.g. "Show what you will do the next time this happens." "Change places and pretend you are the other person," etc.
• Assess and plan next steps	Assist in evaluating the experience and discussing what might come next, e.g. "What did you like about what you/we did?" "What would you do differently?" "What would you tell someone to be sure to remember/do if they were doing this?" "What do you want to be able to do better?" Teacher Assessment Related to Objectives: • Do children seem comfortable expressing themselves in their primary language in the classroom?

RPFL	Kind of Experience
	• Do children understand each other's language, and make sincere attempts to do so when they do not? • Do children begin to use additional vocabulary items and syntactic patterns when exposed in oral discussions? • Do children evidence knowledge of written language as being related to speaking, their own and others'?

Level I: The Pre-Reading Learner

Characteristics of the Pre-Reading Learner

The term pre-reading refers primarily to the student's self-perception. In this print culture, it would be extremely rare to find a speaker of the native language of any age who could not read anything. When reading competence is measured in diverse and creative ways, very young children and adult "non-readers" are found to be readers of impressive amounts of environmental print, survival warnings, logos, food labels, and so forth. However, if the person refers to him or herself as a non-reader, this view must be recognized and addressed.

In the K-3 elementary school, the pre-reader is most apt to be a kindergarten or first grade child, but it could be an older child, especially when another native language, physical handicaps or other causes for delay are involved.

Whatever the student's age, the characteristics of this learner's behavior related to reading usually include some or all of the following:

- No significant use of printed language (reading or writing) for information or pleasure (printed language here includes at least some connected discourse).
- Little or no apparent interest in knowing the message of any particular printed language.
- Little or no evidence of book-handling knowledge (e.g. holding a book properly, turning pages right to left, ability to recognize print as different from illustration and other graphics).
- Little or no evidence of familiarity with the language of reading construction (such as page, story, line, word, and so forth).
- Little or no evidence of "sense of story" (as demonstrated in retelling a story or composing one's own story).
- Little or no evidence of a repertoire of memorized language (poems, rhymes, songs, chants).

- Little or no evidence of the ability to predict upcoming events in the course of listening to stories.

- Little accumulated familiarity with a substantial body of literature appropriate to the student's age and culture.

- Substantial evidence that the student perceives himself or herself as a non-reader (perhaps even expressing verbally, "No, I can't read").

- Evidence that the student does not even imagine himself or herself being able to read.

In most cases it is possible to uncover some or many of the above habits and kinds of information from students where the climate is supportive, non-threatening and respectful of the students' primary language and cultural background. It is then possible to use whatever strengths are already there as bridges toward further development of all the types of abilities enumerated above.

This level may also include students who show "little or no evidence of meaning-seeking strategies" on the TIRC. Teachers may wish to refer to the recommendations given on pp. 93 to 95 of Chapter 4.

Activities

In general, the activities suggested for the pre-reading learner are basic versions of those suggested for the three levels of readers. The principal focus is to use children's oral language competence (in both speaking and listening) to build a bridge to reading competence. Considerable emphasis is placed on enhancing students' confidence in their language abilities and increasing their familiarity with a wide range of written language.

As we mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the use of categories or levels is not meant to imply that children should be grouped according to ability, or that only these activities may be used with children at this level. Children at varying levels of proficiency can participate in the same activity, with the teacher making appropriate adjustments to suit individual children. Teachers may find that activities suggested in the other sections of this chapter can also be used with children at this level.

As with the activities at other levels, it is intended that these suggestions serve as starting points that teachers can deviate from, modify, and expand upon. This particular group of activities is one that teachers might especially recommend to parents for some version of home use, since home involvement could increase the child's competence and confidence, and assist in developing parental understanding about reading as it relates to language in general, rather than isolating it as a separate activity.

The suggested activities for this level are as follows:

a. Oral Discussions

1. Book-Based Discussion Groups
2. Describing an Animal

b. Listening to Written Language Presented Orally

1. Using a Chart Poem
2. Changing a Rhyme

c. Independent Silent Reading

1. Read-Alongs at the Listening Post
2. Uninterrupted Silent Reading

d. Responding to Written Material

1. Daily Story Time
2. Making an I CAN Book

e. Practicing Comprehension-Seeking Strategies

1. Enjoying Books Together
2. Retelling Stories

BOOK-BASED DISCUSSION GROUPS

Objective: To help the child to:

- Formulate his thoughts and feelings about a story into his own words.

Focus: Children discuss personal and group understanding of a book of mutual interest.

Materials: Multiple copies (up to five or six) of books frequently selected by this age group.

Procedure: Form a group or groups on the basis of a book selected to be read. This can be either a whole class activity or a small group activity operating simultaneously with several other activities.

The group gathers to listen to and discuss the book. The teacher or another leader elicits all members' ideas and opinions about the whole story, main character, favorite event or other focus. Probing questions are used to explore certain aspects in depth (e.g., "Why do you think Glenda acted that way?" "What might have caused the king to leave early?"). Some form of synthesis or closure is suggested to conclude the activity. Children might describe, draw, or paint the character most like themselves, the problems in the story, their favorite part, or their alternative ending, and so forth.

Make a distinct effort to have the children see some part of their familiar oral language in print. Use terms new to the children in the context of the story to inquire about their understanding. Elicit synonyms for new terms and encourage sharing terms of phrases related to individual dialects, regional or family background, etc.

Integration: Ask each child to make one statement about the main or favorite part of the story.

Evaluation: Observe and keep records to see that all children learn to participate and can express their own ideas about a book.

DESCRIBING AN ANIMAL

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate oral and written language.
- Use reading in conjunction with the other language processes.

Focus: Children are asked to supply words describing an animal. Words are listed, put into simple sentences and read together by the group and teacher.

Materials:
- Pictures
- Large paper and pen or blackboard and chalk
- Story books about the animal in question

Procedure: Display some pictures of the animal and have the children sit in a group so all can see. (This is an ideal activity when a real animal such as a kitten, butterfly or frog has been brought to class.)

Ask the children some words to describe the animal. If the animal is a kitten you would probably get: "soft, cute, purry," etc.

Write the words in a list on large paper or the board. (The paper is preferable because it can be saved and referred to again.) Then ask what a kitten can do and make a second list of these words.

In front of each word on the first list put "Kittens are" and on the second, "Kittens can."

Kittens are cute.	Kittens can play.
Kittens are soft.	Kittens can sleep.
Kittens are purry.	Kittens can eat.

Read the sentences with the children, both as you write the words and afterwards, several times.

Follow-up activities can include: drawing pictures and dictating sentences, dramatizing how a kitten acts, writing a group story about a specific kitten or reading stories about kittens.

Integration: Ask children individually in follow-up situations which one or two ideas are their favorites. They can then write about or draw these ideas.

Evaluation: Watch each child to observe how he or she is remembering the words listed, whether or not interest is sustained and if there is any recognition of repeated words. (The opportunity for learning is there but no child is threatened by any demands to remember as the responses are made by the group and the teacher together.)

USING A CHART POEM

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate oral and written language.
- Relate the task of reading to a variety of materials and purposes.

Focus: Children say a rhyme while looking at the print, visually match words, phrases and sentences, and hear and see rhyming words.

Materials:
- Large chart paper
- Flow pen

Procedure: On a large chart, print a Mother Goose rhyme, jump rope rhyme or the words to a song. Read the poem to the children, running your hand under the words as you read. Do this several times, having the children say it with you.

Print some of the words on separate cards. Make strips of some of the sentences. Show the sentence strips to the children and see if they can find the same sentence on the chart. Reassemble the sentences in the order of the poem.

Give each child a word and have him or her try to find it on the chart. The child can hold the card under each line and move it along until the match is discovered. Tell the child what his or her word is and then repeat the sentence to restore the context.

Repeat the poem, stopping when you come to key words and letting the children supply them.

Leave the poem on the wall and return to read it from time to time. Point out words that begin like children's names. For example, if the poem is "Baa Baa Black Sheep," find the words that start like Betty and Bob or Sheila.

Have the children draw pictures about the poem and dictate sentences. Read these aloud several times with the children. Some of the words will appear again and can be pointed out.

Note to Teacher: Be sure not to place any pressure on the children. Do not demand any of the word or letter matching from the children. Follow the interest and abilities of each child and let the others enjoy the reciting of the poem.

Integration: Discuss the poem with the children and have them relate any similar experiences.

Evaluation: Observe the children to learn which ones can remember the poem and which ones can readily match words or sounds.

CHANGING A RHYME

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate personal meaning with oral and written language.
- Perceive himself or herself as a capable language user and a potential reader.

Focus: Children sing along or chant along while looking at print. They change words to make the rhyme their own.

Materials:
- Large chart paper
- Flow pens

Procedure: Print the words of a song or rhyme on a large chart. Use a verse with a repetitive pattern such as "Hush little baby, don't you cry" or "One, two, buckle my shoe." Have the children sing or chant along with you as you run your hand along the space below the words.

After the children are familiar with the poem, ask them to substitute words. For example, instead of:

> "Hush little baby, don't say a word
> Mother's going to buy you a mocking bird,"

children might suggest:

> "Hush little baby, don't you cry,
> Mother's going to buy you an apple pie."

Print the new version and hang it beside the original. Even kindergarten children will remember and recognize the words that they suggested.

Integration: Ask individual children which were their particular ideas and which parts of the new song they especially like.

Evaluation: Observe which children are paying attention to the print as they repeat the rhyme.

READ-ALONGS AT THE LISTENING POST

Objective: To help the child to:

- Practice in context several reading skills simultaneously.

Focus: Children listen to a story of their own choice while following the print, and are allowed to repeat the experience frequently, if desired.

Materials:

- A variety of commercial or home-made sets of short story books with accompanying tapes (usually cassette) or records.
- A listening post where one to six students may listen to records or tapes, with the use of earphones. (Individuals may listen with just a tape recorder, but flexibility is added to the activity if the whole group can listen at once.)

Procedure: Following an orientation session on how to handle and operate the equipment, the listening aspect of this activity can be carried out by children independently. In fact, they enjoy the responsibility of doing so. Usually a child or group will select a book to listen to but there are occasions which the teacher finds it appropriate to select with or for the child (e.g., a book related to a topic of study, a book especially suited for this reader to prepare to read independently to others). When introducing the activity, establish the habit in students of thoughtfully choosing a book and pondering for a moment what it might be about or reflecting on why it looks interesting.

As the children listen, they should follow along, turning pages as signaled. (Some commercial tapes also involve children by asking them to supply predictable words.)

The usual use of this activity would have the children listen only once and then perhaps do a follow-up activity (such as going

to an adult to discuss or retell the story, or drawing or writing about the story). This format accomplishes the basic goal of the activity.

However, listening to the story additional times, voluntarily, has definite benefits in helping children acquire effective reading strategies. The purposes for repeated listening vary. Some children just like to hear a favorite story many times. Others can be motivated to use this as a practicing aid to "coach" them in rehearsing a story to read to others (especially when older children read to younger ones). They can listen any number of times (even take it home) until they feel confident at reading the story themselves.

Frequently, children who have listened repeatedly to the same story can read more of the story on their own than they realized. To add stories to this collection, you can tape the daily story reading session "live" and add that tape and book to the read-along library. This is especially valuable when multiple copies of the text are available.

Children of this age may need some structure at first to listen to a complete story and absorb it in a way similar to live reading. It may help to have an adult at the listening center or it may be wise to be sure that some of the stories are old favorites of the group.

Books that have only one line of print per page can be recreated individually for children who wish to do so and they can illustrate their own copy of stories such as "Three Billy Goats Gruff."

Integration: Ask children to tell or draw the ending of the story. Then ask if anything like that has ever happened to them or to someone they know.

Evaluation: Observe or sit in on this activity to see which children need more help to (a) follow along on the correct page, (b) attend during a complete story and (c) become sufficiently involved to respond to the feeling or tone of the story.

UNINTERRUPTED SILENT READING

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Develop the habits of expecting pleasure and information from books.
- Develop the basic book-handling skills.

Focus: Children silently read a book of their own choice or other written text for an uninterrupted period of time.

Materials:

- A wide variety of reading materials on a range of levels of sophistication (such as TV guides, children's magazines, picture books, easy readers, trade books, joke books and craft books, poetry) that are easily accessible.
- To initiate this activity some teachers "flood" a rug in the center of the room with books and students gather around to browse and select a book. Others categorize materials and topics in a class library corner.

Procedure: The students are helped to understand that to learn to do anything you must DO it. They can be encouraged by telling them that when left alone, we have found that children do have extremely good problem-solving skills and can actually read better than they think, when they need to and want to. Each time they will select their own book and find a comfortable reading place to read silently for a period of minutes. During that time, they are to independently do whatever is necessary to attempt to learn what the story is about. They may not interrupt anyone else. Even the adults read during this time. At the end of the period, students may return the books or some might wish to keep them for further reading, even for the next silent reading period. There is no obligation to "report" on the book to anyone. However, after this activity, some readers often voluntarily gather and want to tell each other

about the book they read or looked at. Since this is the most desirable possible outcome, it is beneficial to support this extension of the activity.

The younger child may spend most of these sessions "reading" pictures, even in wordless books. This is appropriate. Many benefits result from the book-handling experience and the construction of a story-like text to match illustrations. If the teacher reads a particularly favorite story, children will be apt to read it later because they are already familiar with it. Thus, it is important for the teacher to make sure that the books containing such stories are made accessible to the children. Similarly, seeking highly predictable language and subjects will assist in motivating children to read at this initial stage. Five to ten minutes may be an appropriate period at first. The term silent reading may be too strong for this age group. Kindergarten and first grade children may need to vocalize a certain amount while reading. Quiet reading could be substituted.

Integration: If done daily, occasionally ask a question at the conclusion of the period, such as: "Think about your book today. What would be one part you would want to tell someone about?" If possible, have them tell partners or small groups.

Evaluation: Observe the children to learn which ones may need additional assistance in selecting books of interest to them, in maintaining interest over the period and in giving evidence of handling books in ways actual readers do.

DAILY STORY TIME

Objective: To help the child to:

- Enjoy literature, develop increasing knowledge of literature and come to expect meaningful ideas from printed material.

Focus: Children listen to a literature selection and respond to the story from their own experience and hear others respond from theirs.

Materials: A literature selection appropriate to the particular group of children. Selections will vary from new publications to old favorites, and from books related to themes (holidays, units of study) to spontaneous choices made by children in the group.

Procedure: An adult reads a story to the entire class or small groups, often at a regularly scheduled time. A typical session would include the following steps:

1. Display the book front and ask the children to predict something about the story. (Sometimes you'll read the title first, other times, not.)

2. As you read the story, usually keep the "flow" going without distractions away from the topic, but pause in places for children to join in where the next words or phrase are highly predictable (rhymes, repeated phrases).

3. After reading the story, ask questions requiring children to think beyond the information presented directly in the story ("Why do you think they did that? What might happen after the story ended?"), and ask for their responses to the story from their own point of view. ("What did you like about the story? Has anything like that ever happened to you?") Encourage a variety of responses,

being careful not to stop after just one acceptable response is heard.

4. Frequently it is desirable to follow a story with an art, craft or writing project. Especially when it can be voluntary with a variety of options available, children can benefit from further integration through drawing or painting favorite portions, sequels, events in sequence, etc.

5. Make the book available to children for free time activities.

Children at this level especially benefit from large picture books that enable them to see well and even follow some of the print. They usually respond best to sessions that last no more than about 15 minutes, but each teacher should determine that from experience with the children in her classroom. As a rule, a story should be completed in one sitting. Children of this age delight in hearing old favorites repeatedly and these can easily become their beginning reading content. Multiple copies of the book, whenever available, are often used well by children following an enjoyable story session.

Integration: Ask children to picture the main characters in their minds. "Tell what they are doing in your picture."

Evaluation: Over time, continue to refer back to stories read and ask children to recall main characters, major events and themes. Check to see whether they are acquiring this "library" in their minds.

MAKING AN "I CAN" BOOK

Objectives: To help the child to:

- See some relationships between oral and written language.
- Develop confidence in himself or herself as a language user.

Focus: Children dictate sentences that can be illustrated on each page of a small book.

Materials:

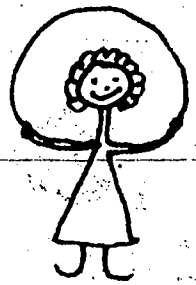
- 9" x 12" paper
- Flow pen
- Crayons

Procedure: Prepare small books by folding three sheets of 9" x 12" paper and stapling along the fold. Print "I Can" on the covers.

Discuss with the children things they are able to do now that they couldn't do when they were babies.

Distribute books and crayons. Have children draw their faces and write their names on the covers.

Then have them draw pictures of things they can do on each page. As they complete the pictures, have each child dictate a sentence or two which you print under each picture.



I can jump rope.

I can run really fast.

It may be best to take at least two sessions to complete the books because young children get too tired to do a good job if asked to do it all at once.

At the second session, begin by reading what has been written so far, supporting individual ideas.

When the books are completed, read and have the child read the books many times. The pictures and the fact that each child formed the sentence will help them remember.

Extension: Books entitled "I Like _____," "I Want to Go to _____," or any subject of interest.

Integration: Encourage the child to discuss his or her abilities in even greater detail than depicted in the dictated caption.

Evaluation: Notice which children are remembering their sentences and individual words they have seen in another context (e.g., in another child's book, in a chart story).

ENJOYING BOOKS TOGETHER

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate and expect meaning from written language.
- Perceive meaning and view himself or herself as a potential reader.

Focus: Children follow along while teacher reads, then retell the story.

Materials: One copy of a simple story with a repetitive pattern for each child.

Procedure: Distribute the books. Discuss the title and pictures and have the children predict what might happen in the story.

See that the children have the correct page and have them follow along while you read. Read some pages twice so the children can say it along with you the second time.

Discuss the story and relate children's experiences to it as you read.

Read the entire book again with the children chiming in.

Have the children turn the pages and retell the story.

Put the books out so that children can look at them in their free time. Let each child go through the book with the teacher, an aide, or a cross-age tutor.

Integration: Children should be encouraged to relate their own experiences that are similar to those in the story.

Evaluation: Observe the children who enjoy this activity, those who choose to look at the book again, and those who remember some of the phrases and sentences. Note which children can retell stories effectively and which need more practice.

RETELLING STORIES

(This task originates from the Reading Miscue Inventory, Y. Goodman and C. Burke, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1971.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop the ability and habit of thinking while approaching stories (orally or in print).

Focus: After listening to a story, students tell the story in their own words to someone who has not heard it.

Materials:
- A wide variety of reading materials
- Tape recorder (optional)

Procedure: Ask students to listen to a story of their choice or an assigned story. Beforehand, explain that they are to retell the story in their own words after listening. To initiate the retelling, you might just say, "Tell me everything you remember" or "Tell me the whole story in your own words." Then listen to all the student has to say. When he or she has told all he remembers you may wish to probe further, on the basis of information already given ("You mentioned two pilots. What did they do?"). Or you may wish to encourage synthesizing and generalizing by asking for major ideas or themes. ("What was the main idea or ideas in this story?")

Students unfamiliar with this task might be helped by practicing retelling an actual experience or a TV show or movie, just to be clear about the task itself.

Children at this level can retell stories they listen to and picture book stories they look at. This is an appropriate point to establish the idea that stories are read for the meaning they convey, and that the child's ideas and interpretations are worthy and important.

Some of these oral retellings could even be written down, to be treated as optional versions of one story, to be shared with other peers.

Integration: The retelling is an integration activity, but in addition, asking children for the most important part can assist them learning to summarize. Asking for the general theme days or weeks later is a helpful way to develop the ability to generalize.

Evaluation: Notice whether children who are able to carry out this task with real-life events can do the same with stories. Those who cannot may need support for confidence, and more chances individually, in partners, or small groups to participate in this activity.

Level II: The Beginning Reader

Characteristics of the Beginning Reader

The greatest difference between the non-reader and the beginning reader is the student's perception of himself as a reader or a potential reader. The so-called non-reader perceives himself as not being able to read and frequently does not even imagine himself reading. In contrast, the beginning reader is engaged in activities using printed text and is at least beginning to "taste" success at reading and can picture himself using printed materials for information and pleasure.

Regardless of age, this beginner's behavior related to the process of reading usually includes some or all of the following:

- Increasing signs of knowledge and familiarity with
  - a body of appropriate literature,
  - a sense of the structure of stories,
  - book-handling skills
  - terminology used in reading instruction.
- The ability to sustain attention to listen to stories being read aloud and
  - predict upcoming events
  - supply highly predictable words, phrases
  - retell the plot at the conclusion or later
  - select favorite stories, characters, or poems
- When approaching a new book, the ability to use title and illustrations to predict the possible plot of story (when content is relevant to the student's cultural background and/or life experiences)
- The ability to recognize increasing amounts of print used or seen regularly in daily life (e.g., the student's own name, names of products used daily, stop signs, store signs)

This level may also include students who show "little or no evidence of meaning-seeking strategies on the TIRC. Teachers may wish to refer to the recommendations given on pp. 93 to 95 of Chapter 4.

Activities

As we mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the use of categories or levels is not meant to imply that children should be grouped according to ability, or that only these activities may be used with children at this level. Children at varying levels of proficiency can participate in the same activity, with the teacher making appropriate adjustments to suit individual children. Teachers may find that activities suggested in the other sections of this chapter can also be used with children at this level. The activities described here are intended to serve as starting points that teachers can deviate from, modify, and expand upon.

The suggested activities for this level are as follows:

a. Oral Discussions

1. Recorded Oral Language from Personal Experience
2. Writing a Group Story

b. Listening to Written Language Presented Orally

1. Read-Alongs at the Listening Post
2. Daily Story Time

c. Independent Silent Reading

1. Chime-In Reading
2. Uninterrupted Silent Reading

d. Responding to Written Material

1. A Matching Game Based on a Story
2. Retelling Stories

e. Practicing Comprehension-Seeking Strategies

1. Fill-In Story
2. Developing Independent Reading from Language Experience
3. Tape Recording to Develop Self-Correction Strategies

Level II
Oral Discussions

RECORDED ORAL LANGUAGE FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Objective: To help the child to:

- Make the connection between oral language and print.

Focus: Highlight individual accounts of personal experiences by recording oral language in writing and/or on tape.

Materials:

- Writing materials appropriate to the age level
- Tape recorder and blank tapes

Procedure: Children, individually or in small groups, tell about an event or topic of their choice while it is being recorded on tape or in writing. Often, this is most comfortably done by suggesting a theme area, relating it to a story read today, asking for a caption to accompany a painting, etc.

If the accounts are written and carried out individually, they can be collected over time to form individual books, with each entry dated and sequenced. Or, class books can be developed by putting together each child's story about a birth celebration or other common topic.

Tape recordings can be replayed for others or larger groups to hear each other's accounts at a group time. They can also be converted to writing, but if possible, the child should be present to watch the writing performed, to observe the mechanics in actual use (left to right, top to bottom progression, spelling patterns, etc.).

Various uses can be made of the recorded language. A major focus is to encourage the "flow" of language, but also to build a bridge to reading from their own language (see following page).

With the written dictation, young children will not be able to "read" their own statement readily. Frequent opportunities to have it read to them, however, will lead to occasions where they can join in on certain parts and "Find your name and your brother's name." Repeated readings, especially of favorites, are helpful.

"Reading instruction" language can be introduced naturally with comments such as, "Beside your name, there are three other words in this sentence (point). 1-2-3. And you have four sentences in your story. 1-2-3-4." Moving the eyes left to right can become a habit through this informal process as well.

Using the tapes, children enjoy guessing whose voice it is, stopping the tape to guess the rest of the sentence, etc. Accompanying the tape with written copy can lead to some of the same participation described above.

Integration: Ask children which parts of their own dictation they remember. Help them to re-read the whole sentence(s).

Evaluation: Observe to see that children associate the print with what was said, immediately and days later.

Level II
Oral Discussions

WRITING A GROUP STORY

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Utilize various written materials in developing reading skills.
- Perceive himself or herself as a present or potential capable reader.

Focus: A small group of children dictate a story together.

Materials:
- Large chart paper
- Felt pens

Procedure: Gather a group of children (approximately six to 12) around the chart paper or blackboard (dark print on paper is easier to read but not essential).

Ask the children what they want to write about. The subject can be stimulated by a picture, the unit the children are currently working on, the season of the year, etc.

Have the children choose the main character. You can hear several suggestions and then have a vote. Discuss what this character might look like and elicit some adjectives. Then ask some child to volunteer a first sentence. Print this on the paper as the child dictates, saying each word as you print.

Then ask what this character wanted and elicit another sentence. If there is disagreement, have a vote.

Then elicit some sentences about the difficulties the character had. For example, if the story was about a rabbit who wanted to paint Easter eggs, why couldn't she do it? Children will usually come up with: "She didn't have eggs" or "She had no paint" or "A wolf was bothering her" and you have a good start for your story.

When the story is completed, read it over and have the children decide whether they are satisfied with their story. Revise or add as they indicate, upon hearing the whole story.

You can turn the story into a book with an illustration and sentence on each page, done by individuals or partners.

Depending upon ability level, children might trace, or copy a line or the whole story, for their own versions.

Integration: Have the children examine each other's illustrations of the story for similarities/differences. Discuss the richness of differences and how our own experiences affect what we think and do.

Evaluation: Observe which children can form sentences. Observe which children can read phrases and words as you read it with them. Phase out of the reading if you can, and see which children can continue without you, especially during repeated reading of the same story.

READ-ALONGS AT THE LISTENING POST

Objective: To help the child to:

- Practice in context several reading skills simultaneously.

Focus: Children listen to a story of their own choice while following the print, and are allowed to repeat the experience frequently, if desired.

Materials:

- A variety of commercial or self-sets of short story books with accompanying tapes (usually cassette) or records.
- A listening post where one to six students may listen to records or tapes, with the use of earphones. (Individuals may listen with just a tape recorder, but flexibility is added to the activity, if the whole group can listen at once.)

Procedure: Following an orientation session on how to handle and operate the equipment, the listening aspect of this activity can be carried out by children independently. In fact, they enjoy the responsibility of doing so. Usually a child or group will select a book to listen to but there are occasions on which the teacher finds it appropriate to select with or for the child (a book related to a topic of study, a book especially suited for this reader to prepare to read independently to others, etc.). When introducing the activity, establish the habit in students of thoughtfully choosing a book and pondering for a moment what it might be about or reflecting on why it looks interesting.

As the children listen, they should follow along, turning pages as signaled. (Some commercial tapes also involve children by asking them to supply predictable words.)

The usual use of this activity would have the children listening only once and then perhaps doing a follow-up activity (go to

an adult to discuss or retell the story, draw or write about the story). This format accomplishes the basic goal of the activity.

However, listening to the story additional times, voluntarily, has definite benefits in helping children acquire many effective reading strategies. The purposes for repeated listening vary. Some children just like to hear a favorite story many times. Others can be motivated to use this as a practicing aid to "coach" them in rehearsing a story to read to others (especially when older children read to younger ones). They can listen any number of times (even take it home) until they feel confident at reading the story themselves.

Frequently, children who have listened repeatedly to the same story can read more of the story on their own than they realized. To add stories to this collection, you can tape the daily story reading session "live" and add that tape and book to the read-along library. This is especially valuable to do where multiple copies of the text are available.

Children of this age may need some structure at first to listen to a complete story and absorb it in a way similar to live reading. It may help to have an adult at the center or it may be wise to be sure that some of the stories are old favorites of the group.

Books that have only one line of print per page can be recreated individually for children who wish to do so, and they can illustrate their own copy of stories such as "Three Billy Goats Gruff."

Integration: Ask children to tell or draw the ending of the story. Then ask if anything like that has ever happened to them or to someone they know. Have them locate one part they can read to you.

Evaluation: Observe or sit in on this activity to see which children need more help to (a) follow along on the correct page, (b) attend throughout a complete story and (c) become sufficiently involved to respond to the feeling or tone of the story.

DAILY STORY TIME

Objective: To help the child to:

- Enjoy literature, develop increasing knowledge of literature and to expect meaningful ideas from printed material.

Focus: Children listen to a literature selection and respond to the story from their own experience and hear others respond from theirs.

Materials: A literature selection appropriate to the particular group of children. Selections will vary from new publications to old favorites, and from books related to themes (holidays, units of study) to spontaneous choices made by children in the group.

Procedure: An adult reads a story to the entire class or small groups, often at a regularly scheduled time. A typical session would include the following steps:

1. Display the book front and ask the children to predict something about the story. (Sometimes you'll read the title first - other times, not.)

2. As you read the story, usually keep the "flow" going without distractions away from the topic, but pause in places for children to join in where the next words or phrase are highly predictable (rhymes, repeated phrases).

3. After reading the story, ask questions requiring children to think beyond the information presented directly in the story (Why do you think they did that? What might happen after the story ended?), and ask for their responses to the story from their own point of view. (What did you like about the story? Has anything like that ever happened to you?)

Encourage a variety of responses, being careful not to stop after just one acceptable response is heard.

4. Frequently it is desirable to follow a story with an art, craft or writing project. Especially when it can be voluntary with a variety of options available, children can benefit from further integration through drawing or painting favorite portions, sequels, events in sequence, etc.

5. Make the book available to children for free time activities.

Children at this level especially benefit from large picture books that enable them to see well and even follow some of the print. They usually respond best to sessions that last no more than about 15 minutes, but each teacher should determine that from experience. As a rule, a story should be completed in one sitting. Children of this age delight in hearing old favorites repeatedly and these can easily become their beginning reading content. Multiple copies of the book, whenever available, are often used well by children following an enjoyable story session.

Integration: Ask children to picture the story in their minds and to draw one or more of these "scenes."

Evaluation: Check to see that children are becoming familiar with a variety of stories and remembering major ideas and characters, to use in future discussions.

CHIME-IN READING

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Experience the pleasure of getting meaning from written language.
- Perceive himself or herself as a potentially capable reader.

Focus: Children read aloud along with a teacher and then read alone when they are confident.

Materials: Multiple copies of a short story book, preferably one that has repeated patterns in it; such as "Gingerbread Boy" or "Henny Penny."

Procedure: Gather a small group of children into a circle and tell them that you and they are going to read a story together. Ask them to say the words right along with you. (In actuality, the children's reading will probably be a second or so behind at first.)

Ascertain that everyone has the place and begin reading. Sometimes it is necessary to read the first page twice to get the children started.

Read along with the children chiming in until you come to a very predictable sentence, then begin the sentence and "phase out." That is, you remain silent and let the children complete the sentence on their own, e.g., from "Gingerbread Boy," "I ran away from the little old man and I can run away from you."

Talk about the story as you read to keep the children involved and predicting what will happen next.

At the completion of the story, ask the children to retell it, then read at least part of the story over again. On this second reading, you can phase out more.

At a subsequent time, the children can practice reading or telling the story by themselves and then read it to an adult or older child.

At the early stages of reading, any approximations of the print that make sense are acceptable. The story can then be read to the child again or he or she can listen to a tape to get a closer match to the print.

Note to the Teacher: The children who learn to read easily are usually those who have been read to repeatedly before coming to school. When the child hasn't experienced this, the school can provide such experiences.

Following the print and listening to a story on a tape recorder or record is very beneficial but lacks the emotional support and the personal interest another human being can give.

Integration: The children's own experience should be discussed and related to the reading material as much as possible. Which character did you like? What in this story is like something you have done?

Evaluation: Observe which children remember the sense of the story and can retell it in their own words while turning the pages.

Observe those who can closely approximate the author's language. Make note of which stories can be used repeatedly in the future to help those children gain confidence in their reading.

UNINTERRUPTED SILENT READING

(This activity is a version of "Uninterrupted Silent Sustained Reading" by Lyman Hunt, University of Vermont.)

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Develop the habit of expecting sense and pleasure from print.
- Develop basic book-handling skills through use.

Focus: Children silently read a book of their own choice or other written text for an uninterrupted period of time.

Materials:

- A wide variety of reading materials on a range of levels of sophistication (such as TV guides, children's magazines, picture books, easy readers, trade books, joke books and craft books, poetry) that are easily accessible.
- To initiate this activity some teachers "flood" a rug in the center of the room with books and students gather around to browse and select a book. Others categorize materials and topics in a class library corner.

Procedure: The students are helped to understand that to learn to do anything you must DO it, so this activity is to help improve their reading by just doing it. They can be encouraged by telling them that when left alone, we have found that children do have extremely good problem-solving skills and can actually read better than they think, when they need to and want to. Each time they are to independently do whatever is necessary to attempt to learn what the story is about. They may not interrupt anyone else. Even the adults read during this time. At the end of the period, students may return the books or some might wish to keep them for further reading, even for the next silent reading period. There is no obligation to "report" on the book to anyone.

However, after this activity, some readers often voluntarily gather and want to tell each other about the books they read or looked at. Since this is the most desirable possible outcome, it is beneficial to support this extension of the activity.

The younger child may spend most of these sessions "reading" pictures, even in wordless books. This is appropriate. Many benefits result from the book handling experience and the construction of a story-like text to match illustrations. If the teacher reads a particularly favorite story, children will be more apt to read it later because they are familiar with it. Thus, it is important for the teacher to make sure that the books containing such stories are made accessible to the children. Similarly, seeking highly predictable language and subjects will assist in motivating children to read at this initial stage. Five to ten minutes may be an appropriate period at first. The term silent reading may be too strong for this age group. Kindergarten and first grade children may need to vocalize a certain amount while reading. Quietly could be substituted.

Integration: Circulate at the end of a period or ask in small groups for individuals to tell favorite parts of their books and to find parts in their stories like their own experience.

Evaluation: Observe which children may need additional assistance in selecting books, sustaining interest over the period, handling books appropriately, and being able to retell main events and characters from the stories.

A MATCHING GAME BASED ON A STORY

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate written language with other forms of language and forms of information (pictures).
- Derive meaning from written language.

Focus: Children produce a game by drawing pictures and composing sentences.

Materials:

- 5" by 8" oak tag cards (or file cards)
- Crayons
- Flow pens

Procedure: After children have read a story they enjoy, have them draw pictures from the story.

Print sentences that the children dictate on their pictures and on separate cards. You will need 12 to 16 pictures in order to play a game.

Shuffle the picture cards and deal them out to the children. Hold up the sentence cards, have children read them, together or with you, and match with the picture.

Children can also work independently or in pairs to match the pictures with sentences.

Games can also be made by cutting up inexpensive picture books. This means can be the way to get the idea started.

Integration: Have the children determine how many times they need to keep practicing the game to do it well. Ask them to invent other (more difficult) ways to use their pictures and sentences.

Evaluation: Observe which children read the sentences readily and which show they grasp the meaning of the sentence by quickly finding the matching picture.

RETELLING STORIES

(This task originates in the Reading Miscue Inventory, Y. Goodman and C. Burke, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1971.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop the ability and habit of thinking while reading or approaching books.

Focus: After reading or listening to a story, students tell the story in their own words to someone who has not heard it.

Materials:
- A wide variety of reading materials
- Tape recorder (optional)

Procedure: Students read a story of their choice or listen to a story. Before they read or listen, explain that they are to retell the story in their own words after reading. To initiate the retelling, you might just say, "Tell me everything you remember" or "Tell me the whole story in your own words." Then listen to all the student has to say. When he or she has told all he remembers, you may wish to probe further. ("What did they do?") Or you may wish to encourage synthesizing and generalizing by asking for major ideas or themes. ("What was the main idea or ideas in this story?")

Students unfamiliar with this task might be helped by practicing retelling an actual experience or a TV show or movie, just to be clear about the task itself.

Children of this level are especially able to retell stories they listen to and picture book stories they look at. This is an appropriate point to establish the idea that stories are read for the meaning they convey, and that the child's ideas and interpretations are worthy and important. Some of these oral retellings could even be written

down, to be treated as optional versions of one story, to be shared with other peers. Children should be encouraged as much as possible to look at the printed text as well, especially in books they have heard frequently and those that have repeated, easily predicted portions.

Integration: The retelling is an integration activity, but in addition, asking children for the most important event or characters can assist them integrating the information. Their ability to generalize can be promoted by returning to discussing former stories days and weeks later.

Evaluation: Notice whether children are able to retell events of any kind, then whether they can tell stories such as this with increasing confidence and thoroughness as well as show a beginning ability to generalize about plot and theme.

FILL-IN STORY

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Regard reading as a meaning-based activity.
- Use other language processes in conjunction with reading.

Focus: A short story lacking key words is used so that students can be asked to fill in words to complete the story.

Materials:
- Large chart paper
- Flow pen

Procedure: Print the following story or similar one on a large chart.

Tell a group of children that they are to fill in the blanks with words that would make sense. Emphasize that there are no "right" answers.

Title (have children supply this at the end)

Once upon a _____, there was a _____ _____ named _____ who liked to _____.

One day she _____ to a _____. She met a _____ _____ who said, "How are you _____ _____. What are you _____?"

"I'm _____," said the _____. "Would you like to _____ too?" _____ were happy _____ _____.

Write the words as the children dictate them and then read the story together two or three times.

Then prepare another identical "fill-in story" and ask another group or individual to fill in the gaps (have the first story hidden or covered).

The two stories can be compared by both groups and left up on the wall for re-reading.

Integration: Discuss the differences and similarities between the stories, and why people might have different ideas.

Evaluation: Observe which children can make appropriate insertions. Then, note which ones can join in on the reading of the story, and to what degree.

DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT READING FROM LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Readily associate written language with its meaning.
- Perceive himself or herself as a capable reader.

Focus: Children dictate stories, then match words and sentences written on cards with the complete written stories.

Materials:
- Notebook
- Stiff paper folder
- 1-1/2" x 3" cards

Procedure: In a notebook or on one side of a folder, write an individual child's story as she dictates it.

Read the story over several times with her.

On small cards print the words of a key sentence from the story. E.g.: "I like to ride my bike."

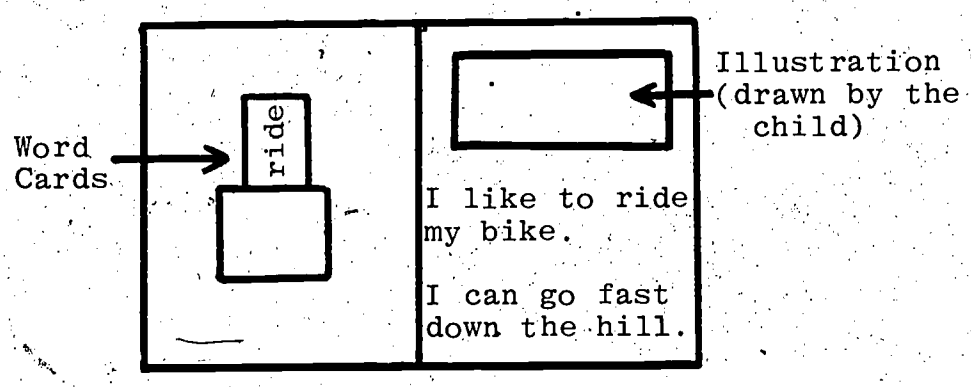
Mix up the words on the table and ask the child to reassemble them into the original sentence. She has the sentence in the written story available to match. You can refer to the separate words as you work with the child. "Oh, here's 'ride' over here," or "Where did 'like' go?"

When calling attention to each word and thus lifting words out of context, you are nevertheless putting the words into sentence form so that meaning is not lost. Additional sentences can be added if the child's interest is sustained, until at some point, children might manage the whole story, then recopy it for themselves.

The next time you work with the child, read the story, make the sentence again and then add a word or two so the sentence can be changed or lengthened. For example, you could add "to school" or any verb the child suggests so he could make the sentence: "I like to swim" and "I like to ride to school." This could lead into the next dictated story which would naturally then contain some of the same words.

This activity can be carried out with a small group of children who will profit from hearing and sharing each others' sentences and stories. Some can be making illustrations while others are dictating and vice versa.

If the story is printed on one side of a folder, the cards can be stored in a pocket on the other side.



e to the
cher:

Don't work for recognition of a lot of isolated words. Use the activity to present more experiences with words. It is repeated experience with context and a strong meaning association that will help the child develop a sight vocabulary.

egration:

The child's own experience and language supply the reading material, so continue to relate the sentences and ideas to the child's understanding of these sentences. Focus always on meaning, not on whether the child knows this or that word.

Evaluation: Observe whether a child can visually match a word card with the word in the sentence. If he can't yet, give him more experience with chime-in reading, memorization and group responses until he shows he is making the connection between the visual symbols and oral language.

If the child can match the words, continue with more activities of this nature.

TAPE RECORDING TO DEVELOP SELF-CORRECTION STRATEGIES

(This activity is a combination of work done by Y. Goodman, C. Burke and M. Buckley.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop the habit of striving for sense to the degree that making corrections or attempts to correct is done readily when needed.

Focus: The student listens to his or her own reading on tape while watching the text to self-assess and decide on any further changes.

Materials:
- Various reading materials
- Tape recorder, blank tapes
- Copy of the story text (optional but convenient)

Procedure: As the student reads a short story unassisted, she tape records herself. An adult or older student can be present or not, as the learner wishes. (The eventual goal is to have the student do this entirely independently.)

After completing the reading, the student listens to her own reading while watching the text. The reader's task is to decide whether there are any changes to be made in what she read originally so that it makes "better sense." Encourage the student to disregard changes that really don't matter and assure her that "Everybody does that when they read."

At least in the learning stages, it is helpful to give the student a photo copy of the story so that she can mark any places where she would make changes. That way, the teacher could listen later and see where the reader had detected her own miscues and how many of those left uncorrected were apt to result in confusion about the text.

Once the student understands the process, regardless of adult involvement or record-keeping, she is apt to be able to continue to listen to the tape recording to see the extent to which it makes sense and improve it in the places it differs to any significant degree. Often, students eliminate the use of the tape recorder because the "monitor for meaning" is now installed in their minds and functions simultaneously with reading. This is the goal.

Care must be taken to avoid placing undue emphasis on oral reading and its absolute accuracy in this activity. That is not the goal if one is reading to oneself rather than performing before an audience. A transition back to silent reading will be necessary but now the child is listening for sense.

Children at this level could begin by tape recording their dictation and any stories they tell to monitor them for "sense" and whether or not they tell a story. Then "reading pictures" can be taped and self-checked for sense. Easy readers with repeated and predictable language are good for this purpose. Afterward an adult can listen with the child, to point out the positive examples of effective meaning-seeking strategies.

At this early stage, when children have been primed to expect and demand sense, there will frequently be no later need for the use of the tape recorder to teach self-correction. It will have occurred naturally.

Integration: The integration activity is the child's evaluation of what to change and what to keep that he hears on the tape he made. (Readers tend to correct a high percentage of miscues made in a first reading, just by replaying it on tape.)

Evaluation: Observe whether the children are involved enough and thinking for sense enough to be able to detect the need for changes. Observe regular oral reading behavior to see whether the self-correction transfers to that initial activity, rather than waiting for a replay.

Using Basal Readers

If a basal text is being used as part of the instructional program for this level reader, the materials need to be examined on the basis of:

- Relevance and interest (of topics) to the readers.
- Predictability and natural quality of the language to the ear of the reader.

Frequently it is this level text that might be most inappropriate for Responsive instruction because of the above factors. For the beginner, it is especially important that there be a match between what is familiar orally and what is encountered in print. Therefore, teachers need to determine the degree of match. One way to do this is to read some of the text stories to the students to see whether they can understand and discuss the content on that basis. While reading, a teacher can pause to see if students can anticipate key words, endings, and so forth. Ability to participate in these ways does not guarantee a high degree of suitability but it assures some comprehension at least.

Frequently, this check plus a teacher's intuitions reveal that the language and topics of beginning reader texts are not closely related to the real world of the beginning student. "Primer-ese" is generally clipped, short sentences with very redundant, vague content. Therefore, if such texts must be used as a major or minor part of instruction, the following techniques are recommended:

1. Selection of stories. Instead of following the exact sequence of stories presented, select one for today that coincides with another current unit of study in the classroom, or have the students help select the day's story. (Hook up to some relevant topic and enlist their motivation.)

2. Before reading. Use the title and illustrations to ask the students for predictions about the story.

3. During the reading. Read the story to the students the first time through the whole story. After establishing the setting and characters, some may be able to join in and read along, at least in portions of each paragraph. Use the second reading as a read-along.

The degree of students' participation will vary greatly from not reading along the first time through to joining in almost immediately. In the former case, the teacher can read the text, asking occasionally for predictions of next events, words. Then for the second reading, the students should be asked to join in just as soon as they can and the group will re-read the story. When there is time and interest, it is sometimes helpful to have students do a third reading with partners.

When students can join in on the first reading, the teacher can drop out entirely on parts, then on whole paragraphs, joining in only when needed for a new start. In this case, it may be possible to have partners reading the second time through or even the second half of the first time.

The progression is generally one of the teacher:

a) reading to children;

b) reading with children;

c) phasing out.

4. After reading: Ask students to compose responses that demand comprehending the story, such as:

- Retelling the plot.
- Describing the main character and his or her important actions.
- Creating a sequel.
- Comparing this with your life.
- Creating a different ending and different title.

5. Vocabulary development. To satisfy concerns about developing vocabulary through reading stories, some teachers like to check on the key ideas, terms, and concepts presented. After the reading and the above discussion, students can be asked about certain items to learn of their interpretation.

For example:

"The father talked about a tantalizing fruit. What does that mean to you?" (Several responses.)

"Find the part of the story that supports your guess about tantalizing. What words prove your answers?" (Several responses.)

6. Phonetic analysis and structural analysis. This kind of analysis should occur in a period separate and after a reading lesson.

In proceeding according to the steps outlined above, most teachers see that students are applying abstract rules, such as vowel rules or pronunciation of blends, whether they can recite the rule or not. Also, they may or may not be able to state the rule and give arbitrary examples, but this seems to have little bearing on their use of the rules while actually reading.

Therefore, it seems more appropriate to observe for [illegible]ve instances of students using the principles and recognizing these to suggest transfer during a discussion after the reading. For example, "Cynthia, you might have noticed a couple of words in today's story that use the letter 'c' as in your name." (City, cylinder.) "There is one more that no one mentioned. Can you find the item that Uncle Don wanted to give to Jerry?" (Cycle.)

In sum, then, the reading lesson focuses on reading the whole story and responding to and interpreting the ideas. All efforts work to that end and do not distract by emphasizing segments too small to be obviously related to the whole. No attention is drawn to words other than in the context of their role in the story. If such discussions are needed, they are reserved for times other than the daily story lesson, which is kept at the heart of planned instruction.

In general, even when a basal text is used, this is the level at which it is most important to use daily amounts of students' own language and memorized language, such as songs and rhymes. The more they see and "read" this highly familiar language, the better are the conscious and unconscious generalizations formed in a natural way about the sound-symbol associations.

Level III: The Developing Reader

Characteristics of the Developing Reader

The developing reader is the term used here to denote the less-than-independent reader who is beyond the initial stages of heavy reliance upon live or taped competent readers. This stage may be the result of two very different paths by learners, however. The first is the path depicted in the two levels described above. This reader is ready for increasing amounts of time with very familiar and less familiar printed matter, to practice the meaning-seeking strategies that worked so well in the company of a competent reader. He is making the transition toward becoming his own monitor for meaning.

A second kind of developing reader had different prior instructional experiences. He is often older than the student described above, and is probably lacking some of the strategies and perceptions of self as a reader that were emphasized in Levels I and II. So, while some or all of the characteristics described below will apply to all developing readers, the instructional strategies might differ for any particular student. The first type might benefit most by a program of "business as usual," a continuation of what is being done already, with increasing amounts of independence. The second type might need several experiences from those prior levels.

Regardless of age, the developing reader's behavior usually includes some or all of the following:

- Is familiar with a considerable amount of literature of various types and forms (prose, poetry, drama, fiction, non-fiction, fairy tales) as well as environmental and functional print (signs, labels, menus).
- Can independently read familiar, predictable language, especially that which has been encountered previously.
- Can make logical guesses and self-corrections based first upon retaining meaning and language sense and then upon graphic and phonic similarity.
- Can make logical predictions about new material when participating in a structured activity, but may need support when encountering certain new material, especially long passages, new forms of literature and less familiar subject matter.

- Can make logical guesses and substitutions when encountering unknowns and can self-correct errors, but is not consistent, and sometimes loses motivation and sustaining power, so does better in company of a listener; a reading partner or small group; a competent reader who helps to listen for sense, or a tape recorder, to be played later for oneself and/or others.

This reader needs continued support for using and reinforcing his or her effective meaning-seeking strategies. This support will take many forms, from frequent to occasional physical presence with the reader to well-designed individual, partner, small-group and total-group activities before and after reading that demand thinking while reading and integrating new information with old. Often it will be sufficient to provide a calm, thoughtful start to the reading of a story, using only body language for support during the reading, and then supplying an attentive listener after the reading or an interesting comprehension-centered follow-up activity. Again, the goal is to further the student's self-perception of being a capable reader who is doing better each day at becoming his own monitor for making sense.

This level may also include students who show "some evidence of meaning-seeking strategies" on the TIRC. Teachers may wish to refer to the recommendations given on p. 96 of Chapter 4.

Activities

As we mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the use of categories or levels is not meant to imply that children should be grouped according to ability, or that only these activities may be used with children at this level. Children at varying levels of proficiency can participate in the same activity, with the teacher making appropriate adjustments to suit individual children. Teachers may find that activities suggested in the other sections of this chapter can also be used with children at this level. The activities described here are intended to serve as starting points that teachers can deviate from, modify, and expand upon.

The suggested activities for this level are as follows:

a. Oral Discussions

1. Riddle Book
2. Who, What, Where: Mixed Up Sentences

b. Listening to Written Language Presented Orally

1. Daily Story Time
2. Read-Alongs at the Listening Post

c. Independent Silent Reading

1. Silent Reading Within a Basic Text Lesson
2. Group Uninterrupted Silent Reading

d. Responding to Written Material

1. Following Written Directions
2. Comparing Animal Characters
3. Book-Based Discussion Groups
4. Retelling Stories Orally or in Writing
5. Using Other Media for Follow-Up Activities

e. Practicing Comprehension-Seeking Strategies

1. Story Completion
2. Cloze Strips
3. Tape Recording to Develop Self-Correction Strategies

RIDDLE BOOK

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Use reading as a source of pleasure.
- Derive meaning from written language.

Focus: Children write riddles for others to read and guess the answers.

Materials:
- Riddle books
- Paper
- Pencils

Procedure: Choose a theme. It could be animals, TV characters, undersea life, toys, or something from a unit the class is studying.

Write a few samples of riddles on the chalkboard or chart and read them with the children as models. Talk about what a riddle is. "Why is it funny? Do you know other riddles?" Then direct the class to write a riddle, putting the answer and an illustration on the back of the paper. They might work in partners or as individuals. Bind the papers into a book or let the children keep them singly to exchange. Have them read each other's riddles.

Integration: The children read each other's riddles and guess the answers. Have children interact using their riddles and the reading of them as a basis. The point is to try to get the children to guess the answers to each other's riddles.

Evaluation: Check on children's ability to read each other's riddles. Listen to see if their substitutions for unknown words make sense.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE: MIXED-UP SENTENCES

Objectives: To help the child to:

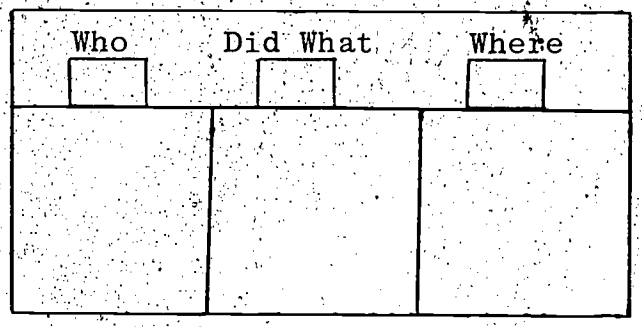
- Derive meaning from written language.
- Experience pleasure from a reading activity.

Focus: Children will be supplying parts of sentences (who, what, where), picking them out blind from each category and forming humorous sentences to copy and illustrate.

Materials:

- Oak tag
- Flow pen
- Cards of three different colors (large file cards cut in half do nicely)

Procedure: Make a card holder approximately 12" x 18" by stapling pieces of oak tag or cardboard together.



Tell the children that they will be helping to make a game about mixed-up sentences. It can be helpful to have a few cards made up advance for illustration.

Have the children supply the names of characters. Characters from books or television are good. Write these on one set of colored cards and place in the Who slot.

Then elicit words for the Did What section. These are to be expressed in past tense singular such as "rode a bike," "ate apples,"

"did math." It is better to avoid "his" or "her". Write these on a different colored card.

The Where cards have such phrases as "under the bed," "in the bathtub," "up in the tree," on a third color of cards.

When you have enough cards for your group (two children can share a sentence), mix up the cards, have the children draw one of each color, read their sentence to the group, and then copy it on a paper with an illustration. The pages can be fastened together in a book. Sentences will be generated, such as "Darth Vader did math under the bed" and "Clifford ate ice cream in the sky."

Sometimes, ask the children to keep drawing cards until they have a sentence that makes sense or could really happen. Other times ask them if their sentence is real or pretend. At certain times, deliberately strive for "silly sentences."

The game can be left out for use as long as children are enjoying reading the sentences.

Later a "why" or a "when" section can be added and children could learn that they need the "who" and "did what" cards for a sentence and the others are optional.

Integration: Ask children to explain this game to another child who does not know about it. Ask them to say how they know when something is real or silly. Ask them why they like or don't like "silly sentences."

Evaluation: Do children need help reading sentences? Do they laugh at the silly ones? Can they read them back after illustrating? Does the illustration match the sentence?

DAILY STORY TIME

ective: To help the child to:

- Develop increasing knowledge, vocabulary, and appreciation of literature.

us: Children listen to a literature selection and respond to the story from their own experience and hear others respond from theirs.

erials: A literature selection appropriate to the particular group of children. Selections will vary from new publications to old favorites, and from books related to themes (holidays, units of study) to spontaneous choices made by children in the group.

cedure: An adult reads a story to the entire class or small groups, often at a regularly scheduled time. A typical session would be:

1. Display the book front and ask the children to predict something about the story. (Sometimes you'll read the title first; other times, not.)

2. As you read the story, usually keep the "flow" going without distractions away from the topic, but pause in places for children to join in where the next words or phrase are highly predictable (rhymes, repeated phrases).

3. After the reading, ask questions requiring children to think beyond the information presented directly in the story ("Why do you think they did that? What might happen after the story ended?"), and ask for their responses to the story from their own point of view. ("What did you like about the story? Has anything like that ever happened to you?") Encourage a variety of responses, being careful not to stop after just one acceptable response is heard.

4. Frequently it is desirable to follow a story with an art, craft or writing project. Especially when it can be voluntary with a variety of options available, children can benefit from further integration through drawing or painting favorite portions, sequels, or events in sequence.

5. Make the book available to children for free-time activities.

Children of this age begin to enjoy stories that continue for several days via chapters or other units. They are less bound to illustrations and can sit back to enjoy a story. There are many opportunities to link a story with ongoing projects, so reading sessions frequently lead to writing tasks, art projects, drama performances. Discussions can interrelate different stories the children have shared ("How might Charlotte have behaved if she met Charlie in the Chocolate Factory?") and attention can be given to helping children examine their developing taste in literature. ("Which of these three stories did you like best? Why? How are the kinds of stories different? The same?")

Integration: Ask children to compare the story or characters with their own lives. "Could that happen to you?" or "What would you have done differently if you had been a character in that story?"

Evaluation: Observe whether students are processing this information in ways that will enable them to increase their understanding of their world and appreciate the contributions of literature. Occasionally ask, "Why do we read these stories? How do they help us?"

READ-ALONGS AT THE LISTENING POST

Objective: To help the child to:

- Practice reading skills in context when still needing supportive help.

Focus: Children listen to a story of their own choice while following the print, and are allowed to repeat the experience frequently, if desired.

Materials:

- A variety of commercial or home-made sets of short story books with accompanying tapes (usually cassette) or records.
- A listening post where one to six students may listen to records or tapes, with the use of earphones. (Individuals may listen with just a tape recorder, but flexibility is added to the activity if the whole group can listen at once.)

Procedure: Following an orientation session on how to handle and operate the equipment, the listening aspect of this activity can be carried out by children independently. In fact, they enjoy the responsibility of doing so. Usually a child or group will select a book to listen to but there are occasions when the teacher finds it appropriate to select with or for the child (e.g., a book related to a topic of study, a book especially suited for this reader to prepare to read independently to others). When introducing the activity, establish the habit in students of thoughtfully choosing a book and pondering for a moment what it might be about or reflecting on why it looks interesting.

As the children listen, they should follow along, turning pages as signaled. (Some commercial tapes also involve children by asking them to supply predictable words.)

The usual use of this activity would have the children listen only once and then perhaps do a follow-up activity (such as going

to an adult to discuss or retell the story, or drawing or writing about the story). This format accomplishes the basic goal of the activity.

However, listening to the story additional times, voluntarily, has definite benefits in helping children acquire effective reading strategies. The purposes for repeated listening vary. Some children just like to hear a favorite story many times. Others can be motivated to use this as a practicing aid to "coach" them in rehearsing a story to read to others (especially when older children read to younger ones). They can listen any number of times (even take it home) until they feel confident at reading the story themselves.

Frequently, children who have listened repeatedly to the same story can read more of the story on their own than they realized. To add stories to this collection, you can tape the daily story reading session "live" and add that tape and book to the read-along library. This is especially valuable to do when multiple copies of the text are available.

Integration: Ask children to listen as many times as necessary to be able to read whole sections to you. Later, they should be able to read whole stories independently after listening. If they can use the tape recorder individually they can pace their own practice.

Evaluation: Observe whether children are intently involved in the listening and are increasing the amount of text they can read alone.

SILENT READING WITHIN A BASIC TEXT LESSON

Objective: To help the child to:

- Read independently with a focus on comprehension.

Focus: Children silently read part or all of a story that is part of the regular basal text lesson.

Materials: The basal reading text used for reading instruction or any other story; one copy per child.

Procedure: Within a regular reading lesson, independent silent reading is emphasized. Children are helped to realize the importance of practicing reading the way it is usually done in real situations. They are encouraged by learning that using the common-sense strategies they employ when reading alone (self-correcting, guessing, etc.) is the best thing to do to learn to read better and that that is what all good readers do.

A typical lesson might gather the group at the beginning to read the title and browse the illustrations to 1) discuss what similar experiences each has had or what they already know about the topic, and 2) predict what might happen in the story. Then, after receiving or formulating together a focusing task (read to confirm or reject your initial predictions, read to find a character like yourself, or just read to remember the main ideas to discuss later), individuals go off to read the story independently.

After the reading, they return to discuss the ideas and questions. During the discussion, there may be frequent opportunities to say, "Can you find the part that proves that? Read it to us." This approach teaches the child to employ good skimming techniques and also provides a small glimpse of his or her present oral reading skills.

If a basal text is being used in the classroom, it is strongly suggested that this activity be used with other reading content as well, such as paperbacks and magazines, so that students do not come to separate school-type reading from other reading (home, recreational, etc.). Some children at this level may prefer to read with partners, especially at first.

Integration: Ask the children "What would you do if something like that happened to you?" After discussing content, ask the children to discuss their feelings about their reading abilities now. "What is hard/easy for you?" etc.

Evaluation: Observe children's reading behavior and ability to discuss the story content to determine which students might need additional time to practice or more opportunities to read with a partner or competent listener.

GROUP UNINTERRUPTED SILENT READING

(This activity is a version of "Uninterrupted Silent Sustained Reading" by Lyman Hunt, University of Vermont.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop effective reading skills and an appreciation for the world of print.

Focus: Children silently read a book of their own choice or other written text for an uninterrupted period of time.

Materials:

- A wide variety of reading materials on a range of levels of sophistication (such as TV guides and children's magazines, picture books, easy readers, trade books, joke books and craft books, poetry) that are easily accessible.
- To initiate this activity some teachers "flood" a rug in the center of the room with books and students gather around to browse and select a book. Others categorize materials and topics in a class library corner.

Procedure: The students are helped to understand that to learn to do anything you must DO it, so this activity is to help improve their reading by just doing it. They can be encouraged by being told that when left alone, we have found that children do have extremely good problem-solving skills and can actually read better than they think, when they need to and want to. Each time they will select their own book and find a comfortable reading place to read silently for a period of minutes. During that time, they are to independently do whatever is necessary to attempt to read their selections (guess, skip and go back, etc.) but they may not interrupt anyone else. Even the adults read during this time. At the end of the period, students may return the books or some might wish to keep them for further reading, even for the next silent reading period. There

is no obligation to "report" on the book to anyone. However, after this activity, some readers often voluntarily gather and want to tell each other about the book they read. Since this is the most desirable possible outcome, it is beneficial to support this extension of the activity.

It is important that the children who label themselves non-readers have several choices of books that will afford them success. It is equally important to avoid allowing any stigma or status to be attached to certain books or materials. The length of the period will depend on the particular children, but about 20 minutes is often used.

Integration: Close the period by asking students to think silently about an important part of the story they read today (most exciting part, worst problem, happiest, etc.). Sometimes, ask students to write or draw about this idea.

Evaluation: Spot check all children over a period of time as to whether they are reading with understanding. Ask for retelling or inferences that must be based on thoughtful reading. Continue to check more frequently on children who seem inconsistent or show signs of waivering attention when left alone.

FOLLOWING WRITTEN DIRECTIONS (SPOON DOLLS)

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Use reading as a natural source of information.
- Use reading in conjunction with other language processes.

Focus: Children will be reading directions to construct dolls from wooden spoons, proceeding with little or no assistance.

Materials:
- Wooden ice cream spoons
- Dress patterns
- Yarn
- Colored pens
- Scraps of cloth
- Paper
- Glue
- Pipe cleaners

Procedure: Prepare a work area with the necessary materials. Have cards available with printed directions on them. There could be a large card with general directions followed by more specific ones on the containers for yarn, patterns, and so forth.

The general directions that children will read are:

1. Take a wooden spoon.
2. Draw eyes, nose and mouth on the large end.
3. Glue yarn on the head.
4. Twist on pipe cleaners for arms and legs.
5. Use one of the patterns to trace on cloth to make a dress. Cut out the dress. Glue it in place on the doll.
6. Put away the materials you did not need.

Children are told to read the directions and do the best they can. Encourage them to help each other. Have sufficient materials so if one attempt fails, the child can make another try.

Tell children who help each other to refer back to the directions so that everyone reads, and doesn't just copy another's product.

Extension: Do a similar activity with a recipe!

Integration: Ask children to explain how they felt about doing this activity. Did they like following the directions? Would they like to make their doll differently? How? Were they satisfied with what they made?

Evaluation: Discuss with children how easy it was to follow the directions and what, if anything, caused them difficulty. Observe which ones relied on others for help.

COMPARING ANIMAL CHARACTERS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Use reading as a source of information and pleasure.
- Associate meaning readily with written language.

Focus: Children read stories about animal characters to compare characteristics and descriptions.

Materials:
- Large paper
- Flow pen
- Books containing animal stories

Procedure: Develop with the children a chart about animal characters from stories that they have read to them, i.e. "Harry the Dirty Dog," Lyle the Crocodile," "Peter Rabbit," etc.

Animal	What He Liked To Do	What People Said About Him	What Happened To Him
Harry	Play	Dirty	Had a bath
Peter	Eat	Naughty	Mr. MacGregor almost put him in a pie
Lyle	Help people	Lovable	

Leave enough blanks for the stories they will read.

Distribute the books, explaining that after they read, they will be asked to tell about their story and fill in the chart.

Have the children read independently or in partners. Children who need most help could be coupled with readers who are known to be independent.

After the reading is finished, bring the group together to tell about their animal and fill in the chart.

The first time this activity is done, all children could read the same story (from multiple copies). Subsequently, each partner, small group or individual could select a different story.

Suggested Books:

Gene Zion, "Harry the Dirty Dog," New York: Harper and Row, 1976.

Beatrix Potter, "Tale of Peter Rabbit," New York: Warne, Frederick and Co., 1902.

Bernard Waber, "Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile," Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1973.

Hans A. Rey, "Curious George," Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1941.

Else H. Minerik, "Little Bear" (I Can Read Books), New York: Harper and Row, 1978.

Arnold Lobel, "Frog and Toad Together" (I Can Read Books), New York: Harper and Row, 1972. Also "Frog and Toad Are Friends."

Norman Bridwell, "Clifford, the Big Red Dog," Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Scholastic Book Service, 1969.

Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban, "Charlie the Tramp," Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Scholastic Book Service, 1970.

Integration: Ask children to look at the whole chart and decide which animal they like best. Why? What else would they invent to put in the last column (what happened to their favorite animal?).

Ask them if they would like to do their own chart about their own family pet. They can complete their charts individually or in small groups.

Evaluation: Observe individual participation. Can they readily sort the story plot into these categories? Did their reading focus on comprehension?

BOOK-BASED DISCUSSION GROUPS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Begin to read independently within a structure for support and assessment.
- Benefit from various ideas expressed in a group.

Focus: Children discuss personal and group understanding of a book of mutual interest.

Materials: Multiple copies (up to five or six) of books frequently selected by this age group.

Procedure: Children form groups on the basis of a book selected to read. Either an existing group can reach consensus on which book all will read, or groups can be formed spontaneously on the basis of the books selected by individuals. This can either be a whole-class activity or a small-group activity operating simultaneously with several other activities. Book clubs may be formed within a class around interest areas so that one group reads a series of horse stories, for example, over an extended period of time.

All group members read the designated book during class time, at home, during leisure time, or during combinations of these.

At a prior arranged time, the group gathers to discuss the book. The teacher or another leader elicits all members' ideas and opinions about the whole story, main character, favorite event or other focus. Probing questions are used to explore certain aspects in depth (e.g., "Why do you think Glenda acted that way? What might have caused the king to leave early?") Some form of synthesis or closure is suggested to conclude the activity. Children might tell, write, draw, or paint the character most like themselves, the turning point in the story, their favorite part or their alternative ending.

Make a distinct effort to have the children see some part of their own language in print, either by writing it themselves or by seeing the teacher write it. Use terms new to the children in the context of the story to inquire about their understanding. Elicit synonyms for new terms and encourage sharing of terms and phrases related to individual dialects and regional or family background.

Once the activity is established, children may be capable of managing much of it by themselves--selecting the book, setting a date, and choosing follow-up activities and discussion topics. The teacher will usually still want to be involved frequently, if not always, in the discussion to pose interpretive questions and suggest an array of related activities.

Integration: Ask the children at the beginning of the discussion to listen carefully to each other to be able to state an idea they learned from or about another classmate in this process. Ask later for these responses to encourage the mutual appreciation of different interpretations of one idea or event.

Evaluation: Observe children's behavior during the discussion to assess depth of comprehension and ability to listen and respond to peer contributions.

RETELLING STORIES ORALLY OR IN WRITING

(This task originates in the Reading Miscue Inventory, Y. Goodman and C. Burke, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1971.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Focus primarily on understanding while reading.

Focus: After reading or listening to a story, students tell the story in their own words to someone who has not heard it, or write their re-told story to send to a friend.

Materials:
- A wide variety of reading materials
- Writing materials
- Tape recorder (optional)

Procedure: Students read a story of their choice or an assigned story. Before they read, explain that they are to retell or write the story in their own words after reading. To initiate the retelling, you might just say, "Tell me everything you remember" or "Tell me the whole story in your own words." Then listen to all the student has to say. When he or she told all he remembers, you may wish to probe further, on the basis of information already given ("You mentioned two pilots. What did they do?"). Or you may wish to encourage synthesizing and generalizing by asking for major ideas or themes. ("What was the main idea or ideas in this story?")

If the students do this task in writing, they either write down only their own spontaneous retelling, or they conclude by answering some general designated questions such as those mentioned above. Such students will probably have already done oral retellings before written ones. Also, students are encouraged to use "invented logical spellings" to get their stories written when they are unsure of conventional spelling. They are not penalized for the inaccuracy of this type of spelling.

Students unfamiliar with this task might be helped by practicing retelling an actual experience or a TV show or movie, just to be clear about the task itself.

Many of these children will prefer oral to written retellings, because of the time and "labor." Also, they enjoy and need an attentive audience, which they get in the oral form. Where time and staff do not permit frequent individual retellings, you can (1) have a small group take turns contributing to one total retelling and (2) conduct individual retellings primarily with children lacking confidence in expressing themselves and with those needing experience in recalling and summarizing information.

Integration: The retelling is an integrating activity but it can also have extensions such as:

"Think of another story similar to this one; compare them for similarities and differences."

"Compare this main character with another main character from a favorite book of yours."

"How would you change the way this story ended?"

"On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this story; explain."

Evaluation: Through listening or reading, determine whether students are composing adequate retellings. (One means of judgment is that of the TIRC: assess on basis of characters/events/plot/theme.) Monitor the work of those who have difficulty and model more complete retellings for them; urge those already capable to go into deeper meanings and relationships with daily life.

USING OTHER MEDIA FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop various forms of response to literature and reading.

Focus: After reading a story, children re-enact or extend the story using other media and language processes.

Materials:
- Variety of reading materials
- Collection of scrap art and craft materials (papers, fabrics, paints; "junk," etc.)
- Writing and drawing materials
- Tape recorder, tapes; camera (if available)

Procedure: This activity has unlimited possibilities but a few components might be:

Write or tell a sequel to the story. (In each case, the task could read, "write or tell" to accommodate learners not yet independent in their writing. However, just the word write will be used throughout.)

Write a story using this main character and another character from one of your favorite stories.

Write the story into a play; design costumes; rehearse; present to peers.

Convert the story into a radio program and record it on a tape recorder.

Write and draw the story with your own invented ending on scroll paper to roll through a "TV box."

Choose your favorite scene and create a diorama depicting it.

Use the same characters to write a different story.

Use the patterns you see in this story to write a whole new story.

Children at this level may be able to work independently, especially in groups and over a series of days to accomplish a rather complex project.

Integration: Ask the child to present his or her project to peers, sometimes within a book group, other times to total class. Also ask the child to assess his own project.

Evaluation: Observe the children working and presenting their projects to determine the depth of understanding and ability to express ideas in various forms.

STORY COMPLETION

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Regard reading as a meaning-based activity.
- Use other language processes in conjunction with reading.

Focus: A short story lacking key words is used for students to fill in the words to complete the story.

Materials:

- Large chart paper
- Flow pen
- Individual copies of a story with blanks for certain key words and ideas

Procedure: On a chart, demonstrate the task of filling in words that would complete a story. The group joins in to do one story together before individuals or partners do it independently.

Distribute copies of a fill-in story and have children write in words that they think would fit the context. Students unsure of their spelling can be instructed to (a) use their own invented spelling that "makes sense" and/or (b) ask someone for help. (That is, inability to produce conventional spelling should not hinder the generation of ideas.)

Have children read their stories to each other and then bind them into a booklet for someone else to complete. Partners could exchange or small groups could share.

Integration: Children compare their versions of the story with each other to look for similarities/differences. Then discuss why one might think ~~of~~ a certain word while another child thought of a different word.

Evaluation: Observe which children can readily fill in words that fit the context. Those who still have not made a habit of expecting and demanding sense when reading might benefit from reading the completed story of another child and having the "author" monitor the reading.

CLOZE STRIPS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate meaning readily with written language.
- Use all language cues in combination to interpret information.

Focus: Students supply words that are left blank on a sentence strip.

Materials:
- Oak tag strips 4" x 18"
- Flow pen

Procedure: Write a short paragraph with each sentence on a separate strip of paper. Fold back the last word. Sometimes leave the first letter of the last word visible. The story might go like this:

Big Bear liked to | eat. (fold on line)

He likes to eat b| erries.

Each day he sat in his | cave.

He wondered when the berries would be | ripe.

Have the children read the sentence and guess what the hidden word might be. Get as many plausible answers as possible. Then show the hidden word, ask the children to read it and discuss how close all guesses that would make sense were. Point out how some children changed their guess when they saw the word; and ask why.

This is a good way to encourage the use of context in gaining comprehension and reinforcing the importance of the combined use of meaning, syntax and graphics.

Integration: Discuss with the children their feelings about being able to make good guesses and predictions when they are reading. Help them see that no reader predicts a word he or she has never

heard, so they may need to put in another word or idea when reading. Emphasize thoughtful reading at all times.

Evaluation: Notice which children have difficulty predicting and need more practice. Note which are still hesitant and fearful of being "wrong."

TAPE RECORDING TO DEVELOP SELF-CORRECTION STRATEGIES

(This activity is a combination of work done by Y. Goodman, C. Burke and M. Buckley.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop the habit of striving for sense, so that corrections or attempts to correct are done readily when needed.

Focus: The student listens to his or her own reading on tape while watching the text to self-assess and decide on any further changes.

Materials:
- Various reading materials
- Tape recorder, blank tapes
- Copy of the story text (optional but convenient)

Procedure: As the student reads a short story aloud unassisted, she tape records herself. An adult or older student can be present or not, as the learner wishes. (An eventual goal is that the student can do this entirely independently.)

Upon completion of the reading, the student listens to her own reading while watching the text. The reader's task is to decide if there are any changes to be made in what she read originally so that it makes "better sense." The student is encouraged to disregard changes that really don't matter and is assured that "Everybody does that when they read."

At least in the learning stages, a photocopy of the story is helpful because the student can mark any places where she would make changes. That way, the teacher could listen later and see where the reader had detected her own miscues and how many of those left uncorrected were apt to result in confusion about the text.

Once the students understand the process, regardless of adult involvement or record-keeping, they are likely to be able to continue to listen to the tape recording to see the extent to which it makes sense and improve it in the places it differs to any significant degree. Very often, students eliminate the use of the tape recorder because the "monitor for meaning" is now installed in the head and functions simultaneously with reading. This is the goal.

Care must be taken to avoid placing undue emphasis on oral reading and its absolute accuracy in this activity. That is not the goal if one is reading to oneself, rather than performing before an audience. A transition back to silent reading will be necessary but now the child is listening for sense.

The older readers can come to hear their own miscues while reading and label them as good ones (it still makes sense) or ones that need to be changed. When this level of sophistication is achieved, we merely need to expose this reader to an even greater variety of challenging situations in print.

Integration: Evaluating one's own tape is a form of integration in itself. In addition, readers can begin to comment on how they feel about their own progress. "How do you compare this tape with an earlier one you did?" Help them see and appreciate their growth.

Evaluation: Confer with children doing this activity to confirm whether they do indeed detect most errors that need correction, and whether they have questions about what they are doing. Also listen to these same students in oral reading situations to observe the transfer of these skills to less structured situations.

Using Basal Readers

In using a basal text as part of the instructional program, as with the beginning reader it is important to ascertain the suitability of the materials.

- Is the subject matter relevant and of interest to the learners?
- Is the language predictable to them?

Since most mass-produced texts are not highly suitable on these two counts, the six techniques recommended in the section on beginning readers (pp. 175 to 177) are applicable here as well. They probably can be modified more in the direction of having students assume more and earlier responsibility for their own reading. It would also be important to urge and accept students' appropriate substitutions for unknown words and phrases.

Again it must be emphasized that the core of the daily reading program is to read a story, sandwiching it between comprehension-centered oral discussions with a focus on the story (rather than units too small to carry substantial meaning). Word study and the like would be done in other periods, but still kept in context and related to the story at hand.

Readers at this level primarily need considerable practice at actually reading, so rereading familiar stories, reading into a tape recorder and silent reading preceding group discussions and/or choral reading are all high priority activities in using appropriate basal text stories and/or other materials. The goal is successful reading and lots of it!

Level IV: The Independent Reader

Characteristics of the Independent Reader

The independent reader stage is the goal of all the instruction discussed previously. By this point the student gives considerable evidence of independently and consistently using effective meaning-seeking strategies while interacting with print, or as others term it, while making transactions with written language. For a student to achieve this level, little, no, or substantial amounts of formal instruction may have taken place. Instruction here is used to include a wide range of behaviors from very indirect organizing of space and materials to direct contact with one or more students. In our print-dominated culture, many individuals manage to learn to read quite naturally as a logical part of being curious about their total environment and using language extensively to clarify and refine their understanding of their world. In such a context, written language accompanies much of their normal daily world, and they integrate and use that knowledge in increasing ways from infancy on. Early recognition of food labels leads to noticing print on television and in books, leading to a substantial tacit knowledge of how to interpret the ideas represented in symbols. Likewise, listening to stories repeatedly leads to unconscious knowledge of which way to hold books and turn pages as well as what symbols represent words and ideas we know about.

This is to say that varying amounts of instruction are needed for different learners. Considerable attention must be given to discovering what each learner already knows about the print in his or her daily life, and planning subsequent instruction as bridges from that knowledge to a wider and deeper facility with language in its various forms. Many students have far more understanding of language than the school presently recognizes, sometimes owing to an inability or unwillingness to respect, learn about and value the student's primary language or dialect and experiential and cultural background. In a respectful, supportive environment the gap can be narrowed considerably between "I can't read" and "Sure, I can read. It's easy." as well as between "can read" and "do read."

Regardless of age, the independent reader's behavior usually includes some or all of the following:

- Continues to build a broader base of familiarity with various forms of literature; follows favorite authors, poets, explorers.

- Consistently uses various effective meaning-seeking strategies while reading (self-corrects, makes appropriate substitutions, continues reading to gain context).

- Can provide evidence of reading comprehension (retelling, summarizing, highlighting major ideas) and the relationship of ideas in print to self (individual response, interpretation, critique).

- Can approach new material containing unfamiliar topics and/or less known language patterns and determine its usefulness to self (not confusing unfamiliarity with content with an inability to read).

- Is continually learning to read different kinds of materials, formats and subject areas; continually building the necessary experience base to bring meaning to a wider range of print and ideas.

- Has confidence in self as a reader and uses reading as a tool with little or no attention to the reading process itself.

This reader has developed the necessary confidence and skills for gaining meaning from printed language. Such readers are another excellent resource for assistance to less capable readers. These readers can read to and with partners or small groups to serve as the necessary support to monitor meaning, provide encouragement, and keep the language flowing.

This level may also include students who show "moderate and considerable evidence of meaning-seeking strategies" on the TIRC. Teachers may wish to refer to the recommendations given for such students on pp. 97 to 98 of Chapter 4.

Activities

As we mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the use of categories or levels is not meant to imply that children should be grouped according to ability, or that only these activities may be used with children at this level. Children at varying levels of proficiency can participate in the same activity, with the teacher

making appropriate adjustments to suit individual children. Teachers may find that activities suggested in the other sections of this chapter can also be used with children at this level. The activities described here are intended to serve as starting points that teachers can deviate from, modify, and expand upon.

The suggested activities for this level are as follows:

a. Oral Discussions

1. Somebody-Wanted-But-So
2. Class Newspaper

b. Listening to Written Language Presented Orally

1. Daily Story Time
2. Read-Alongs at the Listening Post

c. Independent Silent Reading

1. Responding to an Interview
2. Book-Based Discussion Groups
3. Group Uninterrupted Silent Reading
4. Silent Reading Within a Basic Text Lesson

d. Responding to Written Material

1. Question the Reader
2. Using Other Media for Follow-Up Activities
3. Retelling Stories Orally or in Writing

e. Practicing Comprehension-Seeking Strategies

1. Reading to Find Facts
2. Judging Important Facts
3. Completing Cloze Passages

SOMEBODY-WANTED-BUT-SO

A Story Structure

(This activity is adapted from an activity by Dr. Barbara Schmidt, Sacramento State University, Sacramento, Calif.)

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Derive meaning from written language
- Use reading to obtain information as well as pleasure.

Focus: Children read a story, then retell the plot by giving the main character (somebody) what the character wanted, what the conflict was (but), and how the conflict was resolved (so).

Materials:
- Paper
- Pencils
- Story books

Procedure:

1. Help the children analyze a well-known simple story such as "Cinderella." Ask for these items:

   Somebody - Cinderella (Who was it about?)
   Wanted - to go to the ball (What did she want?)
   But - her stepmother and stepsisters wouldn't let her (What was the problem?)
   So - the Fairy Godmother came and helped her go. (How was the problem solved?)

2. Assign the children to watch a TV show and analyze it the same way.

3. Have the children read a story and analyze it by the same pattern.

Extension: This format can be used to write an individual or group story. See "Writing a Group Story."

Integration: Have the children compare this pattern with their own lives. "You are the somebody. Finish the wanted, but, so portions for yourself." They can share their stories if they wish to.

Evaluation: Check on children's ability to pick out these important parts of a story and to process that information.

CLASS NEWSPAPER

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Use reading in conjunction with other language processes.
- Perceive himself or herself as a capable language user.

Focus: Children write newspaper articles for classmates to read.

Materials:
- Paper
- Primary typewriter
- Pencils

Procedure: Have the class plan a weekly or monthly class newspaper. Discuss what type of articles they wish: Joke of the Week, Class News, Book Review, Artist of the Week, Sports News, etc. Have children select which articles they wish to write. More than one might write on the same subject, so that authors are comfortable with their topics.

Choose an editorial board to edit the articles. Have children proofread for clarity, spelling, punctuation, etc. before final copies are made.

The newspaper can be typed, copied, and distributed to the children. Some classes make enough to distribute to children and teachers of other classes.

An alternate plan is to pin the articles on a bulletin board reserved for this purpose.

Integration: Children compare their newspaper with other young people's newspapers. Are there ideas they would like to incorporate? Do titles of articles fit what's in the article?

Evaluation: Do children enjoy reading the product? How well can they plan and execute their plans? Do the newspapers improve over a few weeks?

DAILY STORY TIME

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop increasing knowledge, vocabulary and appreciation of literature.

Focus: Children listen to a literature selection and respond to the story from their own experience and hear others respond from theirs.

Materials: A literature selection appropriate to the particular group of children. Selections will vary from new publications to old favorites, and from books related to themes (holidays, units of study) to spontaneous choices made by children in the group.

Procedure: An adult reads a story to the entire class or small groups, often at a regularly scheduled time. A typical session would be:

1. Display the book front and ask the children to predict something about the story. (Sometimes you'll read the title first; other times, not.)

2. As you read the story, usually keep the "flow" going without distractions away from the topic, but pause in places for children to join in where the next words or phrase are highly predictable (rhymes, repeated phrases).

3. After the reading, ask questions requiring children to think beyond the information presented directly in the story ("Why do you think they did that? What might happen after the story ended?"), and ask for their responses to the story from their own point of view. ("What did you like about the story? Has anything like that ever happened to you?") Encourage a variety of responses, being careful not to stop after just one acceptable response is heard.

4. Frequently it is desirable to follow a story with an art, craft or writing project. Especially when it can be voluntary with a variety of options available, children can benefit from further integration through drawing or painting favorite portions, sequels, or events in sequence.

5. Make the book available to children for free-time activities.

Children of this age enjoy stories that continue for several days via chapters or other units. They are less bound to illustrations and can sit back to enjoy a story. There are many opportunities to link a story with on-going projects, so reading sessions frequently lead to writing tasks, art projects, drama performances. Discussions can interrelate different stories the children have heard.

Integration: Ask children to compare the story or characters with their own lives. "Could that happen to you?" or "What would you have done differently if you had been a character in that story?"

Evaluation: Observe whether students are processing this information in ways that will enable them to increase their understanding of their world and appreciate the contributions of literature. Occasionally ask, "Why do we read these stories? How do they help us?"

READ-ALONGS AT THE LISTENING POST

Objective: To help the child to:

- Be introduced to more technical content than he or she could normally read independently.

Focus: Children listen to a story of their own choice while following the print, and are allowed to repeat the experience frequently, if desired.

Materials:

- A variety of commercial or home-made sets of subject matter books with accompanying tapes (usually cassette) or records (science, social studies, history).
- A listening post where one or six students may listen to records or tapes, with the use of earphones. (Individuals may listen with just a tape recorder, but flexibility is added to the activity if the whole group can listen at once.)

Procedures: Following an orientation session on how to handle and operate the equipment, the listening aspect of this activity can be carried out by children independently. In fact, they enjoy the responsibility of doing so. Usually a child or group will select a book to listen to but there are occasions when the teacher finds it appropriate to select for or with the child (a book related to a topic of study, a book especially suited for this reader to prepare to read independently to others). When introducing the activity, establish the habit in students of thoughtfully choosing a book and pondering for a moment what it might be about or reflecting on why it looks interesting.

While listening, the children follow the text to learn about the topic at hand. Depending on their familiarity with the content, they may be reading most of the text simultaneously with the recording, but are being assisted with new ideas and/or vocabulary.

Students can tape such material for each other on various hobbies, crafts, and other special abilities or subjects they have to share with each other.

Integration: Ask students to use the information gained in some way: tell others, write a summary, incorporate it into an ongoing study or report.

Evaluation: Observe the use of such resources to determine the student's ability to use this procedure as a bridge from the known to the unknown. Look for the students' subsequent use of the new terms and ideas in their own work.

RESPONDING TO AN INTERVIEW

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Use reading in conjunction with the other language processes.
- Derive meaning from written language.

Focus: After reading a story, children assume roles of characters and are interviewed in the format of a TV interview.

Materials:

- Sufficient copies of a story for a small group of children (four to six). The story should have several characters and some interesting events.
- Tape recorder, tapes

Procedure: Introduce the story to the children as a group. Explain that after they read the story once, they will be choosing characters and then will be interviewed (questioned) as if they were that character. Have the children read the story independently or with partners.

Call the children together to discuss the broad outlines of the plot and the characters each will represent. If there are not enough characters, one or two children can be observers who describe the action. For example, if the story were "Red Riding Hood," a bird in a tree could describe what he saw and heard when the wolf met Red Riding Hood.

Ask the children to reread or scan the story again to review the part their characters had in the action.

Call the children together to begin the interview. It is fun to tape this for future listening. It might be advisable for the teacher to be the interviewer the first time this activity is attempted, but later a child could do it.

Begin the interview something like this: "There was a very interesting happening today in the forest. We have in our studio Red Riding Hood, her Grandmother, Mr. Woodcutter and a Bird who observed the action.

"Miss Riding Hood, how did you happen to be in the forest that day?"

After Miss Riding Hood answers, the other characters can be questioned in the sequence of the story. If any of the characters do not remember the action, they can be directed back to the book to check.

Conclude the interview with a question about future action, such as, "Miss Riding Hood, how do you feel about walking in the forest now? Will you go again?"

Listen to the tape and discuss whether the entire story was told, if the speakers were in character and experienced feelings.

Are there any suggested improvements?

Integration: Ask children how it felt to "be" their character. Would they have acted differently or the same in that situation?

Evaluation: How well did each child remember his or her part? Could he or she scan and find the part of the story needed?

BOOK-BASED DISCUSSION GROUPS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Find pleasure and information in both reading and discussing a book of common interest
- Benefit from various ideas expressed in a group.

Focus: Children discuss personal and group understanding of a book of mutual interest.

Materials: Multiple copies (up to five or six) of books frequently selected by this age group.

Procedure: Children form groups on the basis of a book selected to read. Either an existing group can reach consensus on which book all will read, or groups can be formed spontaneously on the basis of the books selected by individuals. This can either be a whole-class activity or a small-group activity operating simultaneously with several other activities. Book clubs may be formed within a class around interest areas so that one group reads a series of horse stories, for example, over an extended period of time.

All group members read the designated book during class time, at home, during leisure time, or during combinations of these.

At a prior arranged time, the group gathers to discuss the book. The teacher or another leader elicits all members' ideas and opinions about the whole story, main character, favorite event or other focus. Probing questions are used to explore certain aspects in depth (e.g., "Why do you think Glenda acted that way? What might have caused the king to leave early?"). Some form of synthesis or closure is suggested to conclude the activity. Children might tell, write, draw or paint the character most like themselves, the turning point in the story, their favorite part, their alternative ending.

Make a distinct effort to have the children see some part of their own language in print--either by writing it themselves or by seeing the teacher write it. Use terms new to the children in the context of the story to inquire about their understanding. Elicit synonyms for new terms and encourage sharing of terms and phrases related to individual dialects and regional or family background.

Once the activity is established, children may be capable of managing much of it by themselves--selecting the book, setting a date, and choosing follow-up activities and discussion topics. The teacher will usually still want to be involved frequently, if not always, in the discussion to pose interpretive questions and suggest an array of related activities.

Integration: Ask the children to:

- Make one summary statement about how they liked or didn't like the book.
- Recall at least one idea they learned from a classmate in this discussion.

Evaluation: Observe children's behavior during the discussion to assess depth of comprehension and ability to listen and respond to peer contributions.

GROUP UNINTERRUPTED SILENT READING

(This activity is a version of "Uninterrupted Silent Sustained Reading" by Lyman Hunt, University of Vermont.)

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop increasingly efficient reading skills and an appreciation for the world of print.

Focus: Children silently read a book of their own choice or other written text for an uninterrupted period of time.

Materials:

- A wide variety of reading materials on a range of levels of sophistication (such as TV guides and children's magazines, easy readers, trade books, joke books, craft books, poetry) that are easily accessible.
- To initiate this activity some teachers "flood" a rug in the center of the room with books and students gather around to browse and select a book. Others categorize materials and topics in a class library corner.

Procedure: The students are helped to understand that to learn to do anything you must DO it, so this activity is to help improve their reading by just doing it. They can be encouraged by being told that when left alone, we have found that children do have extremely good problem-solving skills and can actually read better than they think, when they need to and want to. Each time they will select their own book and find a comfortable reading place to read silently for a period of minutes. During that time, they are to independently do whatever is necessary to attempt to read their selections (guess, skip and go back, etc.), but they may not interrupt anyone else. Even the adults read during this time. At the end

of the period, students may return the books or some might wish to keep them for further reading, even for the next silent reading period. There is no obligation to "report" on the book to anyone. However, after this activity, some readers often voluntarily gather and want to tell each other about the book they read. Since this is the most desirable possible outcome, it is beneficial to support this extension of the activity.

Integration: Close the period by asking students to think silently about the message or lesson this author was telling the reader. At times, this interpretation could be written, drawn or depicted in some other way.

Evaluation: Observe and talk with children to maintain a level of awareness and interest in their reading. Discuss inferential types of issues and relationships between the story and their own lives, feelings, and beliefs.

SILENT READING WITHIN A BASIC TEXT LESSON

Objective: To help the child to:

- Read independently maintaining a focus on comprehension.

Focus: Children silently read part or all of a story that is part of the regular basal text lesson.

Materials: The basal reading text used for reading instruction or any other story; one copy per child.

Procedure: Within a regular reading lesson, independent silent reading is emphasized. Children are helped to realize the importance of practicing reading the way it is usually done in real situations. They are encouraged by learning that using the common-sense strategies they employ when reading alone (self-correcting, guessing, etc.) is the best thing to do to learn to read better and that that is what all good readers do.

A typical lesson might gather the group at the beginning to read the title and browse the illustrations to 1) discuss what similar experiences each has had or what they already know about the topic, and 2) predict what might happen in the story. Then, after receiving or formulating together a focusing task (read to confirm or reject your initial predictions; read to find a character like yourself, or just read to remember the main ideas to discuss later), individuals go off to read the story independently.

After the reading, they return to discuss the ideas and questions. During the discussion, there may be frequent opportunities to say, "Can you find the part that proves that? Read it to us." This approach teaches the child to employ good skimming techniques and also provides a small glimpse of his or her present oral reading skills.

If a basal text is being used in the classroom, it is strongly suggested that this activity be used with other reading content as well, such as paperbacks and magazines, so students do not come to separate school-type reading from other reading (home, recreational, etc.). Some children at this level may prefer to read with partners, especially at first.

Integration: Ask the children global and specific questions about the story content. Later ask them to assess their own reading abilities. Compare the present with time in the past.

Evaluation: Observe children's reading behavior and ability to discuss the story content to assist in decisions about other reading materials to offer these students. Also, compare their comprehension of these text materials with their comprehension on materials they have chosen for themselves.

QUESTION THE READER

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Associate meaning readily with written language.
- Derive pleasure from stories.

Focus: Children listen to a story and formulate questions to ask the reader.

Materials: A story of interest to the particular group or child.

Procedure: Explain to the children that you are going to read a page of a story to them and that when you finish they are to ask you one question each about the story.

Read the story. Ask for their questions. At first there will probably be simple recall questions. Encourage and praise all questions at first; later on you can point out the more thought-provoking ones.

Invite a child to read the next page. If no one wants to, go on reading yourself but usually someone will choose to read. Now you will have an opportunity to ask one of the questions yourself and can ask something that requires inference, comparison or prediction.

Children will probably imitate the more difficult questions because it is fun to "stump" the reader, particularly if it's the teacher!

At the end, the questions can be discussed and evaluated.

Integration: How does it feel to be the one asking the questions? Is this easier or harder than answering them?

Evaluation: Which questions showed the most perception? Which children had difficulty formulating questions? Was it because they didn't remember the material read or was it hard for them to formulate questions? Could the listeners answer the questions?

USING OTHER MEDIA FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Objective: To help the child to:

- Develop various forms of response to literature and reading.

Focus: After reading a story, children re-enact or extend the story using other media and language processes.

Materials:
- Variety of reading materials
- Collection of scrap art and craft materials (papers, fabrics, paints, "junk," etc.)
- Writing and drawing materials
- Tape recorder, tapes; camera (if available)

Procedure: This activity has unlimited possibilities, but a few components might be:

Write or tell a sequel to the story. (In each case, the task could read, "write or tell" to accommodate learners not yet independent in their writing. However, just the word "write" will be used throughout.)

Write a story using this main character and another character from one of your favorite stories.

Write the story into a play; design costumes; rehearse; present to peers.

Convert the story into a radio program and record it on a tape recorder.

Write and draw the story with your own invented ending on scroll paper to roll through a "TV box."

Choose your favorite scene and create a diorama depicting it.

Use the same characters to write a different story.

Use the patterns you see in this story to write a whole new story.

Children at this level may be able to work independently, especially in small groups and over a series of days to accomplish a rather complex project.

Integration: Ask the child to present his or her project to peers, sometimes within a book group, other times to the total class. Also ask the child to assess his or her own project.

Evaluation: Observe the children working and presenting their projects to determine the depth of understanding and ability to express ideas in various forms.

RETELLING STORIES ORALLY OR IN WRITING

(This task originates in the Reading Miscue Inventory, Y. Goodman and C. Burke, New York: Macmillan, 1971.)

Objective: To help the child to

- Focus primarily on understanding while reading.

Focus: After reading or listening to a story, students tell the story in their own words to someone who has not heard it, or write their retold story to send to a friend.

Materials:
- A wide variety of reading materials
- Writing materials
- Tape recorder (optional)

Procedure: Students read a story of their choice or an assigned story. Before they read, explain that they are to retell or write the story in their own words after reading. To initiate the retelling, you might just say, "Tell me everything you remember" or "Tell me the whole story in your own words." Then listen to all the student has to say. When he or she has told all he or she remembers, you may wish to probe further on the basis of information already given. ("You mentioned two pilots. What did they do?") Or you may wish to encourage synthesizing and generalizing by asking for major ideas or themes. ("What was the main idea or ideas in this story?")

If the students do this task in writing, they either write down only their own spontaneous retelling, or they conclude by answering some general designated questions, such as those mentioned above. Such students will probably have already done oral retellings before written ones. Also, students are encouraged to use "invented logical spellings" to get their stories written when they are

unsure of conventional spelling. They are not penalized for the inaccuracy of this type of spelling.

Students unfamiliar with this task might be helped by practicing retelling an actual experience or a TV show or movie, just to be clear about the task itself.

Integration: In the retelling, emphasize the students' thoughts on the theme or message of this particular story. Ask them to compare it with themes of other recent stories.

Evaluation: Examine the oral and written retellings for reasonable and substantial theme statements (that is, no one theme is "correct," but if students can use an accumulation of story clues to arrive at their notion of a theme, this is what is sought).

READING TO FIND FACTS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Regard reading naturally as a source of information.
- Use a range of written materials to suit specific purposes.

Focus: Children skim and read several books to locate information.

Materials: A selection of books on a given subject, ~~chosen by the children (and teacher).~~

Procedure: Children and teacher meet to discuss the ~~topic and the information they want to find out. If the subject were birds, each child~~ could choose a bird and then hunt for information on a question they select (e.g., what it eats, where it lives, its appearance, its enemies, its nest, etc.).

It may be necessary to help individuals formulate important questions to answer. It may even be helpful for children to browse some of the materials first, and then select a category or area to research.

Children then scan the available books for the information, read what is pertinent, and report back to the class orally or by a written report.

Integration: Children should be encouraged to follow their own interests in choosing their subject. Then, at the conclusion, ask them: "What ~~did you learn about the topic that you~~ didn't know before? What was a review for you?"

Evaluation: How independent are the students in finding and reporting information? Are students willing to skip unimportant words or text when reading in the content areas? Can they determine what is important?

JUDGING IMPORTANT FACTS

Objectives: To help the child to:

- Derive meaning from written language.
- Better understand how written language is used to convey information.

Focus: Children read a brief passage and decide which portions are essential.

Materials:

- Overhead projector
- Marking pen
- Transparencies

Procedure: Type a passage or short story on a transparency. Show to a group of students on the overhead projector.

Have the students, in pairs, look to see if all sentences are necessary for conveying the meaning. Locate unnecessary sentences and cross them out.

Look at the essential sentences and see if any words or phrases can be eliminated. Cross them out.

Have each pair meet with another pair, or total group, and compare different views of what is essential and what is not--and why. Encourage an increased awareness and appreciation of ideas that are different from one's own.

Discuss how the crossed-out parts enhanced the selection, if at all.

Integration: Ask, "How could you use this idea when you write a story? When would you want to keep all the parts you write?"

Evaluation: Observe which children have difficulty picking out the essential sentences and give them experiences at an easier level, such as essential details in a picture or filmstrip or a very familiar brief story.

COMPLETING CLOZE PASSAGES

Objective: To help the child to:

- Read thoughtfully to be able to anticipate upcoming words.

Focus: The reader supplies words to fill the blanks in a story to maintain the sense of the story.

Materials: A copy of a story text from which words have been deleted. The deletions can be based on various criteria (e.g., every fifth or tenth word, the final word in the sentence, the major noun). The specific deletion pattern should be selected to suit the purpose of the task. For beginning readers, an easy-to-determine, obvious item serves well to demonstrate what readers need to be doing while looking at a text. Later, a more difficult task of supplying every fifth word might be appropriate.

Procedure: Pre-reading cloze task. The student writes in words that would complete the passage to make sense (imperfect spelling is not penalized). If the passage was created solely for this purpose and there is no original version, individual students can read their versions to each other, or even create new ones from each other's ideas. If the deleted version was actually based on an original, students may compare their version with the author's to look for similarities and differences. There is no tone of right and wrong, but one of appreciation for diversity.

Post-reading cloze task. As one means of developing and assessing comprehension, the student completes a deleted passage based on all or a portion of a story just read. Or, the specific purpose may be better served by delaying the task a few days or weeks after the reading of the original passage. Either way, students then compare their copies with the original copy.

One way to expand vocabulary and increase flexibility and risk-taking is to ask students to insert items synonymous to the original as they remember it. The highest value is placed on meaning, not on exact terms. This objective may also be achieved with a "reverse cloze" task. In a reverse cloze exercise, a complete passage has words at regular intervals or key words underlined or otherwise marked. In each of these instances, the student is to substitute a synonym for the word marked. This can be especially helpful in oral reading with hesitant readers who are bound to an accuracy model of reading.

This activity helps children become accustomed to the practice of having to think while processing language. These prediction, anticipation and recall strategies are central to their independent reading (just as they are central to critical, thoughtful listening).

One especially beneficial use of this activity is to have children devise their own cloze exercises, based on their own or other short passages. Considerable thought must go into deciding which words would be easily predictable and which ones are crucial to meaning, or to determine any other criteria for deletion. Such criteria should emphasize the two-way nature of communication. The process of exchanging passages with a peer promotes learning in other areas, including expressing oneself clearly to others, and understanding the importance of using logical spelling and legible handwriting.

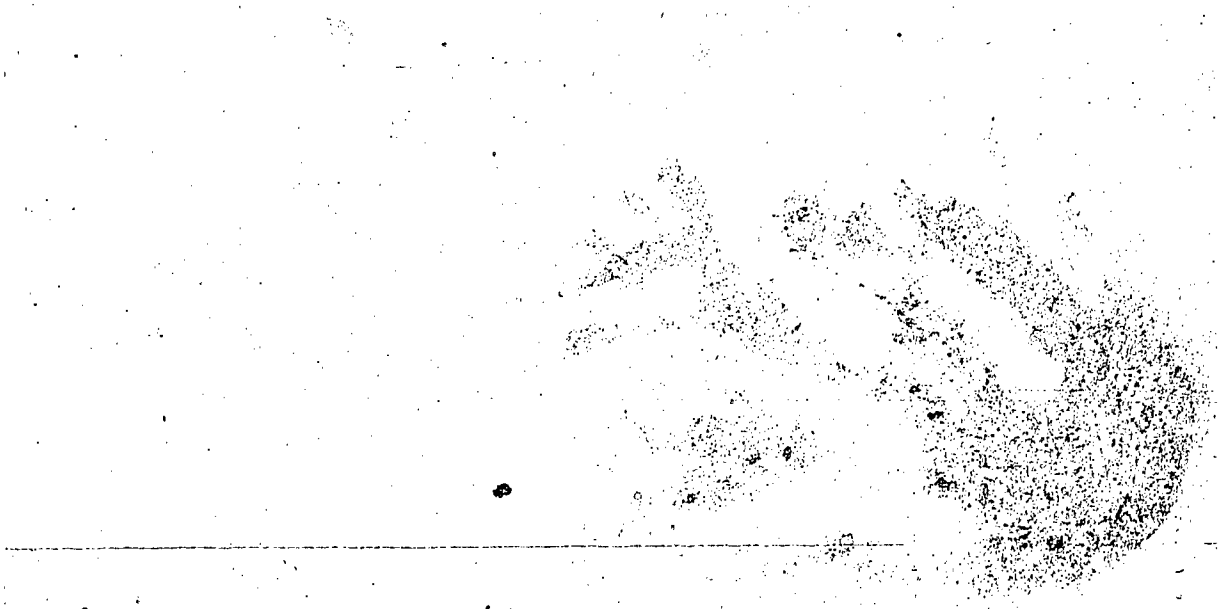
Integration: Ask students to share their completed exercises to hear other possible responses for the same context. Discuss the slight to great change in meaning caused by the different responses.

Evaluation: Read the passages and listen to the students' discussions to learn whether they are using the same problem-solving strategies being promoted for good reading in general (supplying terms that make sense and supplying appropriate language forms). Listen to determine whether these strategies transfer to regular oral reading.

Using Basal Readers

Using a basal text as part of the instructional program is usually more compatible with activities at this level than the others. This compatability is due to the fact that these students are quite confident about their reading ability and use effective strategies without assistance, so they can face the challenge of a wide variety of reading materials used for a range of purposes.

It is still important to help the reader make a connection between himself and the text, so that comprehension-centered activities before and after reading are still needed in some form. Also, to obtain a reasonable degree of involvement from the learner, a change in the sequence of stories or units of study in the text may fit better with current seasons, news, other curriculum areas, and so forth. Therefore, the suggestions presented in the sections on beginning and developing readers can apply here, but there is less concern about the student's lack of confidence and background to cope with the content. Also, the higher-level basal text is often written in more natural language (not in stilted "primer-ese") and is more predictable. Again, it is hoped that a wide variety of materials will be used.



6. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

No single assessment or instant of assessing can be relied upon to provide enough information about students to plan individual or class programs. While many different forms of evaluation should be used to assist in creating an instructional program, the total situational context must still be considered so that generalizations do not go beyond the data gathered.

Our program's position on assessment is similar to the statement made by the International Reading Association (IRA) in 1979 on competency-based testing. Just as the IRA statement recommends that a battery of tests be used to assure reasonable accuracy, we recommend multiple evaluations. The IRA position states:

> No single measure or method of assessment of minimum competencies should ever be the sole criterion for graduation or promotion of a student. Multiple indices assessed through a variety of means, including teacher observations, student work samples, past academic performance, and student self-reports, should be employed to assess competence.
>
> Furthermore, every effort should be made through every possible means to remediate weaknesses diagnosed through tests. Retention in grade or non-promotion of a student should be considered as only one alternative means of remediation and one that should be considered only when all other available methods have failed.
>
> For these reasons, the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association is firmly

opposed to efforts of any school, state, provincial or national agency which attempts to determine a student's graduation or promotion on the basis of any single assessment.

The informal and more formal measures described below are presented as suggestions for carrying out assessment in accordance with this position. The first section describes internal assessment for the teacher's use within the classroom and the second section describes external assessment.

Internal Assessment

While a certain amount of external assessment may have to take place, we believe that teachers will gain the most valuable information for program planning from their own assessments, ranging from formal to informal. These evaluations can be carried out within the context of the normal operation of the classroom; in fact, they can serve as an integral part of instruction. The Taylor Indicators of Reading Competence discussed in Chapter 4 will serve as the central means of internal assessment in the reading program, but complementary means will be discussed below.

It is important to note first, however, that the most effective way to use the TIRC is to employ it at a range of levels of formality. That is, once a teacher has completed even two or three full assessments, he or she can adapt an abbreviated system to capture the information even more rapidly and in spontaneous, unrecorded situations. For example, some teachers sit with a blank piece of paper while listening to individuals or small groups of readers and simply jot down +, 0, or − following each sentence read, in keeping with the ratings used in Level B. Also, specific notes can be taken regarding effective strategies used so the teacher can discuss these positive behaviors after the reading is concluded.

Also, the TIRC can be used far beyond beginning reader assessment. Once a reader shows effective strategies with familiar, "comfortable" content, the instrument can be used when the reader encounters new content in topics quite unfamiliar to the student. This use of the TIRC is consistent with the program objective that students gain competence in reading a wide variety of written materials.

Student Assessment

In keeping with principles of the Responsive Education Program, the most desired and effective assessment is that which is performed by the learners themselves. Therefore, the basic means of assessing both individual and group progress will be the ongoing and final evaluations undertaken by students themselves.

We recommend that teachers use a reading conference, or something similar, as the means for exchanging this information and offering support and guidance to students. Some teachers schedule brief individual conferences daily or twice weekly; others hold one long individual conference weekly; others use individual, partner or small-group conferences from time to time.

The student interview described at the beginning of Chapter 4, along with other questions generated by the teacher and student, can serve as a structure for a conference and for keeping track of a student's progress. That way, the teacher is aware of how the student feels about her own reading and more importantly, the student is given the time for reflection and the support she needs to clarify her own feelings and ideas. The interview should also make it very clear to the student that success in reading is measured by a variety of tests, not a single test score, and that the most important questions are, "Do you feel good about it; Do you like to do it; Do you choose it voluntarily?" This approach helps convey a broader message that is part of every REP curriculum: You are very capable and you will be able to do most of the things you really set out to do.

A convenient means of record-keeping for both student and teacher needs to be devised. Some classrooms use logs; others use card files, file folders, three-ring notebooks, etc. Whatever record-keeping device has been selected is brought to each conference and is used for reviewing past progress and entering current activities, feelings, successes and next steps. In addition to the interview information (gathered once per month or six weeks), the log will contain records of books read and responses to those books. For example, a routine entry might include a book title; author; a statement about the topic in general; major ideas/theme; reader response as to likes/dislikes and why; relationship to own life; potential recommendation to other readers. Such inclusions must be adapted to age level, time constraints, and so forth. To record this information, many children may do one or more of the following: (1) draw pictures to represent ideas, (2) use invented spellings to write words they are unsure about, (3) ask for assistance with spelling, and (4) dictate their information to an older student or adult.

The log can, of course, be much larger than a reading record. It can track plans and assessments of all curricular activities in the child's school day. This integrated approach is preferred, since reading and writing are integral parts of science and social studies topics and projects. Students need never think of reading as a subject area. Rather, it is a way of getting information and enjoyment. For that reason, it is desirable that these conferences center on the student's current project, unit of study, or a similar theme. The information about reading (relative to the student's project) plus other pleasure reading is then just a small part of the conference discussion.

Teacher Self-Assessment

Teachers can use the brief survey given here to guide the initial organization of a classroom and/or to assess the ongoing classroom. The survey is intended to highlight the characteristics of classroom operation that would be anticipated when the Responsive Reading Program is being implemented. It has three areas:

I. Room environment

II. Teacher behaviors

III. Student activities

In combination, these three areas are to "paint a picture" of what is happening regarding reading instruction. To serve a range of teacher levels of experience and understanding, the items presented are quite specific (e.g., a daily silent reading period). These items are not to be interpreted literally in a rigid manner. For instance, while daily silent reading in some form is strongly suggested because it is found to be a significant contributor to reading proficiency, a particular teacher may have sufficient reason to modify this item in some way. Individual variation is always encouraged; only the actual application can determine whether the change maintained the spirit of the original item and achieved adequate success.

With regard to classroom environment, the user indicates whether these items are present to a "high degree" or only "some." "None" indicates their absence. To examine teacher behaviors and student activities, users make a decision on the basis of frequency: "daily," "frequently," "occasionally," or "never."

Teacher Self-Assessment Related to Reading/ Language Learning Opportunities

I. Room Environment

There is evidence of and easy access to:

	None	Some	High Degree	COMMENTS:
A. Children's own language in print and/or on tape				
B. Language that is very familiar to these children				
C. Functional language appropriate to this age level and to their interests in print				
D. Language written in student's own handwriting				
E. A wide variety and number of printed materials				
F. Materials reflecting the cultures and backgrounds of the children				
G. A variety of media other than print (tapes, records, filmstrips, photos, language master)				
H. A comfortable, pleasant setting in which to select and enjoy printed materials				
I. (Where non-readers or beginning readers are present): Stories to read that are written in language predictable to learners, on topics interesting and familiar				

	No	Some	Yes
J. The language environment is changed by adults and children to maintain "currency" of interest and variety: displays and materials are seasonal and limited to what is currently being used.			

II. Teacher Behaviors

Classroom adults:

	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily
A. Listen attentively to children, informally and in instructional situations				
B. Converse informally with children				
C. Maintain a major focus on meaning and enjoyment in all language instruction (reading, writing, speaking, listening)				
D. Practice minimal intervention in student's reading, writing to not disrupt flow and to promote student independence				

	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily	COMMENTS:
E. Promote confidence in the student's own problem-solving abilities in language activities (with many opportunities to self-correct)					
F. Model competent, positive uses of all four language processes (reading, writing, speaking, listening)					

III. Student Activities

Children have opportunities to:

A. Listen to a story read or told live					
B. Read silently, or uninterruptedly, a selection of their own choice					
C. Interact informally with adults and children in the classroom					
D. Participate in different-sized groups; alone, partners, small groups, total group					
E. (For non-readers or beginning readers): Listen to reading being modeled correctly while watching the print simultaneously. (live or recorded)					
F. Select (and repeat, if desired) language activities of own choosing					
G. Assume increasing responsibility for their own planning, conducting and evaluating of language activities					
Check which ones:					
[ ] select own reading, writing material [ ] self-correct while reading, writing [ ] evaluate own performance [ ] select and create own pre/post activities					
H. Use reading, spelling, handwriting, etc. as tools in communication tasks, not ends in themselves					
I. Use their own language and experiences in language activities					
J. Participate in activities that integrate the uses of verbal language with other skills (art, music, dance, computation, etc.)					

External Assessment

The issue of assessment is important because parents, school administrators and others want to ensure that someone is accountable for children's proficiency at reading and that the children are making gains in their reading achievement scores. In addition, in a program supporting holistic learning in natural environments, there is another kind of pressure. The traditional standardized testing systems tend to assess skills in isolation, especially in the young learner, in direct contrast to what we believe to be supportive of significant learning. Therefore, we need to show that practices of the Responsive Education Program not only achieve as great or better gains, but that the whole child benefits in lasting ways that do not result from teaching isolated skills.

The following assessment procedures are designed to document and present that data. Additional instruments would be needed to complete a "battery" of tests to address all the language arts of an interrelated curriculum, but the particular focus here is reading. The first part of the discussion below concerns the topic of group assessment; the second part covers the issue of administering standardized tests.

One comment pertains to this entire discussion: it is always recommended that where mandated testing procedures and/or tested tasks and terms violate the Responsive Education Program's goals on the actual use of the reading process, educators make known their objections to these tests, and continue to work to make the necessary changes that would make testing reasonable and equitable for all children.

Group Assessment

The Responsive guidelines that pertain to individual assessment apply to groups as well. This requirement, of course, makes it difficult to find an acceptable published test.

At present, it seems most reasonable to ask the teacher to examine the existing reading tests that contain subtests specifically termed comprehension. Determine which ones actually contain whole passages and require reading of the text rather than just visual matching. Of those tests, select the one(s) that contain written

passages most relevant to the experience and backgrounds of your school population. Then, when interpreting test results, look at deviant responses so that you can identify patterns and possible linkages with backgrounds different from those expected by the test maker.

A second source of information on group performance is the use of a cloze test. In this case, the teacher can select content that is relevant to the particular population and ensure that more than one passage is included so that the influence of content can be better controlled. Students can complete a cloze passage from material they have already read and/or from new material.

A third source is to use the TIRC as an ongoing group assessment. Rather than focusing on the individual reader, group retellings can be conducted following silent and partner reading (Level A). The other levels lend themselves to group work as well; once the teacher is familiar with the assessment process for individual use. That is, when meeting with small groups of readers, the teacher continues to listen for the readers' degree and ways of seeking meaning in the print. Informal notes can be recorded by the teacher to determine whether there is any significant amount of reading being performed where readers settle for nonsense or lack of understanding (Level B). And finally, daily listening to readers in partners and small groups can be used to identify the effective strategies (Level C) readers are using to obtain meaning.

As mentioned earlier, a variety of tests can be more useful than depending upon one test or one kind of material on one particular day. A standardized comprehension subtest plus, perhaps, three cloze passages using three different selections can provide rather complete information on pre- and post-progress of a group of students. (Research indicates a minimum of 250 words per passage is preferred.)

We would recommend adding other information pertinent to students' success in reading as well, such as library check-out rates, student questionnaires or interviews regarding reading, parent surveys about their child's reading, and teacher observations related to reading activities. Whether the child selects reading as a leisure time activity (pre- and post-comparisons) is an important question for parents and teachers. This is to say that a composite of information is more helpful than any one by itself.

Mandated Standardized Tests

Standardized testing is a "given" for many classrooms, whether anyone likes it or not. Someone has compared this procedure to that of planting a seed and then digging it up daily to check on it. When such "monitoring" is mandatory, teachers can (1) work with decision-makers to install more appropriate and meaningful means of assessment while (2) putting the mandated test in a context meaningful and reasonable to the child.

One way to help children understand and learn from the testing situation, as well as comply with mandates, is to use familiar materials to phase into the actual test material. Perhaps, if one means of adapting the test situation is suggested, teachers can invent their own modifications. Thus, adapting the mandated test is described below:

1. List for yourself the different tasks asked of the child. For example:
   a. Matching words beginning with similar initial consonants
   b. Identifying rhyming words
   c. Reading a paragraph and answering questions
2. Find material very familiar to the children to use to practice these tasks. For example, use a song or poem they all know, such as: "This Land is Your Land."
3. Have the children as a group (or small groups) perform the testing tasks on the familiar material:

This land is your land
This land is my land,
From California
To the New York Island,
From the redwood forests
To the Gulf-stream waters
This land was made for you and me.

For example:

a. initial consonants

"In this first line (point), is there a word that starts the same as (child in class) Laurie's name? (A word is called out) O.K. Say both words: Laurie/Land."

Proceed to other classmates' names, other lines in the song, etc.

b. rhyming words

Using words they know and have read in their own reading instruction, ask for rhyming pairs in the song, e.g., "Which word sounds the same at the end, or rhymes like a poem, with sand, etc.?"

c. Write questions beneath the song, similar in format and type to those in the test. Read the questions with the students and discuss the possible answers. For example:

1) What is the song about?

(a) sand (b) band
(c) land (d) landing

2) Whom was the land made for?

(a) me (b) everyone
(c) you and me (d) all

4. Discuss test-taking strategies. Throughout your work with the familiar material, ask children what clues they see to help them in selecting an answer and what they might do when they do not know the answer. Elicit ideas on:

- logical guessing
- the process of elimination
- always making a selection.

5. After doing the task as a group, ask each one to pretend he is doing this all alone and must make his own best guess.

Use a new set of questions and tasks on the same material for each child to imagine what item he'd select in each case. Afterward, discuss the choices and what clues helped to make those choices. The purpose of such discussion is to reinforce problem-solving strategies and help children become comfortable with a task of forced choice.

6. When children can perform the tasks with familiar material (this may take several sessions), move to predictable but new material (familiar topic, recognizable language patterns, but not ones that are memorized) and perform the same tasks, first as a group, then pretending to do it alone.

7. When children feel comfortable with these tasks and can say why they made specific choices, have them perform the task in writing with pilot test material. (Most districts have already developed mock tests for this purpose.) You may do some practice items together, but then ask children to try on their own.

Some children may need additional experiences with any of these steps to become adequately prepared for the task.

Additional Comments

While children can be aware that there is a time limit and they will be stopped (perhaps with a warning), the time limit need not be stressed to the point of "on your mark, get set, go!" With practice at working within a given time limit, which they should be encouraged to do with a relaxed attitude, they can come to expect to be stopped in some cases, prior to finishing, but know that's all right, or they can use the time after the warning to make their best guesses about remaining items.

Although this description is lengthy, it is not intended to suggest that a major project should be made out of teaching children about test-taking. A few minutes at a time can be spread over days, or may be condensed into three sessions. Vary the steps, tasks, and pace to fit your children and your particular tests. Strive for a balance between helping children be prepared and test-aware, and giving testing undue importance.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Listening" here refers not only to hearing but also to recognizing and interpreting spoken symbols. This process is sometimes termed "auding."

2. Such researchers as Kenneth S. Goodman, Robert B. Ruddell, Frank Smith, James Button, Russell Stouffer, Roach Van Allen, James Moffett, Michael Halliday, Walter Loban, Ruth Strickland and Lyman Hunt have written extensively about these ideas.

3. Responsive Education Staff, The Responsive Education Program (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1976). See Chapter 3, "Cognitive Development in the Responsive Education Program."

4. Responsive Education Staff, op. cit., Chapter 3, "Cognitive Development in the Responsive Education Program"; Chapter 4, "Healthy Self-Concept in the Responsive Education Program"; Chapter 5, "Cultural Pluralism in the Responsive Education Program."

5. William W. Purkey, Self-Concept and School Achievement (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

6. Y. Goodman, C. Burke, and B. Sherman, Strategies in Reading (New York: Macmillan, in press), p. 23.

7. Kenneth Goodman, The Psycholinguistic Nature of the Reading Process (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967).

8. Ibid.

9. Kenneth Goodman, "Goodman Taxonomy of Reading Miscues," in K. Goodman, Final Report, Project No. 9-0375, Grant No. OEG-0-9-320375-4269 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, Bureau of Research, April, 1973).

10. Example based on data taken from tapes of children reading and retelling stories in Mount Diablo Unified School District, Concord, California, 1970-73, and in Lebanon School District, Lebanon, N.H., 1974-75.

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APPENDICES

A. Abstract of "The Challenge of Individualized Reading Instruction," an article by Lyman C. Hunt, Jr.

B. Abstract of "The Role of Prediction," an article by Frank Smith.

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APPENDIX A

Abstract of
"The Challenge of Individualized Reading Instruction"
-an article by Dr. Lyman C. Hunt, Jr.

With increasingly powerful audio and visual media clamoring to satisfy the informational and entertainment needs of the public, it is becoming a real challenge to continue to produce interested, productive readers. As a teacher responding to this challenge, it is important to develop a reading program that values choice, independence, and self-direction and allows children to learn to read by reading.

Important Aspects of Independent, Individualized Reading

Independent, individualized reading is such a program. Its basic goal is to have children read for and by themselves. In order to accomplish this, children are taught the skills of independence and self-reliance. Those who administer the program encourage children to practice these skills just as they would practice any other skills, by incorporating the following fundamental principles into the program:

1. Each reader chooses his or her own material.
2. Each reader sets his or her own pace, with help if necessary, for completing material selected.
3. Each reader, with the teacher's help, engages in responsible, productive reading.

The first important aspect of Individualized, Independent Reading is encouraging readers to select their own materials. Reading will only be

independent and productive if the readers are able to choose what they will be reading. Readers will read if the material interests them. In addition, the decision-making skills involved in selecting materials is necessary to the reading process itself.

In the beginning, some readers may experience difficulty at this new task of self-selection. The teacher must be patient and understand that at first there may be some inappropriate choices made, but that this too can be a valuable learning experience with the proper low-keyed guidance. Teachers can provide as much incentive as possible for making appropriate choices by having a wide variety of materials available to readers. Basic texts, paperbacks, library books, newspapers, and magazines can all be provided. Parents are usually supportive in allowing the children to share their own books.

There should be approximately five to ten books per child that vary in difficulty and cover a wide assortment of subject matter. It is beneficial to rotate the collection occasionally, being careful to retain titles that some children may be waiting to read. Some sort of library system to keep tracks of books and requests is usually helpful.

The second significant aspect of the Independent Individualized Reading Program is to create readers who can read independently. Reading independently involves sustaining concentration and motivation, and keeping track of ideas while reading for a considerable amount of time. These characteristics of independent reading develop with continuous, prolonged reading. It is important to the program to provide the opportunity for and a climate conducive to uninterrupted sustained silent reading.

Uninterrupted, Sustained Silent Reading

Uninterrupted, Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) is the foundation of the program upon which all of the other components, conferences, evaluations, etc., rest. The following are some elements to consider in implementing USSR:

A. Establishing the Atmosphere in the Classroom

The teacher must be prepared and determined to continue having the children practice USSR even if it seems a difficult task. It will require careful planning and time, and it may be necessary to take a firm stand against disruptive behavior. In the beginning stages of the program, priority must be given to USSR.

B. Key Points to Establishing the Climate Necessary for USSR

1. Silent Reading Practice -- Establish a schedule of regular practice periods. Time should be devoted to silent reading each day.
2. Changing the Teacher's Role -- In the beginning stages, one of the best ways to encourage the children to get as much as possible from silent reading is for the teacher to also read during this period. Setting this example helps to get the message across.
3. Stressing Independence -- Use a variety of strategies for helping readers become more independent. The children should understand that it is important that they spent the time reading quietly. It may be a good idea to establish a class motto that says, in effect, that no one may do anything that disturbs the productive reading of another. Teachers too must make it clear that they are not to be interrupted during the time that they are reading.

4. Be Prepared -- Have plenty of reading material available to choose from and help the children prepare themselves for the reading period.

5. Comfortable Positions -- Make sure everyone is comfortable before starting and reinforce the idea that this is an individual, rather than group effort.

C. Be Prepared for Variation in Reading Performance

There will probably be quite a range of concentration, especially in the beginning. At first, about 1/5 to 1/4 of the class will not take it seriously; some will not understand what silent reading means. Allow the already able readers who enjoy reading to settle down to USSR right away to serve as a model for the others. Give ample encouragement to all who need it; let them know they can succeed if they persist. Offer guidance when necessary, emphasizing reading for ideas and exciting parts, rather than remembering everything. Allow for some children to just pretend to read at first. Aim for getting greater amounts of silent reading accomplished during each session.

D. Guidelines for Sustained Silent Reading

Plan the framework of the silent reading period with the class. When plans are decided upon, make them visible to everyone. The following are sample guidelines for the readers that can be adapted to the needs of individual classes:

1. Have enough reading material for the entire reading period.
2. Read to yourself the whole time.
3. Read as much as you can in this period of time.
4. Do not interrupt others or ask for help.
5. Think about what you are reading, not about when it will be

time to stop.

6. Read for as long as you can.

E. Time Schedules

In allotting time for silent reading, the important thing to remember is to begin with a short period of time and gradually extend it. In primary grades, children may read silently for as little as five minutes or less, or for as much as ten minutes. Intermediate levels could also begin with five to ten minute periods. Eventually, depending on age, group and purpose of the exercise, the period could go from thirty to sixty minutes each day.

Evaluation

The goal of the program is to develop qualities of independence, self-direction, and self-sufficiency. Evaluation must reflect the growth of these qualities in the individual, as well as whether or not the individual understands what is being read.

One of the most effective ways of determining the extent to which individuals are acquiring the skills of independence, and self-motivation is through keen observation. Observe how a child goes about selecting reading material and if the choice seems appropriate. Note how quietly and conscientiously a child works, and if upon completing one task, he or she goes on to the next without prompting. Concentration should increase with practice, as should the length of time spent reading silently.

The concept of "extensive" reading underlies Independent, Individualized Reading. Extensive reading is exploratory or detective reading during which the reader goes through a good deal of print constantly searching for ideas that are important to him or her. It is the antithesis of "intensive" or sponge-like reading which theoretically requires the reader to remember

everything that is read. In intensive reading, comprehension is determined by how much is remembered and can be recounted. In extensive reading, comprehension entails judging ideas encountered in the reading, in order to select those that have the greatest relevance to the reader.

Evaluation of the reader's understanding of the material he or she has read is based on extensive reading standards. It is important to know if the reader has responded to ideas of personal importance, and whether or not he or she has the interest and enthusiasm to voluntarily express these responses. Book talks, conferences and discussions are all good ways of determining whether a reader is sorting out important ideas and searching for significant elements in the reading material. The teacher needs to sample some of each child's individual reading and discuss selected parts from one or two of the several books that may have been read between conferences. Asking interested, stimulating questions will encourage the child to indicate meaningful scenes, characters, pictures and ideas, which can then be discussed further. For example, "Did anything happen in the book that you would like to have happen to you?", "Did you learn anything new from this book?", "Would you like to share your book with anyone else, and why?" Other kinds of questions can be asked to determine if the selection of material was appropriate -- "Could you tell what was happening all the time?", "Did you get mixed up?", "How did you straighten yourself out?", "Did you want to keep on reading?"

Even though only a few questions can be asked of each child each time, the teacher will come to recognize which responses indicate that the child has thought about and assimilated some of the ideas that have been read, and which are superficial. This will become clear even if the teacher is not intimately acquainted with all of the materials. Readers, on the other hand,

will become familiar with this kind of discussion and be able to talk with increasing confidence about what they have read. As the program continues, teachers will find that they come to know each individual as a reader, and that they have a clearer picture of each reader's performance and progress than ever before.

Keeping Records of Reading Progress

Keeping records is an important part of the program, but is secondary, particularly in the beginning, to silent reading. As the program develops, records will become more important as a means of documenting both progress and performance and helping the teacher guide the readers. To this end, readers can share the responsibility of keeping records. Each can have a notebook in which entries are made about each piece of material read. The class may determine what questions are important to answer for the record, and the class together or each individual may wish to devise some kind of record-keeping form.

Record-keeping should not become an overwhelming, too time-consuming chore for either teacher or students. It should not take time away from other activities, but should be integrated as well as possible into the program.

Conclusion

In addition to encouraging children to read and stimulating interest and desire for reading, Independent, Individualized Reading has a number of other advantages. It helps children develop the extremely important cognitive skills of decision-making and critical judgment. It improves concentration abilities which carry over into other subject areas. This reading program

also seems to stimulate voluntary interest and independent research and study in other areas. Furthermore, the children seem more anxious to share some of the results of these independent forays in pursuit of information that interests them.

APPENDIX B

Abstract of
"The Role of Prediction in Reading"
-an article by Frank Smith

Studies done over the last ten years indicate the importance of encouraging the reader to use prior knowledge to make sense of the material being read. Using prior knowledge in this way is known familiarly as guessing and is referred to here as prediction. Prediction is a natural part of both listening to spoken language and reading. Everyone who is able to understand spoken language also has the ability to predict as they read or listen.

When we come upon an unfamiliar word as we are reading, we usually either skip over it if the sentence makes sense without it or guess the meaning from the context of the sentence or paragraph. We go through a similar process as we listen to something being read or to spoken language. This is prediction in action and there are four basic reasons why it is automatically practiced by most fluent readers and why it should be encouraged in beginning readers.

1. Certain words have many meanings and can serve different grammatical functions. Often it is only from the context that we can predict the meaning of even simple words such as table, record, force, drive. Usually only one meaning of the word will make sense.

2. The way a word is spelled does not indicate how to pronounce it. Many beginning readers are familiar with the sound of words, but not with their written equivalents. The rules of phonics are complex and readers may have difficulty sounding out a word like laugh. However, if they predict what familiar word beginning with "L" would make sense, they will easily "read"

laugh even if they cannot "sound out" the same word.

3. The brain can only process a limited amount of visual information at any one time. If a long line of random letters is flashed on a screen for a fraction of a second, even an experienced reader will only be able to recognize four or five letters at most. As long as one attempts to read letter by letter, reading is unmanageably slow, restricted and distorted.

4. Short-term memory cannot hold more than six or seven unrelated items at a time. If a word of more than six letters is read letter by letter, the beginning will have been forgotten by the time the end is reached. The same problem will occur if the words of a sentence are read one at a time. By the end of the sentence the beginning words will have been forgotten and it will be impossible to construct the meaning of the whole sentence.

These four basic reasons for prediction all lead to one conclusion -- in order to read effectively and efficiently there is a need to reduce the amount of visual information the brain has to process. This is the role that prediction plays, for prediction is the use of prior knowledge to eliminate unlikely alternatives and bring the choice of possibilities down to a workable number.

Making use of prior knowledge is the key to prediction. All of us do this every day quite automatically in a variety of situations. Our knowledge of the English language is such that if most of us saw this much of a sign partially blocked by a tree:

ic ream

we would easily fill in the missing letters and read "ice cream". It is especially easy to predict in this way if the words are in some sort of context because there are then additional clues. Experiments have shown that

even children have enough language foundation to be able to automatically recognize familiar sequences of letters. Thus they are able to combine visual familiarity with groups of letters with their own previous experience in order to make sense out of a word or groups of words.

There are many advantages in encouraging the use of prediction to develop skill at reading. Reading will be faster and more efficient the fewer alternatives the brain has to process. Reading with prediction entails reading with understanding, working at a level of meaning rather than with dissociated letters and words. Because short-term memory is limited, it is more efficient to fill it with large units of meaning as opposed to dissociated bits and pieces. If the reader is predicting, he or she is constantly seeking the meaning of what is being read, and forming relationships among otherwise isolated words.

When reading with prediction, the important thing is not necessarily to read each word correctly, but to read so that the whole phrase, sentence, or paragraph makes sense. This importance of sense over absolute accuracy gives prediction another advantage in that the reader's language and frame of reference does not always have to match that of the writer. The meaning of "He has no homework today" remains intact even if the reader reads, "He ain't got no homework today." In the same way it would be acceptable to the meaning of this sentence if a reader were to substitute home for house, "She took the bus back to her house." There is time enough after the meaning has been determined to acquaint the reader with unfamiliar words or ways of expression.

If prediction is to be practiced in the classroom, two basic conditions must be met. The first is that the materials being read must have some meaning for the children. Why should they be expected to try to make sense

out of something that has no meaning for them? Conversely, prediction will take place more easily if the children are interested in and want to find out more about what they are reading.

The second condition is that the children are made to feel comfortable and confident about predicting. They must believe that it really is all right to make mistakes and that the most important thing is to make sense out of what they are reading. If a child is reading with this attitude, it would be unlikely that he or she would substitute "horse" for "house" in the example just given. If the children feel anxious, on the other hand and are afraid of making mistakes and facing anger, ridicule or disappointment, they will not take the risk necessary to predict.

There are some obvious ways that prediction can be stimulated in the classroom. Children can be encouraged to guess what a difficult word might be. The teacher can play various reading games, such as stopping suddenly and allowing for children to predict what comes next; leaving out occasional words or making obvious mistakes. Most importantly, children should be allowed to predict naturally. This may mean leaving a word out or substituting other words and may often entail pausing to consider what an unknown word might be. These pauses should be respected, as should children's ability to self-correct. It is satisfying for both teacher and child when the child realizes that the word he or she predicted in one sentence does not make sense in the light of the next sentence, and goes back and adjusts it accordingly.

It would be wrong to assume that prediction is the whole of reading. Other important aspects include efficiently using short-term memory, making minimal use of visual cues, developing strategies for identifying unfamiliar words, and selecting appropriate rates of speed for different reading tastes. All of these skills, however, develop with reading practice. Perhaps the

most significant advantage of prediction is that it actually facilitates successful, meaningful reading experiences through which all the other skills necessary to fluent reading can be acquired.

APPENDIX C

JoEllyn Taylor

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
San Francisco, California

Making Sense: The Basic Skill in Reading

Have you ever heard a student read this way?

"I went home with my fry-end." (friend)

OR *"She stopped to pick a flowed."* (flower)

OR simply stop reading altogether because she did not "know" the next word? These students belong to the large group of ineffective readers who do not know or have forgotten what is basic.

Constructing Meaning is Basic

What *is* basic in reading and the other language arts? To the effective language user it seems obvious that the communication of thought is what is basic. Whether the communication takes place verbally or through writing the receiver is never passive. He unconsciously does what is necessary for him to understand the message of the speaker or author. Using the signals (oral/written) as triggers, he constructs his own meaning which reflects his own language and life experience. His focus while receiving these signals, is "what sense can *I* make out of this?"

Vision of Whole is Necessary for Parts to Make Sense

While taken for granted by effective readers, this demand for meaning seems to be the basic ingredient absent from the ineffective reader's approach to print. Well-intentioned traditional instruction, rather than emphasizing a commitment to understanding, has distracted the reader by paying undue attention to the mechanics of the process (decoding, pronunciation, intonation, etc.). The ineffective reader, as indicated above, has no focus or goal beyond attempting to figure out the parts.

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There is a lack of awareness that the parts add up to a whole with potential meaning.

This disproportionate attention to mechanics can be likened to driving instruction. If the instructor were to isolate the use of the brake and accelerator, emphasizing mastery of those aspects prior to the learner's focus on total road awareness, the student might conceivably direct all of his attention to the pedals instead of the road! Obviously this does not make for effective driving. If, however, the student is first helped to understand the relationship of his car to the road and other vehicles, the use of the pedals and other instruments comes more easily and makes sense in the context of the total driving experience.

Such is the case with the young reader. If she first comes to realize the relationship between oral and written language and is aware that language is used to convey ideas, feelings, etc., this gestalt will assist her in plugging in the other subservient pieces, as they are needed and useful. With such an orientation, the readers might have made *these* substitutions, instead of those cited initially:

I went home with my girlfriend. (friend)

She stopped to pick a daisy. (flower)

My own findings and those of persons conducting research on miscue analysis are that, by and large, American children have enough phonics skills to become competent readers, but that phonics is not enough. If the reader were to seek meaning at all times, the universe of options would be narrowed to those items that are potentially reasonable. In, *The girl climbed the* [*fence*] (if fence is the unknown) the options are immediately limited to nouns that are "climbable." The field is severely reduced again when the "climbable" noun must begin with the letter *f*. A student maintaining a focus on making sense will not even entertain notions about words beginning with *f*, *fe*, *fen* or whatever, if they do not denote climbable nouns. This synergistic sorting system (processing the options simultaneously through semantic, syntactic and symbolic "filters") is a natural process and much more efficient than the traditional single-focused "What does it start with?" (symbolic) approach.

Natural Process of Self-Taught Reader is Synergistic

Young self-taught readers verify these notions for us. Not influenced by conventional instruction, some five-year-olds have revealed to us their intuitive strategies for becoming readers.

First of all, these children have heard stories and enjoyed books from an early age. The adults in their families are seen reading daily for their own interest, needs, and enjoyment, as well as sharing reading time with the children.

After hearing some of their favorite stories read repeatedly and watching the print, these children begin to recognize some portions, and after a period of apparent memorization, phase into actually discerning the words themselves, without reliance on picture clues. Patterns begin to emerge in this process. "That word starts like my name." "These two look alike." "These are the same at the start." When asked, "How do you figure out something you don't know?", they respond with such statements as "I think about what would go there." or "I just say what would sound right."

Obviously, context and the speaker's sense of the language, are the major sources of cues. When one five-year-old was reading Silverstein's "Recipe for a

Hippopotamus Sandwich" (1974) she stopped unsure before the word *mayonnaise*. Her teacher asked, "What *kind* of word is it?" She replied, "Food." He then asked, "What do you think it might be?" "It starts with *m* (sound)," she said, "so it must be *mustard* or *mayonnaise*, but it's long, so it must be *mayonnaise*."

By anyone's common sense criterion, such children are reading. They thoroughly re-tell and discuss the material they read. At the same time, these self-taught readers neither know, nor have they found a need to know:

- alphabet letter names
- sight words in isolation
- letter sounds
- phonics rules

As Frank Smith (1973) points out, this knowledge, if important at all, develops when one needs to spell, to locate words in the dictionary, etc., but is not necessary to be able to read. In fact, it distracts from the *basics* of reading. Beginning reading experiences build the reservoir from which these other skills develop. Attempting to teach these skills as a prerequisite to reading actually violates the natural sequence that these self-taught readers make evident.

"Gestalt" Instruction Based on Natural Sequence

Effective reading instruction is a matter of developing or reinstating the student's natural desire to make sense of his world, in this case the world of print. Ways of doing this can be tailored to fit the level of the reader.

The Young Beginner: In the young child this intuitive demand for sense can be further developed by:

- watching while familiar stories are being read
- seeing known songs and poetry in print
- seeing product labels, ads, commercials
- dictating own stories and seeing them emerge in print
- reading *along with* competent readers
- silently reading (or looking at) books of own choice on a regular basis
- beginning independent reading on familiar, interesting topics, expressed in language similar to one's own
- learning to constantly ask one's self, does this make sense?

Having internalized this fervent demand for meaning, the young reader develops more and more refined thinking skills to deal with the unknown, bringing more experience and language knowledge to each new story and poem. A large storehouse of integrated experiences and sophisticated knowledge of grammar and spelling patterns are subsequently brought to bear on reading and writing tasks in all content areas.

The Older Reader with Difficulties: For the student who did not build her skills of reading in this natural way and is now not processing print sufficiently well to be able to re-tell a story after reading, the habitual demand for meaning must be established. A procedure such as the following can be very helpful in this re-orientation:

Tape record the student's present unassisted oral reading performance and listen to it, asking yourself:

1. *Is she trying to make sense of it at all?*

   A. If so, *to what degree?*

      1. How many sentences still *make sense* in the total context the way she read them? ☐
      2. How many sentences still make sense just as a single sentence? ☐
      3. What percentage do these two figures represent of the total number of sentences in the story? ☐

      TOTAL ☐

B. In what *ways* is she striving for meaning?
   1. Self-correcting
   2. Logical substituting
   3. Using her own dialect
   4. Indicating dissatisfaction with nonsense

II. *Is she appearing* to settle for nonsense?***

A. If so, *to what degree?*
   1. How many sentences (as she read them) do not make sense?
   2. What percentage do they represent? (or simply substract the combined figure in IA,3 from 100 percent)

B. In what *ways* is she arriving at nonsense?
   1. Substituting words that don't make sense
   2. Making critical omissions
   3. Pausing so long that she forgets what she has already read
   4. Other

You now have a broader view of what strategies the reader presently uses to process printed language. How can you use this information?

If she has few or no positive strategies (Section I), you may find the most direct route to instill the habitual demand for sense to be through her own oral language. After she dictates stories, descriptions, anecdotes, memorized songs, rhymes, ads, or any other spontaneous language, you can use this printed copy to help establish the concept that reading is merely listening to a long-distance speaker or interacting with someone who cannot be here now. By re-reading her own words TO her and WITH her, you can build the bridge from demanding sense from a speaker who is present, to demanding sense from the print of the absent speaker (author). The search for meaning is developed through the constant reminder, "Does that make sense?" This will not and should not always result in so-called "accurate" reading of the actual printed words. If we were to monitor our own reading we would discover frequent miscues to make the most sense of what we see. Children, too, who are reading effectively "replace words or phrases of a text, because, as they see it, what they are reading is not as sensible, common, or familiar as it should be" (Bettelheim 1976, p. 13).

Later, or with a More Advanced Student: For a reader who strives to construct *some* meaning from printed stimuli, progress can be achieved by building on the already positive strategies. In fact, with the tape recording of his reading and the story text to follow, he may now become his own best teacher and evaluator. With a focus on, "Listen to see if it makes sense," readers usually spot the majority of their former semantically inappropriate miscues, and change them or sense the need to do so. In this practice, the emphasis shifts from teaching to learning and is more apt to develop along the

*Appearing is used advisedly since we are assessing *oral performance*, not necessarily the actual reading "in the head." The two may differ, but this is an issue too complex to treat lightly here.

**Nonsense = less than sense, in this context. This does not imply random word-calling because most such miscues *do* display graphic similarity to the word in the original text (*think* for *thick*). Nonsense denotes semantic unacceptability or inappropriateness.

natural lines demonstrated by the self-taught readers. The teacher's role becomes one of assisting the student in locating vitally interesting reading matter, urging predictions prior to reading, and discussing story content following the student's independent reading and tape monitoring. This could be accomplished in a small-group format as well.

Reading is learned by reading. Increasing mileage through print, and constructing sense of print are efficient avenues to reading competence. This may appear on the surface to be overly simplistic, but reading need not be regarded as a mysterious process. The miracle, if there is one, is the development of oral language, and this, coupled with the student's recall of life experiences, comprise the ever-increasing bank account from which he draws the "stuff" to make sense of printed language. Thus, teachers can perform one vital function in a student's development of reading competence: to reinforce or reinstate the desire to make sense of the world. This is what is basic to reading, to all of language, and to life itself.

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