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ABSTRACT

These three issues of a newsletter offer diverse kinds of information deemed to be of interest to Association for Direct Instruction (ADI) members--stories of successful implementations in different settings, write-ups of ADI awards, tips on "how to" deliver direct instruction (DI) more effectively, topical articles focused on particular types of instruction (e.g., writing instruction, spelling instruction, etc.), reprints of articles on timely topics, and position papers that address current issues. The Spring 2001, Volume 1, Number 1 issue contains these articles: "Journey from Kindergarten to First Grade" (N. Marchand-Martella and R.C. Martella); "The Power of One" (L.E. DiChiara); "Responding to the Crisis of Education" (M. Kozloff); and "Teachers' Perceptions of Direct Instruction Teaching" (F.B. Bessellieu). The Fall 2001, Volume 1, Number 2 issue contains these articles: "Your State Test Was Not Divinely Inspired" (B. Dixon): "If the Children Aren't Learning, We're Not Teaching" (G.A. Clowes); "Teaching Method Makes the Grade" (M. Bowler); "A Dozen Suggestions to Make DI Beginning Reading Implementations Produce More Student Learning" (J. Silbert); "How to Achieve Excellence" (J. Thompson); "Using Direct Instruction Programs to Teach Comprehension and Language Skills to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students: A Six-Year Study" (J. Kraemer; S. Kramer; H. Koch; K. Madigan; D. Steely); and "Arkansas School for the Blind Adopts More Effective Curriculum" (D. Hunt; D. Woolly; A. Moore). The Spring 2002, Volume 2, Number 1 issue contains these articles: "A View from Askance--Cookie Cutter Curricula" (B. Dixon); "Great Expectations, Greater Results" (A.J. Borsuk); "Scores Soar at Siefert School with Aid of Structured Lessons" (A.J. Borsuk); "Giant Leap in Learning: Teachers at City Springs Elementary Attribute Pupils' Success to Hard Work, Small Classes, and a New Instruction Method" (E. Niedowski); "On-Line Staff Development in Reading Skills" (M.B. Hayden and M.V. Berkeley); "Alex's Story" (G. and K. Shmerler); "Does Direct Instruction in Phonics Benefit Deaf Students?" (B. Trezek); and "Myth versus Science in Educational Systems" (C. Baxter). (NKA)

# Direct Instruction News, 2001

Sara G. Tarver, Editor

Direct Instruction News v1 n1-2 Spr-Fall 2001
Association for Direct Instruction

# Direct Instruction news

ADI Effective School Practices

SARA G. TARVER, Editor, University of Wisconsin-Madison


## *Voices for Excellence in Education—One By One*

A warm "hello" to the hundreds of you who are reading this first issue of *Direct Instruction News (DI News)*. Or, more accurately, the first of a second series of issues of *DI News*. As old-timers like myself may remember, Volume 1, Number 1 of *DI News* was published in September of 1981. Pictures of Doug Carnine, Wes Becker, and Stan Paine were displayed prominently on the first page along with an article in which *DI News* was introduced as a first step in the formation of the Association for Direct Instruction (ADI). The birth of the association was hailed as "The Birth of a New Voice for Excellence in Education." To express our continuing belief in the power of that voice and our belief that the voice of each individual member of ADI makes a significant contribution to the louder voice of the association as a whole, we titled this current issue "Voices for Excellence in Education—One By One."

In 1993, the name of ADI's publication was changed to *Effective School Practices* and continued under that name through 2000. Starting in 2001, ADI members will receive two publications with different names—two issues of *Journal of Direct Instruction (JODI)* and two issues of *DI News*. *JODI*, for the most part, will contain research and research-related articles. *DI News* will provide other kinds of information deemed to be of interest to ADI members—stories of successful implementations in different settings, write-ups of ADI awards, tips on "how to" deliver DI more effectively, topical articles [illegible]ed on particular types of instruction (e.g., writing instruction, spelling instruction, etc.), reprints of articles on timely topics, and position papers that address current issues. As editor of *DI News*, I solicit your help in identifying newsworthy events, writings, and ideas that can help us to reach our goals of (a) teaching children more effectively and efficiently, and (b) communicating that a powerful technology for teaching exists but is not being utilized in most American schools. I also look forward to receiving your "letters to the editor." Feel free to include both "glows" which state what you liked about the issue or particular article and "grows" which suggest what might be changed to make the publication more meaningful and useful.

This first issue of the second round of *Direct Instruction News* contains several articles that exemplify the kinds of news we want to publish. Nancy Marchand-Martella and Ronald Martella share their story of one family's search for a school for their daughter, Amedee, when she started to kindergarten—a story that goes from "bumps in the road" to "smooth sailing." As you will see, the bumps changed to sails when the instruction changed from not-Direct Instruction to Direct Instruction.

Larry DiChiara, Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction, in Lee County School System in Alabama tells the story of how special education teachers—trained by one university professor—convinced him of the power of DI and how he, in turn, began to convince others. It all began about five years ago. Today, every school in the district uses DI to some extent, every teacher new to the district goes through a 3-day training in DI whether they use the programs or not, and an experienced DI teacher serves as teacher/coach to other teachers. Test scores of at-risk students have risen steadily. In one elementary school that had been placed on Academic Alert status because of low academic achievement, DI was implemented school-wide and, after only one year of implementation, test scores reached the national average and the school was granted Academic Clear status. Larry's story demonstrates clearly the "Power of One."

Martin Kozloff declares that Edland is in a state of crisis and that forces both inside and outside of education are reacting to transform education. In his story of how New Hanover County in North Carolina responded to the educational crisis, he tells how the actions

*continued on page 3*

SPRING 2001, Volume 1, Number 1

### In this issue

*The DI News* is published semi-annually by the Association for Direct Instruction. The mission of the Association for Direct Instruction, as stated in the by-laws, is to promote the improvement of effective educational methods.

The Association for Direct Instruction was incorporated in 1981 in the state of Oregon for educational purposes. ADI is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and is a publicly supported organization as defined in Sections 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) and 509(a)(1). Donations are tax-deductible.

A copy or summary of the current financial statement, or annual report, and registration filed by ADI may be obtained by contacting: ADI, PO BOX 10252, Eugene, OR 97440 (541-485-1293). ADI is registered with the state of Oregon, Department of Justice, #79-16751.



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# *Contribute to DI News:*

*DI News* provides practitioners, ADI members, the DI community, and hopefully those new to DI, with stories of successful implementations of DI, reports of ADI awards, tips regarding the effective delivery of DI, articles focused on particular types of instruction, reprints of articles on timely topics, and position papers that address current issues. *The News*' focus is to provide newsworthy events that help us reach the goals of teaching children more effectively and efficiently and communicating that a powerful technology for teaching exists but is not being utilized in most American schools. Readers are invited to contribute personal accounts of success as well as relevant topics deemed useful to the DI community. General areas of submission follow:

**From the field:** Submit letters describing your thrills and frustrations, problems and successes, and so on. A number of experts are available who may be able to offer helpful solutions and recommendations to persons seeking advice.

**News:** Report news of interest to ADI's members.

**Success stories:** Send your stories about successful instruction. These can be short, anecdotal pieces.

**Perspectives:** Submit critiques and perspective essays about a theme of current interest, such as: school restructuring, the ungraded classroom, cooperative learning, site-based management, learning styles, heterogeneous grouping, Regular Ed Initiative and the law, and so on.

**Book notes:** Review a book of interest to members.

**New products:** Descriptions of new products that are available are welcome. Send the description with a sample of the product or a research report validating its effectiveness. Space will be given only to products that have been field-tested and empirically validated.

**Tips for teachers:** Practical, short products that a teacher can copy and use immediately. This might be advice for solving a specific but pervasive problem, a data-keeping form, a single format that would successfully teach something meaningful and impress teachers with the effectiveness and cleverness of Direct Instruction.

**Submission Format:** Send an electronic copy with a hard copy of the manuscript. Indicate the name of the word-processing program you use. Save drawings and figures in separate files. Electronic copy should replace text that is underlined with italic text.

**Illustrations and Figures:** Please send drawings or figures in a camera-ready form, even though you may also include them in electronic form.

Completed manuscripts should be sent to:

Amy Griffin
ADI Publications
PO Box 10252
Eugene, OR 97440

Acknowledgement of receipt of the manuscript will be sent by email. Articles are initially screened by the editors for placement in the correct ADI publication. If appropriate, the article will be sent out for review by peers in the field. These reviewers may recommend acceptance as is, revision without further review, revision with a subsequent review, or rejection. The author is usually notified about the status of the article within a 6- to 8-week period. If the article is published, the author will receive five complimentary copies of the issue in which his or her article appears.

*Voices for Excellence...*
*continued from page 1*

of outsiders (e.g., legislators, state departments of education) impacted educators, making it possible for disaffected insiders (DI advocates and their friends at the local level) to orchestrate curriculum reform in that one county. He describes step by step how DI was gradually integrated into New Hanover County and provides specific guidelines for others who are attempting to do the same in their counties. Don't fail to read these words for the wise from this great sage.

Teachers' perceptions of DI teaching in New Hanover County are reported in the article by Bessellieu, Kozloff and Rice. Comments reveal an overwhelming consensus that DI has been beneficial to both students and teachers. They also show the enthusiasm that is generated when teachers teach and students learn.

Each year, ADI recognizes the contributions of practitioners of DI at an awards dinner at the ADI conference in Eugene, Oregon. Recipients at the 2000 conference told their own poignant stories of success despite many trials and tribulations. Anayezuka Ahidiana's success at City Springs Elementary in Baltimore, Angelica Fazio's success at Central Elementary in San Diego, Ann Fumiko Watanabe's success at The Waihee School in Maui, Sarah Martin-Elam's success at Siefert Elementary School in Milwaukee, Woodbridge Fundamental School's success with DI for twenty-eight years, and four students' success with DI—Matthew Akonom, Marti Dunn, Kalijah Hopkins, and Nathan Roberts—are all heartwarming stories that can boost our spirits and motivate us to continue the hard, but rewarding, work that we do. Amy Griffin's summary of the 2000 ADI awards reports those stories.

It is my hope that *DI News* will play an important role in helping each of you to experience your own success story in whatever capacity you may serve our children. Please share your story with others in *DI News*.

# *Memorial Service for Wesley C. Becker Held*

Dr. Wes Becker died of circulation problems on Sunday, October 29, in California, where he was undergoing medical observations. Wes was 73 years old. A resident of Eugene from 1970 through 1993, Wes was a professor of School Psychology, Educational Psychology, and Special Education at the U of O. From 1978–1989, he was also Associate Dean in the Division of Counseling and Educational Psychology. Wes served on the Board of Directors for Oregon Research Institute during the years 1972–1986.

Wes was a prolific writer, best known for his four textbooks on Educational Psychology, and the milestone book for parents—*Parents are Teachers*. He wrote more than 100 professional articles, and was a co-author of what is currently the preferred series for teaching problem readers in grades 4 through 12 (SRA's Corrective Reading series).

Wes co-founded Engelmann-Becker Corporation, which is located at 8th and Lincoln in Eugene, Oregon, and was co-director of the University of Oregon's Follow Through intervention model, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education as Project Follow Through, an intervention program for at-risk students in kindergarten through grade 3. The University of Oregon model had the highest student achievements of all models in reading, math, language, spelling, and science. The model also resulted in students with the most positive self-images.

Wes Becker was born in 1928 in Rochester, New York. After serving in the armed forces, he attended Stanford University, where he received a BA in 1951. In 1955, he graduated from Stanford with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and Statistics. Wes became a professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Illinois in 1964. In 1968, he became director of the Bereiter-Engelmann program, which was an early intervention program for at-risk preschoolers. In 1969, Wes became director of the Engelmann-Becker Follow Through model, at the University of Illinois. The program was implemented in 20 communities and served more than 10,000 students. The Follow Through grant and most of the staff moved from Champaign-Urbana, Illinois to The University of Oregon in 1970. In 1980, Wes became the senior founder of the Association for Direct Instruction, which provides training and assistance for schools in implementing effective programs and behavioral practices. Wes was editor of the *ADI News* until 1993. The ADI conference held annually in Eugene is the second-largest annual conference the city hosts. In July, 2000, more than 840 persons attended the conference.

*Earlier times, circa 1974. Clockwise, top left: Zig Engelmann, Wes Becker, Linda Carnine, Phyllis Haddox, Linda Olin, Laurie Skillman, (center) Doug Carnine, Jerry Silbert.*

After retiring in 1993, Wes went to Sun City, Arizona where he could be close to family members. He moved to Sedona, Arizona in 1999. Wes leaves behind seven children.

Wes was more than a scholar. He was a pioneer in the use of behavioral principles in the classroom. His battle cry was, "Catch kids in the act of being good." Those who worked with him were routinely amazed not only by his skill, but the speed with which he could do things. Everyone who worked with him learned a great deal. Perhaps his most impressive quality, however, was the strength of his will. In the face of terrible setbacks and impossible deadlines, Wes prevailed. If he promised to get something by a particular time, it was not only done on schedule, but done very well. We will miss him greatly.

The Association for Direct Instruction has established an award fund in the memory of Wesley C. Becker. Wes died in October of 2000. He was an early developer of Direct Instruction as well as the founder of the Association for Direct Instruction.

This award fund will be administered as an endowment fund with the increase in value being given in the form of two $1,000 awards. One award will be given for outstanding published research related to DI and the other for best success story related to DI. These awards will be given starting June of 2002.

At this time donations have totaled $11,000 and a promise by the Engelmann Foundation to fund $1,000 per year. Friends, associates and any others that would like to contribute to the fund in memory of Wes should send their donations to:

Association for Direct Instruction
Wesley Becker Memorial Fund
PO Box 10252
Eugene, OR 97440

ADI is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization and all donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

NANCY E. MARCHAND-MARTELLA and RONALD C. MARTELLA, Eastern Washington University

# *Journey from Kindergarten to First Grade*

## From Bumps in the Road to Smooth Sailing: An Educational Journey

We did it. We bought the home of our dreams—10 acres, a barn, a house and matching garage, even white rail fencing. Being professors in special education, we had checked out the public schools—well, it was more like analyzing them under an electron microscope. Test scores were reviewed; curricula were analyzed; and teachers and administrators were interviewed. Still we bought our house based solely on falling in love with it. We did not buy where the best schools were located. We convinced ourselves that we would work with our children at home. They would not be hurt at school—we would make up the difference.

Our daughter, Amedee, would attend kindergarten the day after we moved into our new home. She was as excited as any child going to school for the first time would be. Pictures were taken, and videotapes were made. We met with the kindergarten teacher on the first day of school and explained our daughter's reading program. *Reading Mastery Fast Cycle I/II* was discussed. The teacher explained that she had no experience with the program but would try to reinforce our daughter's skills at school. We left thinking it would be okay to have our daughter in a school that didn't use Direct Instruction. Yes, she would be fine. Our kindergarten journey had begun.

We tried to be the perfect parents, focusing on the good rather than dwelling on the bad. We attended a reading success night early in the year where it was explained how parents could best teach and reinforce reading at home. Then came the procedures. Children should read and reread and reread the "books" sent by the school at home. These books included predictable story patterns—"Pumpkins by the fence. Pumpkins by the cat. Pumpkins by the hat. Pumpkins by the scarecrow. Pumpkins everywhere." And of course pictures accompanied these phrases or sentences. The teacher explained that these books would facilitate reading. If children came to words they didn't know, they should be prompted to look at the picture, take a running start, substitute a word that makes sense, or look for a little word in a big word. They should also stretch out words, but sounds were not systematically taught. Implicit versus explicit phonics was used in the classroom. For example, the directions on typical worksheets would read, "Point to and name the target letter with the children. Call attention to the *P* in the box with the *puppy* at the beginning of the row. Ask children to draw a line around each letter *P* in the row.

Do the same for the *puppies* and their *bowls* and *balls*. Focus on *P* and *p* when you play a letter recognition game or do a phonics connection activity from the teacher guide." On the other side of the worksheet, the children were to circle the *p* at the beginning of words such as *paint* and *pizza* and then write the letters *P* and *p* on the lines provided. Our daughter, who was being taught to read using *Reading Mastery* by us, began to guess at words. She seemed to be losing ground. Error corrections not used by us were being used with her. She began to reverse letters and numbers. Library books were sent home that were not on her reading level; after meeting with the librarian and the teacher about what she could read, she brought home a book in Spanish!

Our first parent-teacher conference was also interesting. We were provided an assessment of our daughter's performance. This assessment had our daughter rate her own performance on work/social skills (e.g., be responsible, work cooperatively); reading, writing readiness, and communication skills (e.g., knowledge of letters and sounds, identify sight words, use the traits of quality writing such as idea/organize/word choice); math skills (e.g., read a graph, estimate using numbers); and social, physical, life sciences, and health and fitness skills (e.g., food/nutrition, energy, transportation) by circling a "thumbs up, thumbs sideways, or thumbs down." We spent time reviewing what our daughter thought of her own skill performance on four pages of kindergarten goals such as these. Interestingly, our daughter rated all 38 items as "thumbs up" although we knew she had not learned the skills for many of the areas noted on the form. We also reviewed the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test that was administered by the teacher. She discussed all scores in age equivalents saying that our daughter was either 1 month above or below in specified areas. She asked us what we thought of the scores. We of course were quick to inform her that age equivalents were developmental scores and could not be interpreted in this manner. We wanted to know her skill performance based on direct observation of her skills in school. Was that asking too much? We were told that Amedee did not know many of the letter names (not introduced in *Reading Mastery* to date) and said the *c* sound wrong. When asked what the *c* sound should be, we were told like the one in *"face."* Amedee was producing the *c* like in *cake*!

Then the homework came. One activity was to determine the circumference of a pumpkin she had gotten from school and find five items at home that were as long as the pumpkin was around. We quizzed our daughter on the meaning of circumference. She did not know. Another sheet came home on graphing the length of bears in feet and then responding to questions such as, "how many bears are five feet or shorter?" or, "how many bears are six feet in length?" Additionally, our daughter was to get on all fours "like a bear" and measure from her "snout" to her "tail" and then convert this to feet and inches. Again, our daughter had no idea about measurement, feet, conversion, inches, length, or the like. The year seemed to progress in this manner. When our daughter missed a week of school, the teacher gathered her homework saying she was missing so much. We spent the next few hours doing the pasting, coloring, and cutting that she had missed in school. Again, at home we were doing *Reading Mastery* and *Connecting Math Concepts* lessons. We were working on handwriting. Sleepless nights ensued on our part. We knew that we were settling for an education for our daughter. We were not giving her the best possible education that we could. What were we to do?

We met with the principal who was special education trained. She had visions like we had for education and reform. She sent several teachers to a Direct Instruction school we recommended where we had conducted research and had seen amazing things. This was a model school that served as a training ground for our students, a place where DI had been adopted and was appreciated. In fact the DI teacher of the year for the Association for Direct Instruction was at this school. The teachers from our neighborhood school along with others returned from their visit noting the high performance of the students but saying it just wasn't right for the students in their school.

We decided to place our daughter into the DI school that was 30 minutes away. This required completing a release form from our current district. This form asked why we were placing our daughter into another district. We noted that the new school used research-validated curricula and instruction. The new district required paperwork too. We noted that we were placing our daughter into this district because they used research-validated practices.

We were fortunate to get our daughter into Evergreen Elementary, and so another journey began. On the first day of first grade, a Wednesday, Amedee was assessed on her knowledge of sounds. By the end of the week, Amedee was given placement tests for *Connecting Math Concepts* and *Reading Mastery*. On the start of the first full week of school, Amedee was skill grouped for reading and math. During the upcoming year, she will receive instruction in *Spelling Mastery* and *Reasoning and Writing*. She also participates in center activities to extend her knowledge and skills. Science and social studies round out the curriculum. Of course music and PE are also provided.

We placed our two top students (one undergraduate and one graduate) into the school to help provide additional instruction in the classroom. They describe a setting where all children are learning and expectations are high. They are ever amazed at what they have seen in other schools and what they are seeing at Evergreen. They are thankful for spending their tuition money so wisely as they experience a model classroom and school. They appreciate observing and learning from a model teacher, one who is the epitome of effective instructional practice.

We attended the open house for Evergreen Elementary one evening in September. During the welcome

and overview provided by the four first grade teachers, we learned of the Direct Instruction goals for the classroom:

- All children will learn if we teach them carefully.
- The teacher is responsible for student success.
- Mastery is the goal for every student.
- Learners acquire knowledge at as fast a rate as possible.
- The acquisition of academic skills builds high self-esteem.
- Students must be actively involved.
- Curriculum provides a logical and systematic means for accountability.

The sounds from the *Reading Mastery* program were modeled and practiced with the parents. A pronunciation guide was sent home with each parent. The discipline plan was reviewed. The homework plan was discussed. We smiled when homework was described as additional independent practice. (homework would be sent home from 10 lessons ago). The teachers actually showed data from previous years noting the reading performance of first grade students at Evergreen. Data! We had died and gone to heaven. We wanted to leap up and shout "Yessss!" but we thought our enthusiasm might be misread for insanity. We kept turning around to see the looks on the faces of the other parents. We were in shock, but were others? It seemed that most just shook their heads and smiled. Can you truly appreciate an example of something unless you have experienced a nonexample?

As we are writing this piece we have to smile and feel lucky. Our daughter loves school and feels smart because she is smart. Academic success brings improved self-esteem. Listening to her read in bed at night makes us thankful that we made the choice for better education. Saying she will be okay is simply not good enough. We want the best for our child. And of course we are thinking ahead to our son (now 4) who is attending a preschool in our department that we funded through a state grant. *Language for Learning* is the curriculum to be used. When he attends kindergarten, he will receive not only *Language for Learning* but *Reading Mastery*. How novel to provide these curricular materials for kindergartners!

Now we will have to take the education of our children 1 year at a time. Students whose neighborhood school is Evergreen, next year and for subsequent years, could bump our children out of Evergreen. But we will live for today and worry about tomorrow each August.

So what is the moral of this story? Buy a house in the right district? Don't fall in love with the perfect house? Get your child into a Direct Instruction school or classroom? Having experienced a school that does not align with our beliefs about instruction and then experiencing one that does has taught us several lessons. Chief among those is never compromise on what you know is best for your child. Have high standards and expectations because they involve your child and his or her future. Developing a life long learner is a fragile thing. We learned much on our journey in kindergarten. Yes there were bumps in the road but our journey in first grade (and with luck much beyond that) is smooth sailing! We are looking forward to this journey.

LARRY E. DiCHIARA, Ed.D., Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction, Lee County School System, Opelika, Alabama

# *The Power of One*

How often have we heard that one person cannot possibly make a difference? In a world as diverse as ours, in a society as fast-moving as it is, in communities and schools grown weary from the pummeling of daily challenges, complex issues, and growing disengagement, it is no wonder that many individuals feel helpless.

Teachers are no different. They face complex problems with few simple solutions and those problems are not going away. Many simply do not believe that they can make a difference. Nor do they feel that they know how or that they would be given the freedom to try even if they were willing to take the risk of doing what must be done to make a difference. I am reminded of the expression: If we always do what we have always done, we will always get what we have always gotten!

Ron Edmonds (1983) once said, "How many effective schools must you see to be persuaded of the educability of all children?...we already know more than enough to educate any child whose education is of interest to us. Whether or not we educate all of our children well depends first on how we *feel* about, and then on what we *do* about, the fact that we haven't so far."

This is a story of how a variety of individuals—one by one—made a difference in one school system—Lee County School System in Lee County, Alabama. It tells how these individuals persevered to successfully install and implement one or more Direct Instruction programs and how they did it despite many obstacles. Paramount among the obstacles are the myths, untruths, and misunderstandings of Direct Instruction with which we are all too familiar. My story follows a brief discussion of what I call a "Direct Instruction Paradox."

## *Direct Instruction Paradox*

Direct Instruction (DI) has been described as explicit instruction, a technique, a philosophy, a method, a highly structured and uniquely sequenced curriculum, a data-driven blueprint of instruction that is both efficient and effective. DI is something of a paradox, however. It has been found, time and time again, in research study after research study, to be one of the most effective methods of instruction that has ever existed. Yet, today, to mainstream educators, DI continues to be the Rodney Dangerfield of instructional methods.

Ellis and Fouts (in *Research On Educational Interventions*, 1997) stated, "...One seldom finds any written criticism (of DI) from the critics. DI seems to be basically ignored, much like brussels sprouts, primarily based on personal distaste." This distaste is primarily due to the regimented nature of the instruction, the scripting, the tight controls and design of the programs. But these are integral components without which DI would not be the efficient and effective form of instruction that it is.

Those who have thoroughly reviewed the literature, or better yet, have used DI with students, remain steadfastly convinced of its effectiveness. At the same time, educators who *think* that they know the tenets, philosophy, and scope of Direct Instruction (when they really *don't*), often lead the charge to keep it out of the "regular" classroom, because, "...certainly you know that Direct Instruction is for 'special' students; it is a remedial program..." and on and on ad nauseam.

Many naysayers use the old argument that DI stifles creativity. One of my exasperated colleagues often retorts, "Would someone please tell me what is so inherently creative about producing illiterate children!" Ellis and Fouts (1997) agree, "...it could be argued that teacher creativity is not the end product of schooling, student learning is." They go on to say, "Imagine doctors rejecting a treatment, not because it didn't work, but because it cramped their style, or stifled their creativity." This begs the question as to why a patient has the right to expect that doctors or surgeons follow researched and proven procedures lest they be charged with malpractice, yet we do not hold teachers to the same standards?

## *Success Story*

Lee County School System is located in rural east Alabama. The system consists of 4 high schools, 2 middle schools, and 6 elementary schools. There are 9,100 students (78% white, 22% black). Approximately 42% of the students qualify for the free or reduced meals program. Yet, on the most recently administered SAT-9, Lee County students scored at the 53rd percentile (50th percentile is the national average). On the STAR reading assessment, only 43% of the county's 1st–6th graders read below the national average (compared to 50% that score at or below average nationally). As revealed by the following story, such scores were not always the case in Lee County.

A whole language-based basal series has been the adopted reading text in Lee County for many years. Approximately 5 years ago (1995), reading levels were so low that school officials decided to invest in a phonics-based supplemental reading program that was primarily used at the k–2 levels. It involved music, movement, singing, etc.

Reading scores showed some improvement, but remained well below the national average. The number of at-risk students continued to grow at all grade levels, drop out rates remained high, and special education numbers were at 18%, well above the state average of 12%.

During this time, regular education teachers and administrators were unfamiliar with DI. Only a handful of special education teachers were using DI. These special education teachers had received their training from Dr. Craig Darch via Auburn University's Learning Disabilities program. Craig Darch was a student under the developers and early pioneers of DI—Zig Engelmann, Doug Carnine, Wes Becker and others—while at the University of Oregon. As Coordinator of Special Education in Lee County at that time, I very often found myself being verbally assaulted by DI teachers who were appalled at the fact that I, as a school system administrator, was allowing other special education teachers to use a multitude of methods and materials that were "inferior" to DI. They had data to prove it! And they showed it to me at every opportunity!

Finally, I began studying the data and listening to their mantra, and eventually I became absolutely convinced that they were telling me the truth and I needed to try and do something to make a difference. One of the teachers even said to me, "If you sit back and continue to allow this to happen, you ought to be charged with child abuse!" And she was S-E-R-I-O-U-S!! (Note to the reader: This ONE person *really* made a difference.)

I began the process of trying to educate and convince others of the power of DI. It was not a difficult task to convince special education teachers to try it because they were usually desperate for materials and seemed to constantly search for things that might work with their students who were suffering from dysteachia. Oops, I mean dyslexia.

In 1996, at a time when I was At-Risk Coordinator for Lee County School System, the State of Alabama's Department of Education allocated at-risk funds to all local school systems based on the number and poverty level of students in each district. Because of the success demonstrated with special education students, the county chose to invest a majority of its funds into DI reading programs for at-risk students.

Fortunately, as the At-Risk Coordinator, I was given almost total autonomy to map out the intervention strategy for the county. We proposed the at-risk initiative as ASAP (As Soon As

Possible) in order to stress a sense of urgency. Our Superintendent of Education was convinced of the initiative's potential and approval was obtained from the school board.

That's when the real challenge began. How were we going to serve the at-risk students with limited funds and reluctant teachers and administrators? We began by contacting unemployed, certified teachers who lived in the Lee County area. We offered them an opportunity to teach reading to at-risk students, everyday, at the same school, to the same students, 5 periods per day, for $54 per day, without insurance or other benefits. We started with 10 teachers and trained them on *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading*. They served 6–8 students per period at each school, a total of 83 students in grade 4, 51 students in grades 7–8, and 24 students in grades 9–10.

When the initiative began, the average SAT-9 percentile rank of the 158 at-risk students was 15. After 106 days of instruction, the average percentile rank of the same 158 students was 27—a 12-percentile point gain. Remember that this was accomplished by unemployed, semi-trained, inexperienced, first-year teachers who had never taught a day in their lives! Should we not expect even better results if this were being carried out by well-trained, experienced, veteran teachers?

During the 1997–98 school year, we expanded the program to include 13 teachers ($66 per day!) and 252 students. The net overall gain was 9 percentile points. In 1998–99, we worked with 16 teachers and 340 elementary and junior high students. The percentile gain was 10 points. In 1999–2000, 16 teachers worked with 355 students and gained 11 percentile points. All of these gains were taking place while the remainder of the school system achieved 1–3 point increases or 1–3 point decreases. An interesting side note: Lee County has now hired 40 of the 55 DI teachers as full-time teachers because of their success and hard work, their dedication and willingness to sacrifice, and because they had become reading specialists. This program served as a year-long training and proving ground for these teachers.

Because of the success with special education and at-risk students, DI began to emerge in the eyes of many of our teachers and administrators as a viable program. DI began springing up in after-school tutorial programs, summer remedial programs, and so on. Many teachers asked for training. Some elementary teachers requested permission to use it in their regular classrooms. Some principals allowed it, others did not. Some Title teachers began to use DI, while others remained leery.

In 1996–97, Loachapoka Elementary School scored at the 35th percentile on the SAT-9 Composite Battery. The school was placed on the State Department's Academic Alert list, which meant that if scores did not improve significantly over a two-year period, the school could be taken over by the state. Loachapoka had a long history of low academic achievement. The school serves approximately 335 students: 99% minority, low socioeconomic, majority from one-parent homes. Because of the Academic Alert status, and because of our success with special education and at-risk students in other schools, the superintendent allowed us to take what appeared at that time to be drastic measures. A team of our best DI teachers trained the entire elementary staff at Loachapoka. To make a very long story short, Loachapoka scored at the 50th percentile at the end of that year. The school was given Academic Clear status and schools from all over the state of Alabama now visit Loachapoka to see DI in action. Although DI played a major role in this success story, it is important to point out that factors other than DI contributed to the success—factors such as test incentives, university partnerships, weekly faculty meetings, etc.

The Lee County School System decided to require all newly hired teachers to go through a 3-day training in DI whether they used the programs or not. The training simply made them better language arts teachers and helped them understand the fine details and complexities of language acquisition. More importantly, we had a captive audience that was open-minded and soon came to discover why DI was so effective and harmless. Simply put: The training dispelled the myths that existed about DI and helped these new teachers to not be afraid! Our school system now conducts 2 local trainings and 2 trainings at the State Department of Education's Mega Conference in Mobile, Alabama. Each of these free trainings is typically attended by between 125–180 teachers.

Currently, every school in the Lee County School System uses DI to some extent. At last count, 168 teachers were teaching either *Reading Mastery*, *Corrective Reading*, *Language for Learning*, *Spelling Mastery*, *Morphographic Spelling*, *Reasoning and Writing*, or *Connecting Math Concepts*. Although 168 is 160 more than the 8 teachers who were using DI just 5 years earlier, it is still well below the number that we hope to reach.

Because of the numerous DI initiatives being implemented in our system, we hired one of our best and most experienced DI teachers to serve as resource teacher/coach to any teacher who is using DI program(s). This continuous assistance and training helps to ensure the fidelity of the instruction.

Also because of the various DI implementations, Lee County Schools reduced special education referrals from 171 to 108 over the period of one year. The State Department is now partnering with our system to use our model as a means of reducing special education numbers across the state.

As of July 2000, more than 276 schools in the State of Alabama were using DI to some extent. According to Dr. Katherine Mitchell, Coordinator of the Alabama Reading Initiative, this means that over 50% of the schools participating in the Alabama Reading Initiative are using DI.

I recently completed a doctoral dissertation study which showed that at-risk fourth graders who received DI reading significantly outperformed at-risk fourth graders who received instruction with the traditional basal reader. This ONE study adds to the growing body of research supporting DI.

Some final thoughts on the power of one: **One person CAN make a difference** —one university professor; special education teachers—one by one; resource teachers —one by one; one special education coordinator; one at-risk coordinator; one superintendent; courageous principals—one by one; $54 DI teachers—one by one; Title teachers—one by one; after-school tutors—one by one; and, finally, the many regular teachers who step out of their comfortable boxes and dare to try another way—one by one.

It is my hope that this story of one small rural school system's journey may serve as a source of inspiration and a catalyst for those who want to make a difference and simply don't know where to start. It is our belief, and our promise, that it *is* a fight worth fighting!

MARTIN KOZLOFF, University of North Carolina at Wilmington

# *Responding to the Crisis in Education*

**Excerpts from the Keynote Address given at the Third Southeast DI Conference in Orlando, Florida. June, 2000**

The British historian, Arnold Toynbee, spent a good chunk of his life studying civilizations living and gone. He summarized what he found with three rules.

**First rule.** Civilizations sooner or later are in crisis. Their major institutions don't work very well anymore, and therefore lose legitimacy.

**Second rule.** Civilizations fail when leaders don't notice a crisis; when leaders deny a crisis exists; or when leaders' responses worsen a crisis.

**Third rule.** Civilizations that don't adapt to crisis don't just disappear. They are taken over, and transformed—more gradually or more suddenly—either by outsiders or disaffected insiders, or by an alliance of outsiders and insiders.

The field of education, or Edland, is in or is fast approaching a crisis. It can't sustain itself with its unsatisfactory outcomes, its fanciful theories of learning and instruction, its inept teaching practices, and its programs of teacher indoctrination and ill preparation. And it's certain that the leaders of Edland—who are at the root of the crisis—and who enjoy power and prestige—will not admit their culpability and will not make needed changes that would lower their social positions.

Therefore, by rule 3, I conclude that Edland is ready to be transformed—either by outsiders (that is, the political state), by disaffected insiders (that is, by DI and our allies—the foundations, consumer groups, applied behavior analysts, and others who advocate elements—first, logically organized, research-based, focused instruction), or best yet, transformed by an alliance of the political state with us and our allies. I'll give some evidence to support the three propositions, describe events in New Hanover County, North Carolina, that illustrate the propositions, and end with some generalizations from what we've learned.

## *Listen: Edland is in a State of Crisis*

Edland is an enormous and astonishingly expensive arrangement of schools of education, publishers, and organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. Edland provides curricula to public schools—curricula which reveal their creators' superficial understanding of logical design. New teachers are trained to deliver these curricula in public schools via "progressive" forms of instruction—which increasingly resemble group therapy. Edland justifies its curricula and instruction with a so-called research base on "best" and "developmentally appropriate practices"—a research base consisting largely of anecdotes, authors' opinions, and pre-experimental research designs. And Edland maintains an apparatus of conferences and publications that disseminate always innovative—but seldom effective—models of school reform, classroom instruction, and teacher training. The apparatus functions to legitimize Edland's existence and activities, and to hide the failures in Edland's outcomes and the ineptitude of its leaders.

The manifest function of public schools for society, the reason for their existence, and what families and teachers by and large want public schools to do, is prepare children for adulthood by transmitting culture—that is, disseminating and inculcating the conceptual knowledge, practical skills, and moral principles accumulated by a society and needed for competent participation—or citizenship—in society. Edland's most obvious malady is failure to serve its manifest functions. With slight differences from state to state, about forty

percent of high school students are poor readers. Thirty percent of high school students can't solve everyday math problems or write coherent essays. We find the same figures on reading and math in elementary schools, where the gaps in achievement begin between minority/disadvantaged and white/advantaged children. These early gaps in reading and math spread to writing, science, and all subjects that depend on reading and math. The early disparities in achievement, and later, low self-expectations and weak effort as well, solidify very different life courses for children from different socioeconomic, cultural, and so-called "racial" backgrounds. We know from 30 years of work in DI that these inequalities in learning and in life course are unnecessary. And therefore we feel morally obligated to deem immoral the malinstruction of new teachers and their public school students, and (with Thomas Jefferson) we question whether a republic has long to live when so many of its young citizens are being turned into a culturally illiterate mass.

## *Who Sees the Crisis?*

In large part, a societal crisis is a crisis because it is seen as such by folks who matter. Political coercion, for example, doesn't put a society in crisis unless sufficient numbers of the population find coercion intolerable, and believe a different form of politics is possible. Therefore, the questions are, "Do important groups find the outcomes and the operation of Edland intolerable? And do they see a better way?" The answers are a loud "Yes."

It's becoming clear to school superintendents and school boards; to academics in fields with serious knowledge bases (such as mathematics, history, and business); to wealthy think tanks and foundations; to consumer groups of families who give their children to the care of public schools; and to folks who receive direct consequences for rational vs. irrational thinking (namely, farmers and business persons in state legislatures); that Edland isn't working. Observers of the education scene, such as E. D. Hirsch, Jr. (in *The schools we need and why we don't have them)*, Sandra Stotsky (in *Losing our language*), Rita Kramer (in *Ed school follies*), Richard Mitchell (in *The graves of academe*), Diane Ravitch (in *Left back: A century of failed school reforms*), Jean Chall (in *The academic achievement challenge*), Charles Sykes (in *Dumbing down our kids*), and Arthur Bestor (in *Education wastelands*), all point to the intellectual frivolity, the doctrinal theologicality, and almost compulsive attention to everything but what is important to instruction, that characterize ed school thinking and curricula.

## *The Takeover and Transformation*

Evidence that education is being transformed or taken over by outside forces comes from several different forms of legislation enacted in response to public pressures. There is stringent accountability legislation in at least half a dozen states—legislation with regulations, with financing, with enormous data bases on student achievement, and with teeth. Legislation that mandates higher achievement; that mandates closing the gap between minority and white students; that demands research-based curricula; that rewards schools that do the right thing and punishes schools that won't. Here are relevant sections of North Carolina's statute on reading (Section 115C-81.2. Comprehensive plan for reading achievement):

(a) The State Board of Education shall develop a comprehensive plan to improve reading achievement in the public schools...The plan shall be based on reading instructional practices for which there is strong evidence of effectiveness in existing empirical scientific research studies on reading development...The plan shall, if appropriate, include revision of the standard course of study, revision of teacher certification standards, and revision of teacher education program standards.

(b) The State Board of Education shall critically evaluate and revise the standard course of study so as to provide school units with guidance in the implementation of balanced, integrated, and effective programs of reading instruction. The General Assembly believes that the first, essential step in the complex process of learning to read is the accurate pronunciation of written words and that phonics, which is the knowledge of relationships of the symbols of the written language and their sounds of the spoken language, is the most reliable approach to arriving at the accurate pronunciation of a printed word. Therefore, these programs shall include early and systematic phonics instruction.

(c) In order to reflect changes to the standard course of study and to emphasize balanced, integrated, and effective programs of reading instruction that include early and systematic phonics instruction, the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and with the North Carolina Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, shall review, evaluate, and revise current teacher certification standards and teacher education programs within the institutions of higher education that provide coursework in reading instruction.

(d) Local boards of education are encouraged to review and revise existing board policies, local curricula, and programs of professional development in order to reflect changes to the standard course of study and to emphasize balanced, integrated, and effective programs of reading instruction that include early and systematic phonics instruction.

Do the leaders of the ed establishment see state accountability legislation and mandated forms of research-based instruction as signs of crisis in their effectiveness, their legitimacy, and their social position—as public schools now clearly do? No. This legislation is seen as an unwarranted intrusion. They say, "We don't need the state to man-

date how or what we teach. We can decide for ourselves. We're professionals." Legislatures are more than tired of this defensive posturing. They know that the electorate wants its kids to read better, to do math better, and to know something of American history.

Movements toward vouchers, charter schools, and alternative routes of teacher certification provide further evidence that Edland is being transformed. The voucher and charter school movements clearly say that large numbers of the public no longer judge the ed establishment as having much legitimacy, much credibility, or much hope of improving in their children's school lifetimes. But do the leaders of Edland read the signs this way? No, again. Instead, they try to invalidate the message by branding it a right wing effort to gain political control. Alternative routes to teacher certification offer lateral entry for folks who have degrees in other fields, and even crash programs only six weeks long in some states, including North Carolina. The research says that these teachers do just as well or better than four-year school of ed teachers. And these alternative forms of certification are funded and certified by state legislatures. This clear handwriting on the wall is lost on the education professoriat, who can't imagine that anyone can teach new teachers better, for less money, and in one-fourth the time. But schools of education are beginning to be evaluated along the same lines and by the same legislative groups holding public schools accountable. Politicians under pressure from publics will want to know what evidence justifies the existence of expensive ed schools.

Remember that rule 3 states that civilizations in crisis are taken over and transformed either by outsiders or by disaffected insiders or by an alliance of outsiders and insiders. Lessons from ancient Greece (the battle at Marathon fought in 491 BC and the battle at Thermopylae fought in 480 BC) tell us that alliances are essential. We DI insiders must form alliances with others outside of Edland if we are to prevail in our efforts to transform Edland. By staying home to fight local educational battles rather than also coordinating and focusing force where it matters most—namely, the state departments of public instruction and state legislatures—where accountability laws and phonics laws and math laws are passed, and where textbooks are approved—we eventually may lose battles at the local level as well. Educationists don't care about data on what works—unless they are forced by higher powers. Therefore, we must provide the politicians, the think tanks, the foundations, and the consumer groups with well-designed packets of research data on what works and on what is bunk. We must deliver to legislatures, newspapers, and PTAs, rational critiques of Edland and its folly—critiques that stress the irresponsibility and therefore immorality of unresearched faddish pedagogies and curricula. We must provide principals, PTAs, boards of education, departments of public instruction, and even churches, clear descriptions of DI as an alternative—with videotapes, model classrooms, and data on achievement. And we must become speakers with the guts to go against the ed establishment at school board meetings, at state conferences, and at department of public instruction and legislative panels. These are our weapons.

## *What's Happening in New Hanover County in North Carolina*

North Carolina has a model of accountability with explicit contingencies of reward and punishment. Schools meeting yearly growth objectives are eligible for monetary rewards and recognition as a School of Excellence, School of Distinction, etc. Schools who do not meet growth objectives are designated "low-performing" and are eligible for grants and technical assistance. If a low-performing school does not meet objectives by the end of the next year, the principal may be fired. Students are held accountable also. Students who do not pass state tests given at grades 3, 5, 8, and 12 may not go on to the next grade. This accountability model has had significant effects on administrators and teachers.

*First effect.* County and school administrators believe that the accountability system is here to stay. Therefore, it is understood that time is not on the side of schools whose students are not learning. These schools have to act; they have to change something now.

*Second effect.* District administrators and school principals examine every student's and every class' achievement. They know exactly how well students are doing. Teachers are teaching overtime.

*Third effect.* Administrators and teachers feel pressure to help students achieve from the beginning of the year, and to help at-risk children learn language, reading, and school skills as early as possible (that is, pre-k), so they will be proficient by the third grade gateway.

*Fourth effect.* Teachers, principals, and district administrators understand that rhetoric (such as "We're child-centered."), anecdotal and qualitative data, and deflecting responsibility for low scores onto teachers, children, and families, no longer gains approval or avoids the aversive consequences of low student achievement. In other words, there is a rule implied in the accountability model, and the rule is that socioeconomic status, minority group status, teacher attitude, and family background are only coincidentally related to achievement. The proximal and material cause of achievement and failure is curriculum and instruction. And unlike the excuse variables—of class, race, teacher, and family—curriculum and instruction can be changed.

Given administrators' and teachers' drivenness to raise achievement, their increased attention to achievement data, and the obvious implication that they have to change something, we found that providing administrators and teachers with hard evidence that DI fosters exactly the sort of achievement prescribed by the state (such as data from project Follow Through,

videotapes of kindergartners reading) led many principals and teachers to see DI as a less costly and more rewarding set of beliefs, design principles, and teaching methods. For example, principals came to know that *Reading Recovery* costs about $100,000 a year of Title I funds and "services" only about 20 children, while a full-school implementation of DI language and reading costs less than one-fourth that amount and teaches ALL the children to read. For many administrators, the choice was clear and the decision to use DI was easy.

Here are the steps by which DI was gradually integrated into New Hanover County as a major part of its curriculum reform:

**First step: Getting DI started.** In October, 1998, one school was using DI—*Language for Learning* and *Reading Mastery* —schoolwide. The school served mostly minority and disadvantaged children. Its reading proficiency, and its composite reading, writing, and math proficiency on state tests were as high or higher than in affluent schools not using DI.

By November of 1998, one new school, also in a disadvantaged area, implemented *Language for Learning* and *Reading Mastery* in one class for each of grades k–2. This principal shared her data showing the rapid achievement growth of the children in the DI classes with the principal of a second school serving disadvantaged children. The principal of the second school asked Frances Bessellieu and me how to increase reading achievement of her upper elementary students. We recommended *Corrective Reading.* With less than a month left of school, her kids in grades 3–5 were tested and placed, materials were ordered, teachers received initial training, and DI was now in a second new school. But this each-one-teach-one form of dissemination would probably take a decade to reach all schools. That brings us to step 2.

**Second Step: Summer School.** The executive director of elementary education, Justine Lerch, was impressed by what was happening in the two schools. She took advantage of the opportunity—namely the availability of DI curricula and the momentum—and boldly offered to pay for DI materials in summer school at any elementary school that wanted to use DI. All the principals took her up on this. Frances and I helped test and place children; provided training; made visits to coach; and created simple instruments for teachers to assess their teaching and children's social behavior. We also helped teachers collect data on the number of lessons mastered. Evaluative data were communicated very quickly to principals, teachers, the executive director of elementary education, and the superintendent, Dr. John Morris. All but two of the 59 teachers were very satisfied with what DI had done for the 486 children in summer school. Some teachers said it was the first time in 25 years they felt they were teaching. The data on lessons mastered showed that minority children started well behind white children, but mastered more lessons, and would have caught up in another month or so. In other words, the 18 days of DI summer school provided data that led almost every principal to plan with us DI implementations for the coming year. It also produced a cadre of somewhat experienced DI teachers, who liked DI, in every school.

**Third step: DI in affluent schools.** The director of elementary education identified two affluent schools with a large minority/white achievement gap to pilot test DI as a way to close that gap generally in the county—as mandated by the state. One of these two schools had just missed receiving exemplary status on the North Carolina accountability model—mainly because the minority kids scored so low. The principal and staff of that school were unhappy about being targeted for curriculum reform. However, the staff and principals of the two affluent schools realized they had to do something different to raise children's achievement—both to satisfy their immediate boss, the director of elementary education, and to satisfy the state. Again, we helped to test and place students. We taught the language arts coordinators (former *Reading Recovery* teachers) to order materials. We gave training to all teachers and provided periodic group meetings and individual coaching. Most important, we helped them to supervise and coach themselves.

Data for these two affluent schools were very favorable. Children in *Reading Mastery* made progress at twice the expected rate, and minority children slightly outpaced white children at the same level. Schools' scores on end-of-grade writing tests were much higher than before DI. Kids who received *Reading Mastery* generally did better on the state tests than kids who, in the judgment of teachers, had not needed DI, and so instead received the usual implicit phonics curriculum. There is no question that the principals and staff saw these increases as largely the result of DI. The two affluent schools have become models for other affluent schools with large minority/white achievement gaps. These other affluent schools had small DI implementations this year. Now they are planning larger ones.

**Fourth and Final Step: A consortium.** This year we created a consortium of six elementary schools and a feeder pre-k center (which has managed to combine the *High/Scope Cognitive Curriculum, Language for Learning*, and *Reading Mastery*). The seven schools serve the same disadvantaged and highly transient population. The mission is to have the schools use the same DI curricula, so that as students move from one school to another, receiving teachers will know how to re-test and place them. This will give the kids a more coherent education. It also further institutionalizes DI as the way to solve the problem of disadvantaged children—the problem being the right curricula. In addition, since affluent kids are in the same DI classes, it helps institutionalize DI as a way to reliably and effectively teach all students.

## *Guidelines Based on What We Learned*

**First Guideline: We did not openly work to get DI into the county.** DI was presented as part of something larger—namely, curriculum reform in New Hanover County. DI was present-

ed as one means of helping the county achieve four reform goals with which virtually no one could disagree. These goals are:

1. To raise the achievement of all children—as mandated by the North Carolina accountability model.

2. To close and to prevent the achievement gap between minority and white children—also mandated by the North Carolina accountability model.

3. To intervene early and proactively with powerful curricula in language, reading, and school skills for children in pre-k, kindergarten, and grade 1 at risk of failure academically and behaviorally.

4. To increase teachers' skills in instruction, evaluation, collaboration, and school reform.

By getting educators—from curriculum directors at the county level to teaching assistants in classrooms—to focus on the larger shared mission of raising children's achievement, and to see DI as one rationally chosen means to that end, DI was less of a threat. In fact, with videotape evidence of great DI lessons, and with project Follow Through graphs showing how well DI works in ways consistent with state mandates and county reform goals, DI became something that teachers and administrators wanted to learn more about.

**Second guideline: New DI curricula did not replace existing curricula and materials** (e.g., Houghton Mifflin, *Accelerated Reader,* or even Whole Language). Instead, DI was presented as part of a mix—each curriculum was seen as contributing something to student achievement. Principals and teachers therefore had to examine achievement, determine if it needed to be raised, and then decide how different curricula they use contribute to student achievement. For example, *Language for Learning* was seen as making it possible for children to benefit from reading instruction.

**Third guideline: County administrators did not dictate changes.** Principals and teachers themselves had to decide to adopt new curricula based on their own rational decision-making. However, school principles knew that the county favored DI (again, because the state accountability system made DI favorable). They knew that the state was monitoring every student's achievement and was expecting higher and higher achievement. So, the message was, "It's up to you to do the right thing and we think you know what that is." This way, there was little resistance to DI as something shoved down anyone's throat.

**Fourth guideline: Changes were gradual**—at a pace that was comfortable for personnel and that allowed each next step to be planned on the basis of evaluation of the last step. For example, some schools began with *Corrective Reading* in grades 3–5. When teachers and principals saw how much kids learned, they decided to use *Reading Mastery* the next year beginning in kindergarten.

**Fifth guideline: Each school appointed a curriculum coordinator to oversee testing, placement, materials, and coaching.** This person obviously performed important management tasks. Just as important, this person represented DI. This person's advice was sought when problems arose. This was the first person with whom teachers shared success. This person's presence and continual DI activities kept DI vibrant and salient —something to think about, something happening school-wide and not merely in isolated classrooms, something that helped define the school. Houghton-Mifflin is a series of books. However, a DI coordinator makes DI more than materials. She/he makes DI a way of thinking and a way of teaching.

**Sixth guideline: Potential adversaries who could become great DI teachers, coordinators, or coaches were given better jobs.** Some of the best DI teachers, coordinators, and advocates are former *Reading Recovery* teachers. By accepting DI, they raised their status in their schools and in the county—at the same time preserving their jobs.

**Seventh and final guideline: We encouraged teachers to be critical of DI—but to use DI principles to be critical.** It is likely that teachers whose roles and identities had depended very much on Whole Language, *Reading Recovery*, or on their autonomy to teach as they saw fit, would in time occasionally have hard feelings about DI. To avoid resentment, we encouraged teachers to keep their eyes open and to write down possible logical faults (for example, in *Corrective Reading* deduction exercises); to identify exercises for which children might not be properly prepared by prior lessons; to generate better or additional examples of concepts; and to find typos. In this way, we helped teachers to see that they were not being oppressed by DI, but were welcome and skilled contributors to DI.

Our last effort is to make New Hanover County a leader at the state level, and at the same time to effect change in state policy favorable to DI. I believe that our frequent e-mailing of DI achievement data relevant to the moral mission of well-positioned persons at the state level; our presentations at department of public instruction conferences; our letters thanking legislators and department of public instruction directors for the accountability legislation and the phonics law; and Frances' being asked to serve on a committee of the state board of education—not only help to make DI part of the state culture of school improvement, but may help put *Reading Mastery* on the approved list of reading materials. Who knows, given word enough and time, we may get them to use DI rate and accuracy checkouts as the models for state end-of-grade reading tests.

A DI victory in North Carolina isn't going to happen tomorrow. It's just started. We realize every day that we're sitting on the lap of the goddess who will dump us the instant we take her favor for granted. And so we are thankful; we are humble; and we are always combat ready.

FRANCES B. BESSELLIEU, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. MARTIN A. KOZLOFF, JOHN S. RICE, Watson School of Education, University of North Carolina at Wilmington

# *Teachers' Perceptions of Direct Instruction Teaching*

## *Introduction*

Direct Instruction is a series of curricula in language, reading, math, and science published by Science Research Associates, a division of McGraw-Hill. Thirty years of research shows that Direct Instruction—one type of focused instruction—fosters rapid and reliable achievement in students regardless of ethnicity, "race," family background, or socioeconomic status. For example, both large scale and smaller scale experimental research comparing the outcomes of different forms of instruction show that:

1. Children who are taught math, spelling, reading, and remedial reading with Direct Instruction curricula—such as *Reading Mastery* (Engelmann & Brunner, 1995), *Connecting Math Concepts* (Engelmann & Carnine, 1992), *Corrective Reading* (Engelmann, Carnine & Johnson, 1999), and *Spelling Mastery* (Dixon & Engelmann, 1999)—generally outperform (both academically and with respect to self-esteem) children taught with other forms of instruction, such as whole language and "inquiry" methods (Adams & Engelmann, 1996; Becker & Carnine, 1981; Bock, Stebbins, & Proper, 1977; Tarver & Jung, 1995; Vitale, Medland, & Romance, 1993; Watkins, 1997).

2. The early gains of children who were taught some subjects with Direct Instruction are sustained in later grades. For example, Meyer (1984) followed children (predominantly Black or Hispanic) in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn who had been taught reading and math using Direct Instruction in elementary school. At the end of the 9th grade, these students were still one year ahead of children who had been in control (nonDirect Instruction) schools in reading, and 7 months ahead of control children in math. Similar results were found by Gersten, Keating and Becker (1988). Former Direct Instruction students continued to out-perform children who had received traditional instruction. In addition, in contrast to comparison groups of children who had not received Direct Instruction in earlier years, former Direct Instruction students had higher rates of graduating high school on time, lower rates of dropping out, and higher rates of applying and being accepted into college (Darch, Gersten, & Taylor, 1987; Meyer, Gersten, & Gutkin, 1983).

Despite the long history of extensive evaluation research that supports the effectiveness of Direct Instruction curricula, Direct Instruction has not been accepted in American education as either a method of choice or even as an equal partner amongst other curricula, such as whole language and other "discovery" approaches. Part of the reason is that curriculum decisions at school and district levels frequently rest on the extent to which a curriculum or method of instruction connotes feelings, "philosophies," and value orientations that are consistent with those of education professors, district curriculum coordinators, and local teachers and principals, rather than on experimental data on effectiveness (Ellis & Fouts, 1993; Grossen, 1997; Stone & Clements, 1998). A second, and closely associated reason is that many educators have an inaccurate perception of Direct Instruction, borne perhaps of a lack of direct experience with the materials and their classroom applications. For example, many educators believe that Direct Instruction:

1. Is "only for certain children"; e.g., children with special needs or children who are economically disadvantaged. In fact, Direct Instruction works well with all children.

2. Is "drill and kill"; i.e., involves massed practice. In fact, Direct Instruction involves carefully planned distributed practice.

3. Thwarts teacher creativity because teacher-student interaction is guided by scripts in the Teacher Presentation books. In fact, Direct Instruction requires a great deal of teacher creativity in attending to the needs and progress of all students and in designing expansion activities.

4. Focuses only on basic or rote skills. On the contrary, Direct Instruction curricula quickly move from foundational skills to very high level concepts and cognitive strategies. This is evident, for example, in levels III–VI of *Reading Mastery*, in *Reasoning and Writing*, in *Connecting Math Concepts*, in *Corrective Reading: Comprehension*, and even in the pre-k–2 curriculum called *Language for Learning*.

5. Is disliked by teachers and students (Adams & Engelmann, 1996; Tarver, 1998).

The purpose of this paper is to correct some of the myths about Direct Instruction by providing first-hand information on how teachers who are using Direct Instruction actually perceive it. It is hoped that this sort of information will help educators to make more informed curricular decisions.

## *The Study*

Data were collected from all teachers (83) who were using Direct Instruction Curricula (*Language for Learning*, *Reading Mastery*, and/or *Corrective Reading*) in two situations during 1999–2000.

1. Twenty-four teachers from two affluent schools in New Hanover County whose populations served both white children and minority children, many of whom were from economically disadvantaged families. In these two schools there was a large discrepancy in reading achievement on state end-of-grade tests. The two schools adopted Direct Instruction curricula on a small-scale pilot basis in some classes to see how well it worked overall and with respect to closing the achievement gap. Many teachers, used to whole language as the overarching approach to reading, and to *Reading Recovery* as the predominant approach to remedial reading, were reluctant to use Direct Instruction and voiced many of the common myths and reservations. However, these teachers volunteered (were not ordered by their principals) to try the DI curricula.

2. Summer school classes for at-risk children or for children who needed remedial instruction in 20 elementary schools in New Hanover. Summer school was one month in duration and involved 486 students and 59 teachers.

At the end of the summer school program and at the end of the school year, all of the DI teachers filled out an instrument entitled, "Teachers' Self-Assessment of Direct Instruction Teaching." In addition to rating themselves on instructional skills (such as pacing and error corrections), teachers answered three open-ended questions: (1) How has using DI been beneficial for your students? (2) How has using DI been beneficial to you? (3) Can you see yourself using DI in the future? If so, why? If not, why not? Teachers understood that their responses would help to determine whether or the extent to which DI would continue to be used in their schools; e.g., whether after summer school, it would be adopted for classes during the academic year, or whether, in the two affluent schools, it should be used school-wide. Therefore, teachers understood that they were welcome to give negative evaluations. Following are all of the responses of the 83 teachers.

## *How has using DI been beneficial for your students?*

"I feel I am really helping those children that already seem predestined to be 'below level' and 'at risk.'"

"It has allowed them to become self-disciplined, better listeners and more self-confident learners. They are more willing to attack a word."

"I have been impressed with how quickly children can learn with DI. I taught a group of children in *Language for Learning* during the first semester, and they didn't start *Reading Mastery* until just before Christmas. By January, some of these children were only on level 4 of running records, so in one semester, they grew at least 12 levels to level 16. I do think that it is best to start *Reading Mastery* at the beginning of first grade, if not before. If *Language for Learning* needs to be taught in first grade, it should be taught parallel to *Reading Mastery*."

"I've also noticed my children using the skills they learned when reading other materials."

"They are excited about reading, saying, 'Yeah!' when the lesson gets to story section."

"It helps students focus as a group. Teaches them to learn to work together."

"My students appreciate the improvement in their phonemic awareness, word recognition and fluency. They also work better together as a group as a result of DI."

"I think it helps the children mentally because they feel successful and are reading more text; physically because they are moving to and from a group; and emotionally because they are successful with a group of children and not isolated."

"It has vastly improved their phonics knowledge—and transference."

"It not only has helped the children in reading, but their writing in their journals has been great!!"

"I really like the program. I felt it left no gaps in learning. Covered great material. Consistent and successful."

"I have seen positive growth in students who had very little self-esteem. It has been wonderful to witness."

"Increased vocabulary and skills increased, for example, decoding."

"I definitely see reading scores that have improved."

"It helps the children focus and practice good listening skills."

"It is a good tool for students with attention problems. The material in the comprehension book had many lessons that complemented our classroom curriculum."

"I have charted the growth of these students and I have been very pleased with the progress. All children did learn to read."

"I feel that DI has been beneficial to my students, because some of my non-readers are starting to gain the skills necessary to become readers. The students have expressed to me how good it feels to be able to read words. They truly look forward to their DI group time."

"Better listening skills, can follow directions much better, reading skills improved, writing skills much improved, better group skills, and bet-

ter recall of materials and ideas learned."

"They seem to have gained a great deal of self-confidence through these lessons. They now listen more carefully and seem better able to understand certain concepts (i.e., analogies, synonyms, classification) much better."

"DI has allowed my students to read!!! They can sound out words and have the confidence to even try. I see a major difference in the DI students from this year and students reading in previous years without DI."

"DI is beneficial to students because it finally brings phonics back to reading!"

"Poor readers need many tools to figure words, and DI brings the needed decoding. It teaches the children using positive reinforcement techniques, to replace their poor reading habits with successful habits."

"Students really do seem much more aware of the phonemes in words and the blending process."

"They understand now that all are expected to learn and to participate."

"DI has enabled my non-EC students to experience success through sequential activities and controlled text. EC students were getting this previously. It has allowed many borderline students to explode in their overall abilities and self-confidence."

"My students have greatly benefited from DI. They know letter sounds, can differentiate between letters/words/sentences. They are beginning to blend sounds and transfer to other activities (writing)."

"DI has helped my at-risk-reading students immensely. Each one of the DI students in my class was at least on level 16 running record level by the end of the year. Level 16 is the at-grade-level point for first grade, so every child in my class can read at grade level going into second grade!"

"DI has helped with confidence and improved reading and writing skills."

"The students enjoy reading! They are learning how to decode as well as various spelling patterns. They are much more proficient at both. They really enjoy the stories. Their reading pace has picked up as well. It has given the children structure and routine to their reading."

"They feel successful. They've learned 'rules' to apply during word attack portions of the lesson. They look forward to the lessons."

"DI has given my students more confidence in reading, ex. sounding out words, not embarrassed to do so, follow along with finger when reading, overall confidence in attitude with group."

"Most of the children have improved their reading level. The children have a lot more confidence in themselves."

"The students and teacher bonded during our direct instruction. The methods of instruction can be incorporated throughout the instructional periods during the school day."

## *How has using DI been beneficial to you?*

"It has kept me very organized and helps make a more accurate assessment of the students. Provided me familiarity with the program. Daily interaction with students in an instructional rather than administrative role."

"DI is the program I've been waiting for over my entire career of 27 years! I have always believed that repetition and high child involvement were keys for reading, especially for children having difficulty, but DI is the most efficient method I've seen."

"It has given me another resource tool to teach reading, comprehension, and writing."

"This program is good for the children who are below grade level and gives them a chance to be successful."

"I was able to see in the smaller setting specific behaviors in children not noticed in a larger setting and concentrate on changing those behaviors that were obstacles to their learning."

"It has been a sequential, organized program, building on the skills. It required children to be attentive."

"DI has been beneficial to me because all the materials that I need for planning are in the presentation books. Also, the goals/objectives are located in T.G., which makes it easier to write my IEP's."

"I loved the reading series presented with DI. I am better at keeping group attention and recognizing specific problems our children had. My skills as educator improved, especially my listening skills and presenting skills. Not only for DI but other subjects as well."

"It has helped me see problems associated with comprehension and has taught me different ways of teaching skills and approaching problems."

"DI has been beneficial to me with personal satisfaction in seeing growth and improvement for children who struggle with reading."

"If my children benefit, I benefit! It has helped me make certain that every individual child is held accountable."

"DI has been helpful in discriminating between at-risk learners who needed something different and those who need something different and much more (i.e., specifically designed instruction!)."

"DI has accomplished what I could never have done on my own—convinced teachers that effective research based reading practices (those that DI is based on) work!"

"Easy planning! Smooth transitions."

"I enjoyed working with a small group and watching their growth."

"It had given another way to approach how to teach reading. All children don't learn the same way nor need the same approach. This is an easy to learn program to teach with some great strategies for producing strategic readers."

"It has helped me to understand the need for structure in groups. It has also given me the chance to work with low achieving groups and to better understand their needs."

"I feel like I've helped these children learn to read better and enjoy reading as well as improve their self-confidence and self-esteem."

"I am an assistant, and it has been very beneficial with teaching sounds and reading words. I like the repeated use of DI for myself and I have taken DI to my classroom. I see it beneficial in my class for those that are not in DI groups."

"I have enjoyed seeing my children progress in their reading. It's a joy to see the children feel more confident in themselves, and see that their reading has improved so much. They can read now!"

## *Can you see yourself using DI in the future? If so, why? If not, why not?*

"I loved it!! I saw more growth and felt as if I accomplished something every day!"

"I am excited about using the program in my regular classroom situation. I have seen the progress that my children made in summer school in a matter of 18 days."

"It provided me with a structured way to teach phonics/decoding. I spent less time planning."

"I will use DI in the future. The children like the lesson and followed along very well. I feel that they learned how to form sentences and follow directions as well as how to stay on task."

"Yes (I can see myself using DI in the future). I feel like the program can benefit a large number of students with different learning styles."

"I've been able to use aspects of DI in my other lessons."

"I would like to use DI in the future with my students in addition to other reading programs."

"Already I catch myself using some of the structure of DI in other subjects. It really works out well."

"Yes, yes, yes!! The students were successful, confident, and proud!!!"

"I can see myself using DI in the future because it really works."

"Definitely! It is a great way to present skills in a sequential manner that does not assume skills are already present."

"Yes, however, for many of my students I need to allow more time to supplement the curriculum with phonemic awareness skills and spelling as well as additional work in comprehension."

"Yes! It works!"

"Yes, I think it has been beneficial to the students."

"Yes! It has worked. I don't believe every child needs it, but those with reading difficulties or that are 'on the fence' can benefit from the program greatly."

"Yes. I think the *Reading Mastery* program helps the children get a better understanding for reading. I like to use the signals and verbal usage to get kids on task."

"Yes, I love it! It works and I enjoy the program."

"I would hope that DI would continue here at ....."

"Yes! because DI is great for the kids. They learn how to read when we use DI."

## *Comments Suggesting Difficulties*

Out of all of the comments, only five comments suggested difficulties. For example,

"I found the children had a hard time waiting for the signal... They had to develop listening and watching skills..."

"I feel their attention spans are too limited for this."

"Children complained about so much repetition."

These comments reflect improper placement. The children referred to in the first two comments had been placed at too high a level; they did not yet have the skills needed for effective participation. Students referred to in the third comment had been placed at too low a level. They did not need the repetition. Ordinarily, these misplacements would be caught early in a school year and corrected. However, given the short duration of summer school, these misplacements could not be detected until summer school was nearly completed.

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AMY GRIFFIN, ADI

# *ADI Awards Given*

One of the important roles ADI fills is the fostering of a "DI community." The Board of Directors develops this community through various activities, among them a recognition program for practitioners of Direct Instruction. Each year at the National Direct Instruction Conference there is an awards dinner celebrating the achievements not only of DI users but also students and entire schools. Following is a summary of the recipients of the ADI awards for the year 2000.

## *Excellence in Education Awards*

Anayezuka Ahidiana is one of four recipients of an Excellence in Education Award for teaching and teacher/training. It is a shared feeling when Ed Schaefer of Educational Resources, Inc. says that, "Anayezuka has dedicated her life to improving the educational opportunities of children and their teachers." Ahidiana has used the various DI programs as primary tools in improving the lives of students, teachers, and administrators. Schaefer feels so strongly about the impact Ahidiana has on students lives he says, "Given the students she taught so well, the teachers she has trained so thoroughly, and the schools she has lead so competently; there are or will be literally thousands of men and women whose life's realizations may now match the expectations of their dreams and the promise of this country."

The phrases "total commitment," "tireless energy," "devoted," and "on task" appear repeatedly in the recommendations from her colleagues and Bernice Welchel, Principal of City Springs Elementary in Baltimore, MD says that, "Anayezuka has helped to change the entire culture of our school from one that did not believe that students can and should learn to their maximum potential to a school that beams with pride when students move from one mastery program to another."

*Anayezuka Ahidiana*

Ahidiana not only transforms the lives of students she teaches but as her nominator Paul McKinney says, "I have personally watched her turn the attitudes and beliefs of many 'hard to teach' teachers around. Because she believes that learning is a lifelong habit, Aneyezuka continues to hone her teaching and training expertise by attending many of the DI conferences and training sessions conducted by ADI and SRA."

In sum, the words of the team of coaches at City Springs Elementary perhaps most clearly express the extent of the gratitude felt by those who work with and benefit from the spirit of Ahidiana. "She serves as a mentor to all of the coaches—a constant source of inspiration, support, encouragement, and motivation. She is an excellent trainer; she is thorough. The level of respect that our school family has for Ms. Ahidiana

speaks volumes about the type of person that she is."

Angelica Fazio was recognized as an Excellent Teacher, and she has asked that her nominator, Patricia Contreras be awarded as well because of what she refers to as "*truly* a joint project." "Everything we have done with her class, has been *totally* a team effort!" says Fazio.

Contreras describes Fazio as an "indefatigable fighter both for literacy and for Direct Instruction" and has been so for almost two decades. Both Fazio and Contreras work within Central Elementary in San Diego, CA. Contreras met Fazio when Fazio was working as an ESL Adult Family Literacy Teacher teaching English learning adults how to speak and read English so they might read to their children. But Fazio had a higher goal; she used *Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons* so that the non-English speaking adults were learning a method with which they could teach their own children to read—which many did.

Thus began a relationship between Fazio and Contreras as Fazio responded to the request of Contreras to come to her classroom to teach her to teach the DI program and assist with students. Fazio continued as an adult education teacher while she volunteered extra time in Contreras' k-1 class, and together they taught their students to read far above grade level. Contreras describes Fazio as a strong advocate of DI and also of inner city, impoverished and less privileged multi-lingual, multi-cultural children. Fazio continues to be a tireless inspiration to Contreras and also to the many students whose lives she changes by the donation of her time and energy to the cause of literacy and the personal empowerment which comes thereof.

Of Contreras, Fazio says that she is "totally committed to her students and remains many hours after school each day helping students and preparing her lessons." After facing difficulty acquiring the needed DI materials, Mrs. Contreras purchased the materials with her own money, exemplifying her serious dedication. Together Fazio and Contreras are changing the lives of both students and teachers as they raise standards through the implementation of DI.

Ann Fumiko Watanabe of The Waihee School in Maui, HI was recognized as an excellent Teacher Trainer. Watanabe is known for an uncompromising dedication to education and reading and to the training of teachers to enhance their teaching skills and productivity. In a letter of recommendation, Lawrence T. Joyo, principal of Waihee School, said that, "Ann inspires and motivates teachers to teach better. She is actually a classroom practitioner who epitomizes qualities of educational leadership and support." "Watanabe generates enthusiasm and motivation through her skills in training fellow teachers in DI and beginning reading strategies as well as in effectively teaching low functioning students to read," said Personnel Specialist II, Michael G. Suzaki.

Despite great resistance by her superiors in utilizing the DI strategies, Watanabe never ceased to infuse DI in her special education training modules. Watanabe is often requested to train other teachers who are frustrated with ineffective methods, and she has trained hundreds of teachers throughout her career. Watanabe follows up with workshop participants in the schools by doing classroom demonstrations and providing technical assistance to teachers and administrators.

It is Watanabe's belief that all children can learn to read successfully that motivates her tireless efforts, that helps other teachers to teach better, and that ultimately gives children the gift of literacy.

## *Excellent Administrator Award*

Sarah Martin-Elam received an Excellence in Education Award for her work as principal at Siefert Elementary School in Milwaukee, WI. Ms. Martin-Elam was a pioneer for the implementation of DI within the Milwaukee Public School System, and that was not a simple operation. Ms. Martin-Elam is such a strong believer in DI and its effectiveness and importance that she put her reputation and job on the line to fight for this program she knew would be so beneficial to the students and staff not only at Siefert, but city and statewide. Ms. Martin-Elam faced opposition of DI from the MPS central office administrators as well as from some teachers within Siefert, and she fought "to be able to use money earmarked by central office to be spent on an ineffective reading program to purchase DI materials instead," said Sue Owens, who nominated Ms. Martin-Elam.

*Angelica Fazio*

*Patricia Contreras*

*Ann Fumiko Watanabe*

*Sarah Martin-Elam*

Siefert School was once one of the lowest performing schools in the Milwaukee Public School district. It had very few students reading at grade level and the school performed poorly on local and state assessments. DI was introduced to Siefert during the 94–95 school year and since then most Siefert students are reading at least on grade level with many reading above grade level, and the state test scores have risen significantly. Not only are the Siefert students boasting such accomplishments, but the entire school is reaping the benefits in that teacher stability has improved, student attendance has improved and these and other such improvements have "generated and sustained a school culture in which

these results are benchmarks for continued improvement, not platforms on which to rest," according to John S. Gardner, the at-large Director for MPS.

Steven Huffman, Leadership Specialist for MPS, states that, "Improvements at Siefert go beyond achievement tests. A walk through the halls quickly produces a sense of the dedication and commitment to excellence that Ms. Martin-Elam has engendered. All adults are on task and professional in their behaviors. Students appear serious, dedicated and knowledgeable. There is a perceptible pursuit of excellence that cannot be missed. It is my belief that this enviable environment that I have described is because of the building wide dedication to DI. That dedication is directly attributable to the leadership of Ms. Sarah Martin-Elam."

Because of Ms. Martin-Elam's efforts, perseverance, dedication, and uncompromising set of standards, Siefert Elementary is operating on an unprecedented high level and the staff and students have caught on to that. The school will continue to succeed, thanks to the powerful example set by Ms. Martin-Elam.

## *Excellent School Award*

Woodbridge Fundamental School in Roseville, CA is the Excellent School for 2000. Woodbridge utilizes DI's *Reading Mastery, Distar Language, Reasoning and Writing*, and *Expressive Writing*. Woodbridge has been using DI curricula for twenty-eight years, since its introduction to the school by Mollie Gelder. *Reading Mastery* has remained a constant throughout the school because of Mollie's belief in the curriculum as well as her determination to utilize a system so beneficial to the Woodbridge School System.

Woodbridge employs schoolwide reading that enables the children to progress quickly and confidently in a small group at their instructional level. Student progress is monitored and charted monthly and instructional aides assist the neediest groups. One-on-one tutoring, trained volunteers and an extended school day are some of the intervention strategies in place at Woodbridge, ensuring high success rates for students. All teachers, aides, student teachers and volunteers receive training and all student groups are monitored for excellence.

Student teachers working at Woodbridge have expressed gratitude for the training and the experience of "teaching a sequential, systematic phonics program that filled a void from their college teacher training," said Audrey Nobori, the nominator of Woodbridge. The *Reading Mastery* program has helped these student teachers to bridge the gap between the study of teaching reading to the actual practice thereof.

The story of the *Reading Mastery* program in the Woodbridge School is one of pride and success as the students express pride in their own reading abilities and the faculty express confidence in the utilization of such an effective tool.

## *Wayne Carnine Student Improvement Award*

Four students were awarded with The Wayne Carnine Student Improvement Award for the year 2000. Students received a $100 cash award along with the recognition of their efforts and personal achievements. Most Improved can refer to academic or behavioral changes, or both.

Matthew Akonom attends Hampstead Hill Elementary in Baltimore, MD and was nominated by his social worker, Sara Schmerling. Matthew entered Hampstead Hill with a history of aggressive and destructive behavior. He "refused to complete class work, disrupted the class, and was defiant and threatening," said Schmerling. With the combination of love and support from his grandmother and commitment from his teachers he has made significant improvements during his time at Hampstead Hill. Schmerling also credits the structure of DI in helping Matthew "learn to relax and focus on his intellect rather than his external fears." He became so familiar with the sequence of lessons that he was able to assist visiting substitutes and teacher assistants. Matthew is not only a high achiever personally, but he also "helps other students in the school deal with their problems and tries to model appropriate behavior for them." Schmerling feels that Matthew exemplifies the words "outstanding improvement," and it is clear that Matthew has transformed both academically and personally.

Marti Dunn is from Central Elementary in San Diego, CA and was nominated by her k-1 teacher, Mrs. Patricia Contreras. Marti was retained by her first k-1 teacher and because of Marti's hard work and the use of the *Reading Mastery Series* by Mrs. Contreras, Marti was double promoted to third grade at the end of the school year. Now Marti is the best reader in her third grade class even though she did not attend second grade!

Although Marti is excelling in third grade, her math skills were behind those of her peers and she had not been taught cursive writing. To make up for the skills she missed by skipping second grade, Marti goes voluntarily to Mrs. Contreras classroom regularly after school so that she can continue her progression and success.

Mrs. Contreras feels that through Marti's own efforts and with the help of a good program, Marti has turned her "entire self image around and is becoming a very confident young woman."

Kalijah Hopkins of Beach Channel High School in Jamaica Queens, NY was nominated by Mrs. Daniela Greco, an Academy Coordinator and reading teacher. Kalijah was having difficulty reading in his mainstream classes and when tested it was found that he was reading at a high second grade level and was then placed into the Academy Program which is a remedial reading program.

Kalijah has courageously dealt with physical and emotional obstacles and has had difficulty with reading and spelling for many years. Kalijah has shown tremendous growth since he has been in the Academy Program. "In September 1999 his reading was at a second grade level and by April 2000, only seven months later, his reading level improved to a 7.8 grade in comprehension" and significantly in other areas as well, said Greco. Of Kalijah, Greco says, he "continually expresses a desire and willingness to learn." Kalijah often spent his lunchtime with Mrs. Greco and he has been passing all classes with high marks. Mrs. Greco predicts continued success, improvements and accomplishments for Kalijah throughout the year and expects that he will return to the mainstream classes within the next year.

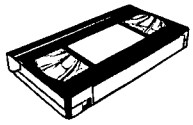
Mrs. Greco is also proud of Kalijah's community involvement in sports programs and with the YMCA where twice a week he volunteers his time swimming and doing water exercises with autistic adults.

Nathan Roberts is from Beale Elementary in Gallipolis Ferry, WV and was nominated by Judith E. Browning who is a Special Educator for Beale.

As a first grader Nathan was not learning to read, and even so he was promoted to second grade. Nathan's second grade teacher reported that Nathan was having a difficult time reading and that his performance was far below grade level. His teacher was concerned because he works hard, has much family support as well as one-on-one instruction within the classroom.

Nathan was not responding to different reading formats that were introduced to him. After a psychological evaluation in which the psychologists found his profile consistent with a child with a learning disability, Nathan's parents agreed to try DI and enrolled him in Beale Elementary. In a year's time Nathan "has gone from only being able to read two or three short words to reading fluently at the third level . . . after approximately a year in DI, he reads everything," said Browning.

Matthew, Marti, Kalijah and Nathan are four examples of what takes place when teachers, administrators and school systems utilize a program that has proven to be as effective as DI. DI has given these children the chance to excel, the chance to succeed. And it is the teachers, administrators, and school systems that have allowed DI to become a part of their curriculum, a part of their continuing story of success.



# Videotapes on the Direct Instruction Model

ADI has an extensive collection of videos on Direct Instruction. These videos are categorized as informational, training or motivational in nature. The informational tapes are either of historical interest or were produced to describe Direct Instruction. The training tapes have been designed to be either stand-alone training or used to supplement and reinforce live training. The motivational tapes are keynote presentations from past years of the National Direct Instruction Conference.

## Informational Tapes

***Where It All Started***—45 minutes. Zig teaching kindergarten children for the Engelmann-Bereiter pre-school in the 60's. These minority children demonstrate mathematical understanding far beyond normal developmental expectations. This acceleration came through expert teaching from the man who is now regarded as the "Father of Direct Instruction," Zig Engelmann. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Challenge of the 90's: Higher-Order Thinking***—45 minutes, 1990. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction strategies. Includes home-video footage and Follow Through. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Follow Through: A Bridge to the Future***—22 minutes, 1992. Direct Instruction Dissemination Center, Wesley Elementary School in Houston, Texas, demonstrates approach. Principal, Thaddeus Lott, and teachers are interviewed and classroom footage is shown. Created by Houston Independent School District in collaborative partnership with Project Follow Through. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Direct Instruction***—black and white, 1 hour, 1978. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction compiled by Haddox for University of Oregon College of Education from footage of Project Follow Through and Eugene Classrooms. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

## Training Tapes

***The Elements of Effective Coaching***—3 hours, 1998. Content in *The Elements of Effective Coaching* was developed by Ed Schaefer and Molly Blakely. The video includes scenarios showing 27 common teaching problems, with demonstrations of coaching interventions for each problem. A common intervention format is utilized in all scenarios. Print material that details each teaching problem and the rationale for correcting the problem is provided. This product should be used to supplement live DI coaching training and is ideal for Coaches, Teachers, Trainers. Price...$395.00 Member Price...$316.00

***DITV—Reading Mastery 1, 2, 3 and Fast-Cycle Pre-and Inservice Training***

The first tapes of the Level I and Level II series present intensive pre-service training on basic Direct Instruction teaching techniques and classroom management strategies used in *Reading Mastery* and the equivalent lesson in *Fast-Cycle*. Rationale is explained. Critical techniques are presented and demonstrated. Participants are led through practical exercises. Classroom teaching demonstrations with students are shown. The remaining tapes are designed to be used during the school year as inservice training. The tapes are divided into segments, which present teaching techniques for a set of upcoming lessons. Level III training is presented on one videotape with the same features as described above. Each level of video training includes a print manual.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Reading Mastery I* (10 Videotapes) | $150.00 |
| *Reading Mastery II* (5 Videotapes) | $75.00 |
| *Reading Mastery III* (1 Videotape) | $25.00 |
| Combined package *(Reading Mastery I–III)* | $229.00 |

***Corrective Reading: Decoding B1, B2, C***—4 hours, 38 minutes + practice time. Pilot video training tape that includes an overview of the Corrective Series, placement procedures, training and practice on each part of a decoding lesson, information on classroom management/reinforcement and demonstrations of lessons (off-camera responses). Price: $25.00 per tape (includes copying costs only).

## Conference Keynotes

These videos are keynotes from the National Direct Instruction Conference in Eugene. These videos are professional quality, 2 camera productions suitable for use in meetings and trainings.

### *Conference 2000 Keynotes!!*

***Commitment to Children—Commitment to Excellence and How Did We Get Here... Where are We Going?*** 95 minutes. These keynotes bring two of the biggest names in Direct Instruction together. The first presentation is by Thaddeus Lott, Senior. Dr. Lott was principal at Wesley Elementary in Houston, Texas from 1974 until 1995. During that time he turned the school into one of the best in the nation, despite demographics that would predict failure. He is an inspiration to thousands across the country. The second presentation by Siegfried Engelmann continues on the theme that we know all we need to know about how to teach—we just need to get out there and do it. This tape also includes Engelmann's closing remarks. Price: $30.00.

***State of the Art & Science of Teaching and Higher Profile, Greater Risks***—50 minutes. This tape is the opening addresses from the 1999 National Direct Instruction Conference at Eugene. In the first talk, Steve Kukic, former Director of Special Education for the state of Utah, reflects on the trend towards using research based educational methods and research validated materials. In the second presentation, ***Higher Profile, Greater Risks,*** Siegfreid Engelmann reflects on the past of Direct Instruction and what has to be done to ensure successful implementation of DI. Price: $30.00

***Successful Schools... How We Do It***—35 minutes. Eric Mahmoud, Co-founder and CEO of Seed Academy/ Harvest Preparatory School in Minneapolis, Minnesota presented the lead keynote for the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference. His talk was rated as one of the best features of the conference. Eric focused on the challenges of educating our inner-city youth and the high expectations we must communicate to our children and teachers if we are to succeed in raising student performance in our schools. Also included on this video is a welcome by Siegfried Engelmann, Senior Author and Developer of Direct Instruction Programs. Price: $15.00

***Fads, Fashions & Follies—Linking Research to Practice***—25 minutes. Dr. Kevin Feldman, Director of Reading and Early Intervention for the Sonoma County Office of Education in Santa Rosa, California presents on the need to apply research findings to educational practices. He supplies a definition of what research is and is not, with examples of each. His style is very entertaining and holds interest quite well. Price: $15.00

***Moving from Better to the Best***—20 minutes. Closing keynote from the National DI Conference. Classic Zig Engelmann doing one of the many things he does well... motivating teaching professionals to go out into the field and work with kids in a sensible and sensitive manner, paying attention to the details of instruction, making sure that excellence instead of "pretty good" is the standard we strive for and other topics that have been the constant theme of his work over the years. Price $15.00

***Aren't You Special***—25 minutes. Motivational talk by Linda Gibson, Principal at a school in Columbus, Ohio. Successful with DI, in spite of minimal support. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: $15.00

***Effective Teaching: It's in the Nature of the Task***—25 minutes. Bob Stevens, expert in cooperative learning from Penn State University, describes how the type of task to be taught impacts the instructional delivery method. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: $15.00

***One More Time***—20 minutes. Closing from 1997 National DI Conference. One of Engelmann's best motivational talks. Good for those already using DI, this is sure to make them know what they are doing is the right choice for teachers, students and our future. Price: $15.00

*continued on next page*

# Videotapes on the Direct Instruction Model...continued

***Keynotes from 22nd National DI Conference***—2 hours. Ed Schaefer speaks on "DI—What It Is and Why It Works," an excellent introductory talk on the efficiency of DI and the sensibility of research based programs. Doug Carnine's talk "Get it Straight, Do it Right, and Keep it Straight" is a call for people to do what they already know works, and not to abandon sensible approaches in favor of "innovations" that are recycled fads. Siegfried Engelmann delivers the closing "Words vs. Deeds" in his usual inspirational manner, with a plea to teachers not to get worn down by the weight of a system that at times does not reward excellence as it should. Price: $25.00

***Keynotes from the 1995 Conference***—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Anita Archer, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University, speaking on "The Time Is Now" (An overview of key features of DI); Rob Horner, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Effective Instruction for All Learners"; Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Truth or Consequences." Price: $25.00

***Keynote Presentations from the 1994 20th Anniversary Conference***—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Jean Osborn, Associate Director for the Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois, speaking on "Direct Instruction: Past, Present & Future"; Sara Tarver, professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison, speaking on "I Have a Dream That Someday We Will Teach All Children"; Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "So Who Needs Standards?" Price: $25.00

***An Evening of Tribute to Siegfried Engelmann***—2.5 hours. On July 26, 1995, 400 of Zig Engelmann's friends, admirers, colleagues, and protégés assembled to pay tribute to the "Father of Direct Instruction." The Tribute tape features Carl Bereiter, Wes Becker, Barbara Bateman, Cookie Bruner, Doug Carnine, and Jean Osborn—the pioneers of Direct Instruction—and many other program authors, paying tribute to Zig. Price: $25.00

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# ADI Association for Direct Instruction

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## What is ADI, the Association for Direct Instruction?

ADI is a nonprofit organization dedicated primarily to providing support for teachers and other educators who use Direct Instruction programs. That support includes conferences on how to use Direct Instruction programs, publication of *The Journal of Direct Instruction (JODI)*, *Direct Instruction News (DI News)*, and the sale of various products of interest to our members.

## Who Should Belong to ADI?

Most of our members use Direct Instruction programs, or have a strong interest in using those programs. Many people who do not use Direct Instruction programs have joined ADI due to their interest in receiving our semiannual publications, *The Journal of Direct Instruction* and *Direct Instruction News*. *JODI* is a peer-reviewed professional publication containing new and reprinted research related to effective instruction. *Direct Instruction News* focuses on success stories, news and reviews of new programs and materials and information on using DI more effectively.

## Membership Options

☐ $40.00 ***Regular Membership*** (includes one year subscription to ADI publications, a 20% discount on ADI sponsored events and on materials sold by ADI).

☐ $30.00 ***Student Membership*** (includes one year subscription to ADI publications, and a 40% discount on ADI sponsored events and a 20% on materials sold by ADI).

☐ $75.00 ***Sustaining Membership*** (includes Regular membership privileges and recognition of your support in *Direct Instruction News).*

☐ $150.00 ***Institutional Membership*** (includes 5 subscriptions to ADI publications and regular membership privileges for 5 staff people).

☐ $30.00 ***Subscription*** 4 issues (1 year) of ADI publications.

✔ Canadian addresses add $5.00 US to above prices.

✔ For surface delivery overseas, add $10.00 US; for airmail delivery overseas, add $20.00 US to the above prices.

✔ Contributions and dues to ADI are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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***New from the Association for Direct Instruction***
***A tool for you...***

# Corrective Reading Sounds Practice Tape


Dear *Corrective Reading* User,

A critical element in presenting *Corrective Reading* lessons is how accurately and consistently you say the sounds. Of course, when teachers are trained on the programs they spend time practicing the sounds, but once they get back into the classrooms they sometimes have difficulty with some of the sounds, especially some of the stop sounds.

I have assisted ADI in developing an audio tape that helps you practice the sounds. This tape is short (12 minutes). The narrator says each sound the program introduces, gives an example, then gives you time to say the sound. The tape also provides rationale and relevant tips on how to pronounce the sounds effectively.

Thanks for your interest in continuing to improve your presentation skills.

Siegfried Engelmann
Direct Instruction Program Senior Author

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# ADI Books Price List

The Association for Direct Instruction distributes the following Direct Instruction materials. Members of ADI receive a 20% discount on these materials. To join ADI and take advantage of this discount, simply fill out the form and include your annual dues with your order.

| Title & Author | Member Price | List Price | Quantity | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Teach Your Children Well*** *(1998)*<br>Michael Maloney | $13.50 | $16.95 | | |
| ***Preventing Failure in the Primary Grades*** *(1969 & 1997)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann | $19.95 | $24.95 | | |
| ***Theory of Instruction*** *(1991)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann & Douglas Carnine | $32.00 | $40.00 | | |
| ***Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons*** *(1983)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann, Phyllis Haddox, & Elaine Bruner | $16.00 | $20.00 | | |
| ***Structuring Classrooms for Academic Success*** *(1983)*<br>S. Paine, J. Radicchi, L. Rosellini, L. Deutchman, & C. Darch | $11.00 | $14.00 | | |
| ***War Against the Schools' Academic Child Abuse*** *(1992)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann | $14.95 | $17.95 | | |
| ***Research on Direct Instruction*** *(1996)*<br>Gary Adams & Siegfried Engelmann | $19.95 | $24.95 | | |

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# Direct Instruction News

ADI Effective School Practices

SARA G. TARVER, Editor, University of Wisconsin, Madison

## *Much Ado About Testing: But the Real Story Is About Instruction*

This issue of *Direct Instruction News* begins with Bob Dixon's on-the-mark satire on state testing. He destroys the myth that state tests are divinely inspired by laying bare the fallacies in the test construction process itself. A process that begins with the creation of state standards (which, in most cases, defy measurement of any kind) by "democratic" committees under the influence of education professors (who, in nearly all cases, know nothing of or have little respect for the technical qualities of tests), and ends with worthless tests that can destroy rather than facilitate the accountability movement.

Thank goodness, Bob goes on to point out, that there are some technically sound standardized tests and that criterion-referenced tests, *if* technically sound, can provide more direct ways of evaluating instruction. His advocacy of technically sound tests that can promote true accountability should not be confused with some currently popular anti-testing views.

As the reader will see when reading George Clowes' interview with Zig, Zig's views on testing complement Bob's. In his usual succinct style, Zig tells how real performance testing (please don't confuse this with what is commonly being touted as *performance testing*) is inherent in effective instruction. He starts by stating, "If you want to know what you taught, you have to look at what the children learned." Then he adds ". . . you would not wait to test the children. You would design the instruction so that you were testing them all the time." He then goes on to explain how the *test* part of the Model-Lead-Test instructional paradigm ensures that the teacher gets feedback about what the children have or have not learned.

Like Bob, Zig does not take an anti-standardized testing stance. Instead, he suggests that we obtain performance measures by randomly testing one out of five students (say, on the reading of passages aloud) and then comparing their performance to their achievement test scores. In other words, we need measures of performance on routine academic tasks AND measures of achievement on standardized tests. Most importantly, both types of measures must be valid, reliable, and sensible.

Zig's interview provides other jewels of wisdom also. The following question is one that I have been asked often and Zig's response to it is right-on. It bears repeating here:

> **Clowes:** So Project Follow Through confirmed what you had already found about the ineffectiveness of those other programs. Yet those programs still are being promoted in teacher colleges and they still are widely used, while Direct Instruction is not. Why?
>
> **Zig:** The answer is really simple, but it's very difficult for most people to accept: Outcomes have never been a priority in public education, from its inception. That's the way the public education system is. The system is more concerned with the experience of the child: "Let the child explore," "Let the child be his or her self," "Don't interfere with the natural learning process," and so on.

*continued on page 3*

FALL 2001, Volume 1, Number 2

### In this issue

*The DI News* is published semi-annually by the Association for Direct Instruction. The mission of the Association for Direct Instruction, as stated in the by-laws, is to promote the improvement of effective educational methods.

The Association for Direct Instruction was incorporated in 1981 in the state of Oregon for educational purposes. ADI is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and is a publicly supported organization as defined in Sections 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) and 509(a)(1). Donations are tax-deductible.

A copy or summary of the current financial statement, or annual report, and registration filed by ADI may be obtained by contacting: ADI, PO BOX 10252, Eugene, OR 97440 (541-485-1293). ADI is registered with the state of Oregon, Department of Justice, #79-16751. 

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES: $25 U. S.; $30 (U. S. currency) Canada; $40 Europe; $60 airmail to Europe.

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Publisher: The Association for Direct Instruction

http://www.adihome.org

# *Contribute to DI News:*

*DI News* provides practitioners, ADI members, the DI community, and hopefully those new to DI, with stories of successful implementations of DI, reports of ADI awards, tips regarding the effective delivery of DI, articles focused on particular types of instruction, reprints of articles on timely topics, and position papers that address current issues. *The News'* focus is to provide newsworthy events that help us reach the goals of teaching children more effectively and efficiently and communicating that a powerful technology for teaching exists but is not being utilized in most American schools. Readers are invited to contribute personal accounts of success as well as relevant topics deemed useful to the DI community. General areas of submission follow:

**From the field:** Submit letters describing your thrills and frustrations, problems and successes, and so on. A number of experts are available who may be able to offer helpful solutions and recommendations to persons seeking advice.

**News:** Report news of interest to ADI's members.

**Success stories:** Send your stories about successful instruction. These can be short, anecdotal pieces.

**Perspectives:** Submit critiques and perspective essays about a theme of current interest, such as: school restructuring, the ungraded classroom, cooperative learning, site-based management, learning styles, heterogeneous grouping, Regular Ed Initiative and the law, and so on.

**Book notes:** Review a book of interest to members.

**New products:** Descriptions of new products that are available are welcome. Send the description with a sample of the product or a research report validating its effectiveness. Space will be given only to products that have been field-tested and empirically validated.

**Tips for teachers:** Practical, short products that a teacher can copy and use immediately. This might be advice for solving a specific but pervasive problem, a data-keeping form, a single format that would successfully teach something meaningful and impress teachers with the effectiveness and cleverness of Direct Instruction.

**Submission Format:** Send an electronic copy with a hard copy of the manuscript. Indicate the name of the word-processing program you use. Save drawings and figures in separate files. Electronic copy should replace text that is underlined with italic text.

**Illustrations and Figures:** Please send drawings or figures in a camera-ready form, even though you may also include them in electronic form.

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*Much Ado About Testing...*
*continued from page 1*

If outcomes are a priority, as they should be, it follows that we must evaluate student outcomes. Some form of testing is required to do that. To test OR not to test debates must be reframed as discussions of the right kinds of tests.

One thing that bothers me about the testing debates is this: advocates of testing often go so far as to say, or at least to leave the impression, that testing itself *produces* learning. The fact is that testing can only tell us that the child has or has not learned what the teacher thought he/she had taught. *Instruction* that occurs before the test is the critical element in learning. The *test* part of the Model-Lead-Test paradigm employed in Direct Instruction is meaningless without the *model* and *lead* parts that come before the test. If, and only if, the instructional elements of the *model* and *lead* parts are intact will the *test* show that students have acquired the intended information and understanding. In the same fashion, even the most technically sound achievement tests will not show increased achievement unless the instruction that preceded the testing is equally sound.

And, as members of ADI know, delivering effective instruction is not easy. Jessica Thompson identified the two basic essentials of effective instruction in a paper for which she was awarded the 2001 Susie Wayne Scholarship (included in this issue): a well-designed curriculum and a highly-skilled teacher. To acquire an understanding of the design principles that undergird DI curricula and expertise in techniques of delivering those curricula, teachers must devote a lot of time and effort to study and training. And beyond these basic essentials is a world of know-how about DI implementations. Jerry Silbert captures much of this know-how as a dozen suggestions in his article on how to make DI implementations produce more student learning. Each of his suggestions—from more emphasis on reading in kindergarten and prekindergarten, to more instructional time, to more in-class coaching, to more supplementary reading, and on and on—is excellent. Don't fail to read this article and benefit from Jerry's extensive experience in helping schools to be more successful.

The rest of the articles in this issue tell of remarkable success with DI. A report of a six-year study (Kramer et al.) with deaf and hard-of-hearing students documents great gains in reading comprehension, spelling, and total language. A report from the Arkansas School for the Blind (*Counterpoint* reprint) tells of success with students who are blind or visually impaired.

Amy Griffin's write-up of 2001 ADI awards tells the stories of how DI helped Amanda Bhirdo, Donte Brooks, Daniel Cahill, Natanael Lozado, Hadley Quintard, and Tony Tran to make large academic gains despite disabilities or other obstacles—reading disability, developmental delay, infantile autism, dyslexia/learning disability, asthma and allergies, English as a second language. Stories of three schools that received Excellent School awards (City Springs and Hampstead Hill in Baltimore and Rio Altura Elementary in Riverbank, California) and eight teachers or instructional leaders who received Excellence in Education awards (Rick Fletcher, Kim Newton, Shelby Saulsbury, Jane Green, Diane Hill, Susan Hornor, Stacey Herrmann, and Bernice Whelchel) are also included in Amy's report of the 2001 awards.

One of the most impressive stories of success with DI is that of City Springs Elementary in Baltimore under the leadership of Principal Bernice Whelchel. Bernice delivered the keynote address to the 2001 ADI Conference and received an Excellence in Education award. In the Fall of 2000, her work was featured in a PBS documentary titled *The Battle of City Springs*. If you haven't yet seen it, get it and watch it. The story of how she led in the City Springs transformation from one of the lowest performing schools in Baltimore to one of the highest is a truly amazing story. Talk about dedication, commitment, and all-around savvy. Bernice has it and she's not through yet! She is an ideal role model for principals and other educators.

Congratulations to Bernice and all of the 2001 awards recipients. I hope that ADI members are already thinking about persons and schools to nominate for 2002 awards.

In the meantime, I hope you're off to a great start of the 2001–2002 school year. ADI

## *Member News*

Member Chuck Arthur, retired teacher from Reynolds School District in Oregon, reports he will be opening a public charter school in the David Douglas School District near Portland in the fall of 2002.

The Arthur Academy will teach accelerated reading and math using Direct Instruction curricula.

Congratulations, Chuck! We look forward to hearing great things about your school in the future.

# *Your State Test Was Not Divinely Inspired*

And that's *almost* all I have to say on the subject, but not quite. Your state education department (or whatever equivalent you have) often seems to want you to think that your own test was divinely inspired, or close to it. But it wasn't. Not even close. The darned newspapers in your state often seem to operate on the assumption that the state tests were divinely inspired. Most newspapers will eagerly advertise their ignorance in print, pointing out how local schools have gone up on this and down on that, and how one community compares with others.

Although I don't really *know* the exact (or vague) history of your particular state test, I'm not reluctant to take a wild guess, nonetheless. Your legislature mandated by law that your state department—or whatever—create a statewide test (and standards, too), as a component of accountability. Your state department wasn't real thrilled to have this (or much of anything else) forced upon them, but it had to do *something*. So it gathered together a few people from the education departments around the state, some teachers, and a bunch of hapless citizens, then swore them all to secrecy, and pressed them to come up with standards and tests.

The citizens were there for show—and the teachers, too, for the most part. The education professors pontificated on "performance assessment" and "constructing meaning" and dozens of other vague or non-existent concepts, thereby completely snowing even the smartest of the poor lay members of the committees, as well as the teachers they had "taught" themselves. To further press the notion that "the community" participated in the development of standards and tests, the state departments widely disseminated drafts and solicited feedback. (The community could make some judgments about what was there, but few thought to seriously consider what wasn't there.) The feedback went back to the committee, and the education professors ignored all they didn't like while making a few obligatory changes here and there, incorporating feedback they did like.

The standards were developed before the tests, which was completely senseless—but pretty uniform across all states. As a consequence, many standards simply couldn't be tested—not by a performance assessment, not by a legitimate assessment, not by Zeus, not by anyone or anything. Note the number of times that "lifelong love of reading" shows up in the standards of different states.

Once the standards were developed, and codified as superb because they were the result of so much democracy in action (as opposed to expertise), it was time to write tests. For this task, the state departments used—well, guess. Who they pretty uniformly didn't call upon were psychometricians—genuine scholars on testing—from psychology departments. Look at it this way. An education professor who has never taught a school child to do anything is not going to worry much about having no expertise in psychometrics. Besides, the folks at your state department don't have psychometricians for cronies. The relationship between the state department and the colleges of education is essentially incestual: they trade jobs with one another occasionally.

The resulting tests varied in quality, just as the standards did. The tests ranged from "has some potential" to "disastrous." Whichever category, your state department went to reputable test publishing companies to get their tests published. The reputable test publishing companies laughed and laughed and laughed back at meetings with psychometric experts at the home office. Then after they had completely laughed themselves out, they agreed to publish your state's worthless test *because if they didn't get the business, someone else would.* I myself am hesitant to draw an analogy with women of ill repute, even though I've heard representatives from some of those publishers do so themselves. As a practical matter, the companies were right: *someone* was going to get the lucrative business of publishing your state's test. I come down on the side of the publishers because they at least *knew* what kind of fiasco they were participating in, whereas the state departments remained clueless.

The very huge problem with most, if not all, of the state tests is that they have not been proven to be *technically sound.* Now, if I explore that topic in too great a depth, (1) you will fall asleep, and (2) I'll make a fool out of myself because I'm no psychometrician myself. (I just know that the suffix -ian—as in psychometrician—refers to people, as opposed to -ion—as in action.) Nonetheless, I'll go out on a limb just a bit by saying that if a test is not technically sound, it's completely worthless. And if there are any important *consequences* associated with a test that is not *proven* to be technically sound, then that test is far worse than worthless: it is exceptionally damaging.

By "technical soundness," I'm talking about those considerations of validity and reliability, and the varieties of each. There are technicalities involved in those things far beyond me, but just as a guy on the street, I have to assume that if a test hasn't been

proven to be reliable, then we can't rely upon the test results, and if a test hasn't been proven to be valid, then...well, it could be invalid.

I can't say that no state test is valid and reliable. But the burden of proof isn't on me: it's on the state departments, and even the legislatures who burdened them will all this to begin with.

Your run-of-the-mill norm-referenced tests—SAT 9, IOWA, CTBS, etc.—are a different matter altogether. The publishers of those tests spent a fortune establishing technical soundness to a level that would make their tests unassailable by any true, qualified psychometrician. Unfortunately, those tests aren't the most direct way to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Criterion-referenced state tests would be better for that *if they were technically sound.* And, the publishers of norm-referenced tests aren't completely invulnerable to pressures from the traditional education community (to whom they sell their wares). On the SAT 9 math test for the spring of fourth grade (or the fall of fifth), you'll find items talking about "number sentences," a remnant of New Math that has been resurrected in the New New Math. Go visit the mathematics department of a good university and ask a senior mathematician if "math is a language," with "sentences" and the like. Chances are fair that someone will start screaming at you, or even might just beat you up.

I suppose that all my contentions here strike you as having just about as much practical value as the other articles I've written for this column—generally, none. If your principal is on your back and her superintendent is on hers and the newspaper is on the superintendent's back and practically everyone in your state actually thinks that the Emperor has clothes on, then you're in a tough spot, and I haven't helped you out of it. I can tell you, though, that some very competent and smart and politically savvy people are working on this problem, and I strongly suspect that sooner or later, *they* will help you.

Now I'll play prognosticator and predict that either one of two things will happen with the state tests. One, the anti-accountability/anti-reform types like Alfie Kohn will destroy the accountability movement, meaning in part that poor kids in particular will keep getting the shaft the way they always have. The other possibility is that the smart activists I referred to above will prevail, and states will start developing reasonably good standards and technically sound instruments to measure them. In that case, accountability will live because it will be *legitimate.* All children, potentially, will benefit, but poor kids will benefit the most if a good accountability system forces their schools to teach them everything that everyone else gets the opportunity to learn.

Postscript. I have so many good friends who are in education departments, such as the editor of this newsletter, that I must say that to me, *good* education professors are saints, if not deities. ADL

GEORGE A. CLOWES, *School Reform News*

# *"If the Children Aren't Learning, We're Not Teaching"*

## An Interview with Siegfried E. Engelmann

One of the most vigorous continuing debates in elementary education is over which teaching method produces the best results.

Is it teacher-directed learning, where the teacher conveys knowledge to his or her students? Or is it student-directed learning, where the teacher encourages students to construct meaning from their own individual learning experiences?

Although a considerable body of research shows student-directed learning is ineffective, the debate rages on because many educators—and especially teachers of educators—choose to ignore the research.

Siegfried Engelmann has been one of the key participants in this debate over the years, and a major contributor to its resolution. He first became interested in how children acquire knowledge when he was research director for an advertising agency trying to understand more about the learning process.

Pursuing this interest, Engelmann quit the advertising business in 1964 and became senior educational specialist at the Institute for Research on Exceptional Children at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. There, his research into the effectiveness of different teaching methods in the education of under-privileged children led him to develop the Direct Instruction method of teaching.

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The Direct Instruction method involves teaching from a tightly scripted curriculum delivered via direct instruction to the class; i.e., giving children small pieces of information and immediately asking them questions based on that information. While Direct Instruction is teacher-directed instruction, it does not encompass all the possible varieties of teacher-directed instruction, including the common situation where a teacher delivers a content-rich curriculum to students but decides exactly "what" will be taught.

Engelmann's research in the 1960s into the effectiveness of different teaching methods was subsequently confirmed by the massive federal Follow Through project in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1999, the American Institute of Research looked at 24 education reform programs and concluded Direct Instruction was one of only two that had solid research vouching for its effectiveness. But despite all the research findings, Direct Instruction is used at only 150 of the nation's more than 114,000 schools.

After developing the Direct Instruction method, Engelmann became a professor of special education at the University of Oregon, in Eugene, where he established the National Institute for Direct Instruction. He recently spoke with *School Reform News* Managing Editor George Clowes.

**Clowes:** *What approach did you first take to understanding the mechanics of the learning process?*

**Engelmann:** I studied philosophy when I was in college, and I was much influenced by the British analytical approach that required very careful parceling out of what caused what, and also what kind of conclusions you could draw from what kind of premises. That had a big impact on how I viewed this process initially, particularly the notion that we are responsible for whatever children learn. We can't just take credit for what they *did* learn; we have to take credit for what they didn't learn, or mis-learned, also.

We assumed that children were logical, reasonable beings in terms of how they responded to our teaching, and that their behavior was the ultimate judge of the effectiveness of whatever went into our teaching. If the way we taught didn't induce the desired learning, we hadn't taught it. But if children learned stuff that was wrong, we were responsible for that, too, and it meant we had to revise what we were doing and try it out again. That's the formula we used from the beginning.

*Just because you covered the material doesn't mean the children learned the material. That tells about what you did. It doesn't tell about what you taught. If you want to know what you taught, you have to look at what the children learned.*

Just because you covered the material doesn't mean the children learned the material. That tells about what you did. It doesn't tell about what you taught. If you want to know what you taught, you have to look at what the children learned.

**Clowes:** *Which means you have to test the children.*

**Engelmann:** It means you would not wait to test the children. You would design the instruction so that you were testing them all the time. You would design the instruction so that you received feedback on what they were learning at a very high rate. You would present instructions so that the children's responses carried implications for what they were learning. And you would design the instruction to be efficient, so that you're not working with just one child.

All of this means that, for young children, you would use procedures involving oral responses where the children can respond together, and you get information about what they're learning from their responses. That's the test.

For very simple responses, the paradigm that we use is: Model, Lead, and Test. You first show them what the task is and how they're supposed to respond to it. Then you test to see if they can respond properly. It all happens very quickly.

It's something like, "My turn: What am I doing? Standing up. Your turn: What am I doing?" It's a model and then a test. But if they can't produce the response, then you do a model and lead the test. For example, "My turn: What am I doing? Standing up. Your turn: What am I doing? 'Standing up.' Say it with me: 'Standing up.' Once more: 'Standing up.' Your turn: What am I doing?" So "your turn" is the test.

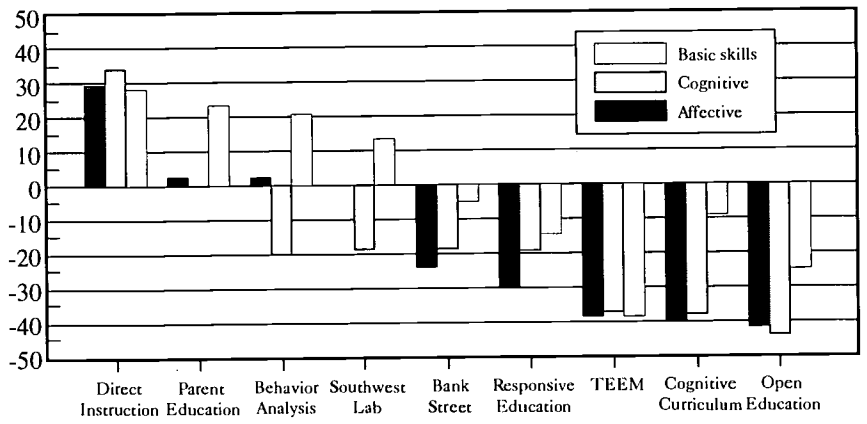
**Clowes:** *When did you decide to develop this into an instructional package for beginning learners?*

**Engelmann:** Initially, we took programs people were using or were being talked about and evaluated them according to our criterion: If the children aren't learning, we're not teaching.

For the most part, the children we were working with were disadvantaged preschoolers. They represented a particular challenge because they didn't come in with very high levels of knowledge and they didn't learn things very well. Their performance on the programs that were available led to the conclusion that these programs just didn't work—the language experience program, the sight-word

## Comparison of Achievement Outcomes

Across nine Follow Through models




| Basic skills models | Cognitive skills models | Affective skills models |
|---|---|---|
| Direct Instruction | Parent Education | Bank Street |
| Behavior Analysis | TEEM | Responsive Education |
| Southwest Lab | Cognitively oriented curriculum | Open Education |

Baseline (0) represents average of the national pooled comparison group.
Source: Educational Achievement Systems

The Washington Times

approach—none of them worked. They were *horrible.*

The sight-word, or look-say, approach is particularly bad because there is no method for correcting mistakes. If a child reads a word incorrectly, what do you tell them with the sight-word approach? "Look at the unique shape of the word," or "Look at the beginning letter and ask yourself what that word could be." That's it. They're not taught that the word is a function of the arrangement of specific letters. It's like taking average people off the street and trying to teach them calculus by showing them different curves with different answers. "What's this one? .03. And this one? .05. Good." It's that stupid.

With sight-word, children develop all kinds of misconceptions about what reading really is. They think reading means looking at pictures and guessing what the words are, because that's what they've learned to do. The misconceptions are induced because the children are given highly predictable text for reading practice, which then reinforces for guessing on the basis of context. But when they're given text that's not predictable, they can't make out what the words on the paper say because they really don't know how to read.

The only programs that showed any promise were the ones based on the International Teaching Alphabet, where you taught children to read using the phonetic pronunciation. You could teach disadvantaged kids to read that way, but then you had a terrible time transitioning them out because they were absolutely unprepared to deal with the high rate of irregular pronunciations among the most common words. The reading strategies they had developed with the phonetic alphabet weren't any help to them and a great deal of re-teaching was necessary.

But what they had learned was a function of what we had taught. We were responsible for so seriously mis-teaching these children that they could not easily transition and learn the irregular side of the reading game. So that meant we had to a) introduce some version of irregulars very early, so that children get the idea not everything is perfectly regular, and b) keep the sounding-out, but treat it more as a sop for spelling the word. You don't want them to spell the word for initial reading. You want them to be able to sound out the word. But if you do it rigorously, they can easily understand that a particular sound means a particular letter.

The notion that you somehow recognize the word as a lump has been thoroughly discredited by research. When words are presented on a screen at the rate of about four or five hundred words a minute, experienced readers still can identify misspelled words. They can't do that without understanding the arrangement of letters in the word, and that each word is composed of a unique arrangement of letters. They're not looking at the shape of words.

**Clowes:** *When did you decide to publish your findings?*

**Engelmann:** When we were working with the children, our objective was to teach them reading, math, and language. We wanted to make sure we taught them well, and so we made up sequences that compensated for what was lacking in other programs.

Pretty soon we had prototype versions of the reading program, the math program, and the language program. Our rule was that we would not submit anything for publication until we were sure that if the script was followed and presented as specified, it would work. We never submitted anything for publication that was not absolutely finished.

Also, the publisher was not allowed to edit any of our material. The publisher would say, "There's a better way to phrase it." No, there isn't! We've tried different ways. This way is efficient

and it ties in with things we're going to do later on.

Another thing that happened was the federal government's Project Follow Through, which came out of President Johnson's War on Poverty and was aimed at evaluating programs that provided compensatory early education to disadvantaged children. We were one of 13 major sponsors, with the others representing the full spectrum of philosophies about instruction: developmental, Piagetian, the British open classroom, natural learning processes, and so on.

The results showed those other programs don't work in any subject. Direct Instruction beat them in all subjects. We beat them in language, in math, in science, in reading, and in spelling. And our students were the highest in self-image. And although Follow Through went only through third grade, additional follow-up showed an advantage through eighth grade and a statistically significant increase in college enrollment.

We also have some more direct information from places we worked with in Utah, where the Direct Instruction sequence goes through sixth grade. For example, when the children in Gunnison Elementary School entered junior high, they skipped seventh grade math and went directly into Algebra I, which was scheduled for eighth grade. At the end of the year, the children from our program were first, second, fourth, fifth, and sixth in performance in Algebra I.

**Clowes:** *So Project Follow Through confirmed what you had already found about the ineffectiveness of those other programs. Yet those programs still are being promoted in teacher colleges and they still are widely used, while Direct Instruction is not. Why?*

**Engelmann:** The answer is really simple, but it's very difficult for most people to accept: Outcomes have never been a priority in public education, from its inception. That's the way the public education system is. The system is more concerned with the experience of the child: "Let the child explore," "Let the child be his or her self," "Don't interfere with the natural learning process," and so on.

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The rhetoric is wonderful, but the test is: Does it work? Quite clearly, it doesn't. The ones who are victimized the most by this are children from poor families.

But anyone who does not view the child in this way is portrayed as some kind of redneck Republican with no real human concern.

**Clowes:** *What about Advantage Schools? I understand they're using your approach, too.*

**Engelmann:** They're doing some pretty good things, but I think they're probably a little light in initial training. Part of that is because they're installing a school from scratch, and so you have to teach the teachers and the administrators a lot more than you would if you were just moving into an extant school. That's a tough job. It takes months to get the routines down.

**Clowes:** *Do you have any recommendations for state policy makers who want to raise the quality of U.S. K–12 education?*

**Engelmann:** My first recommendation would be to use only data-based material; that is, material that has a track record and can demonstrate it works. My second recommendation would be to evaluate test results skeptically. Don't rely on state tests and the like to give you an indication of what's really going on. To produce quality, you have to have quality control. That means having random samples, just as you would in a business.

You would go into a school and randomly test one out of five students in randomly chosen classrooms. In reading, you would give each student a passage to read and then ask them some questions about it. You could get the information you need out of a classroom very quickly—I'd guess no more than 10 minutes. If you sampled six classrooms, that would give you a pretty good idea of what is going on in that school. Then you would compare the performance of the students you had sampled with their achievement test scores and note any discrepancies.

In many cases, you will discover great discrepancies—where the children performed well on the test and yet when sampled they can't do math or they can't read. Schools can do all kinds of things to make their scores look better than they really are, so they need to be evaluated skeptically, preferably with this quality control approach. ADI.

# 2001 ADI Awards

The 2001 National Direct Instruction Conference marked the 27th year for the annual event held in Eugene, Oregon. The conference provides training in the use of DI programs as well as sessions geared toward experienced users of DI, administrators, researchers and behavior management specialists. The conference also provides a unique opportunity for participants, program authors, consultants and trainers to meet and interact, enhancing a sense of community among the growing number of DI practitioners. A highlight of the conference is an Awards Dinner during which excellence within the DI community is recognized. Prior to the conference a call for nominations is sent out to schools and individuals using DI and from the responses a selection committee takes on the challenging task of selecting the recipients. Awards are given for Excellence in Education, Excellent School and The Wayne Carnine Most Improved Student Award. Along with recognition by the Association, the dinner provides an opportunity for the recipients to publicly thank those who are part of their success and reinforces the importance of the mission that is shared: ensuring the success and learning of all students.

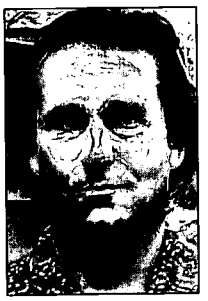
## Excellence in Education

With great enthusiasm the team of Rick Fletcher and Kim Newton, from Rio Altura Elementary in Riverbank, California, was nominated and awarded with the distinction of excellence in education. Dr. Cathy Watkins of California State University, Stanislaus describes their dedication as such, "Rick and Kim approach every task involved in managing this schoolwide implementation with intelligence, enthusiasm, and just plain hard work. They are extraordinarily skilled at translating information into effective practice in the classroom. They both have well developed analytic and problem solving skills. And they have a thorough understanding of how to use assessment information to develop and guide instruction."

Rick and Kim are not only outstanding classroom teachers, they also serve as DI program coaches, trainers, and coordinators of the schoolwide implementation. Prior to the schoolwide implementation, Rick and Kim had both used DI programs in the capacity of their individual classrooms. Their knowledge of the success of students taught by these effective practices led them to approach their school with the notion of changing the curricula for the entire school. As is often the case, the idea of implementing DI schoolwide was met with opposition. Rick convinced the school staff to conduct a pilot study of eight classroom implementation groups. The data collected demonstrated significant gains in reading achievement and resulted in initiating the change to DI practices at Rio Altura.

The success of the school speaks for itself. The 1999–2000 Academic Performance Index (API) growth score was 143 points, placing them in the top ten schools showing academic growth in the state. Dr. Watkins says that Rick and Kim are, "quite simply, committed to improving the academic performance of children. They work diligently and tirelessly. I believe they are precisely the types of individuals for whom such an award is intended."

As a second year 1st grade teacher at George G. Kelson Elementary in Baltimore, Maryland, Shelby Saulsbury has immersed herself in DI. She has dedicated herself to the task of truly teaching students, participating in staff development activities, mentoring new teachers, and working as a coach and a Cadre member. She was featured in *The Baltimore Sun* for recognition in the "Reading by Nine" initiative for promoting reading excellence and was recognized by The University of Maryland for Excellence in Urban Education.



*Rick Fletcher*

*Kim Newton*

Jeanette Coleman, a Master Teacher, in a letter of support for the nomination of Shelby wrote, "I have watched Miss Saulsbury grow in her performance as a first grade teacher for the past two years. She has shown a love for students, a desire for enriching her experiences, a commitment to challenging her students, a willingness to learn and try a new innovative program and a need to stimulate the teaching and learning environment with creative and enriching experiences for her students."

From Shelby Saulsbury, "This year I received the greatest reward I could imagine. I received a class of students who were determined, eager non-readers. The majority of the students had not yet mastered the most basic pre-reading skills. These students started at *Reading Mastery I*, lesson one. These same students are now very firm readers entering *Reading Mastery III*. We have worked extremely hard this year and we are now reaping the benefits of our toil. I feel confident that their commitment to excellence and perseverance will help them to be successful in the years to come. This is my greatest joy."

Jane Green currently works with seventeen DI schools within the Baltimore City Public School system in the capacity of Instructional Specialist. She models lessons for teachers, teaches entire classes or small groups of students to demonstrate specific techniques, and conducts numerous professional development sessions for administrators and teachers. She has developed DI test awareness materials to support the administration of state and national assessments.

An anecdote by Principal Lydia Lafferty from Margaret Brown Elementary in Baltimore summarizes the thoughts of many who have worked with Mrs. Green. "When I first met Jane eight years ago, I was the rookie principal of one of the lowest performing schools in Baltimore City. Jane was a dynamic, energetic teacher with a love of learning. Our students however, were not learning. We had been named eligible for reconstitution or state takeover. Teacher turnover was high and morale was low. Standardized test scores were dismal and student behavior was spiraling out of control. The Baltimore Curriculum Project offered our school, Arundel Elementary, the opportunity to implement a total school reform model—Direct Instruction. I asked Jane to become the DI coordinator for Arundel and that's when she began to spin her magic.

"Jane immersed herself in every aspect of DI. She taught, modeled, coached and confidently expressed her commitment to the success of the program. Quickly she earned the respect of the teachers and parents. With her never-failing smile and direct manner, she transformed novice teachers into pros, naysayers into believers, and a school clouded with failure into an environment of success. Jane was an inspiration—she galvanized the faculty and channeled their energy into developing the skills to make the difference for our children. Their effective implementation of the DI program resulted in noteworthy increases in student achievement. In 1998, the Maryland State Department of Education cited Arundel Elementary for making significant gains on the Maryland State Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP). Jane Green was directly responsible for this highly sought after accolade."

*"Jane immersed herself in every aspect of DI. She taught, modeled, coached and confidently expressed her commitment to the success of the program. Quickly she earned the respect of the teachers and parents. With her never-failing smile and direct manner, she transformed novice teachers into pros, naysayers into believers, and a school clouded with failure into an environment of success."*

A group of Elementary Instructional Specialists with Dalton Public Schools describes Diane Hill's introduction to DI as such. "Over five years ago, as an Elementary Instructional Specialist in a low-performing school, Diane began to search for ways to boost the literacy development of her educationally deprived students. At that same time, Dalton Public Schools was experiencing a rapid influx of non-English speaking Latino students. Diane heard about Direct Instruction and visited an elementary school in Chattanooga, Tennessee that was using *Reading Mastery*. She returned invigorated and determined to use the program to make a difference in the lives of her diverse students. Through her leadership, the program that started as a single school initiative flourished into a system-wide adoption."

In 1994 Diane chose the DI language and reading curricula for her school, Morris Elementary. She organized all staff development activities, the teacher training and secured the support of outside consultants. As Paul McKinney from Educational Resources, Inc. said, "Morris Street's first year success sparked the attention of district level administrators and other schools in her district began to turn to the DI programs as well. By 1997, all eight elementary schools were using *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading*." He goes on to say that, "Because of Diane's persistence, vigilance, knowledge and commitment, the Board of Education created a district wide position for her as Direct Instruction Coordinator."

"Diane's belief in and passion for DI are unequaled. She has experienced first hand how effective the curriculum can be with all students when it is implemented correctly." Those words from Ed Schaefer, also from Educational Resources, Inc., reiterate the belief in Diane's commitment and the quality of her work. When accepting her award, Diane's first humble words were, "It's just my job. That's what I was supposed to do." How outstanding that someone who is truly improving the lives of students sees it simply as "doing her job."

Nominating Susan Hornor, colleague Linda McGlocklin credits Susan with a dedication that led their school, Evergreen Elementary in Spokane, Washington, to adopt *Reading Mastery* as the school reading curriculum with school district approval and financial support. Susan is a first grade lead teacher. Linda also states that, "Susan's passion for reading and ensuring that all students have essential skills reaches beyond the first grade. It has led her to develop a before school tutorial model for third

through sixth grade students. The curricula for this tutorial are *Corrective Reading* and *Reasoning and Writing.* Students in the tutorial have averaged from 1fi to 2 years gain in their reading skills as assessed by the Qualitative Reading Inventory."

The nomination letters for Susan, which included testimonials from parents whose children have been taught by Susan, attest to her motivation, dedication, patience, and her absolute commitment that all students can learn at high levels. Susan is well known for giving up breaks and lunches to ensure that children who need extra help in order to succeed, get that extra help and attention. Dr. Betty Cook, Principal at Evergreen, characterizes Susan in the following statement. "In short, Susan is a phenomenal educator in every sense of the word. She contributes to the lives of students and adults in profound ways. When I walk through the halls of this school, I am constantly reminded of the children whose lives she has literally changed by teaching them to read, seeing themselves as scholars, and to confidently move into their futures. Susan is the most noble example of a teacher I have ever met."

Stacey Herrmann teaches at Wilson Creek Jr./Sr. High School in Yucaipa, California. Margaret Messina of Advanced Education Services states that, "Stacey has been instrumental in advancing teaching to mastery through Direct Instruction at her Junior/Senior High site for at-risk students, as well as at a sister site. The majority of these students are special education students—all of the students are an average of three to four years behind in reading, writing and mathematics."

Stacey recognizes and embraces the value of research-based instruction and has become the leader among her peers in the successful implementation of DI in her school. Stacey and her students have field tested DI science textbooks by Dr. Ken Miller and Dr. Linda Carnine. Gilbert Quinbar of Trinity Children and Family Services relates that, "Because of the enthusiasm she generated in her students, they wrote to Dr. Carnine regarding their feedback on the earth science text and became an important part of the field-testing project. This ownership on their part created a highly motivated group of students who excelled in their science knowledge and self-esteem during that time." To describe the part Stacey plays on the Wilson Creek team, Director Joyce Garrison says that, "She is a role model for other staff at all times in terms of her instructional practices and educational methodology; her support of appropriate student behavior; and her commitment to advancing the progress of staff in the implementation of new strategies and techniques. She has eagerly agreed to train other staff whenever requested."

In reading the letters of support for Stacey it is quite clear that she represents the dedication and enthusiasm that merit the distinction of excellence within education.

"Indomitable, incredible, and a lot of other 'in' words" is how Zig Engelmann described Bernice Whelchel in his introduction of her as a recipient of excellence in education. Zig also expressed that he is humbled by Bernice because of the work she does in the field with her teachers and students. Bernice is the Principal of City Springs Elementary in Baltimore, Maryland, one of the Excellent Schools for this year. In a letter of support for Bernice, Zig states that, "Bernice inherited what everybody agreed was the lowest-performing school in a city with very low-performing schools." She and her school have made tremendous gains since that time.

When the school first implemented DI in 1997, not one student in third or fifth grade passed the state test. This year, 83% of the first graders, 64% of the second graders, and 67% of the fifth graders were at or above grade level in reading. Many people credit such improvements to Bernice—not that she did it alone—but that she effectively and efficiently used any and all resources she had to the greatest capacity.

*Jane Green*

*Diane Hill*

*Susan Hornor*

As Laura Doherty, Implementation Manager for the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI), stated in her letter, "Bernice constantly examines and re-examines instructional practices at her school and solves problems in a positively determined way. As an implementation manager, I found myself in the enviable and rare position of working with a principal who was constantly asking, 'What more can we be doing?' and 'What can we be doing better?' When problems came up and possible solutions were discussed, I could bank on the fact that action would be taken by the time I returned the following week. Nothing that would improve the quality of instruction was out of the question."

The students at City Springs are high achieving, motivated students guided by excellent teachers lending to a positive and pleasant atmosphere due to the determination and leadership of Bernice Whelchel. Laura Doherty states it quite simply, "She truly exemplifies excellence in education."

## *Excellent School*

City Springs Elementary in Baltimore, Maryland is one of three recipients of the Excellent School Award. The story of City Springs since the implementation of DI five years ago is truly inspirational. What a difficult task to summarize the pages of support City Springs generated from the pool of people who supported the nomination of the school. First, some history. Muriel Berkeley of the Baltimore Curriculum Project stated that, "Five years ago City Springs was a school out of control. Children followed their whims out of classrooms, out of the building. The faculty ran around in circles from one crisis to another. Children did not respect adults and adults did not respect children. Children were not learning."

Gary Davis, NIFDI Project Director, has been involved with City Springs since the inception of DI in their school. He describes the situation as such, "City Springs is a 100% low-income school set in a high poverty inner-city neighborhood. The vast majority of students come from one of the lowest income housing projects in the nation."

So what happened in City Springs that five years later they are being recognized as an excellent school? The faculty investigated DI curricula and decided to try it. Under the leadership of the Principal, Ms. Bernice Whelchel, the staff at City Springs has risen to many challenges and expectations, the most difficult being that all children must learn.

A paragraph by the NIFDI Implementation Manager, Laura Doherty, describes the absolute turn around the school has experienced.

"I had what can only be described as a true 'high' the other day during the math period. As a consultant, I'm constantly on the lookout for problems and always listen to whatever instruction is going on, even if I'm just walking by. As I walked from one end of the hall to the other while on my way to the office, I heard classroom after classroom of what can only be described as great teaching and students learning. Classroom after classroom of good pacing, unison responses, and praise. Then I was struck at how normal it was at City Springs for virtually every student in the school to be actively engaged in good instruction, hour after hour, day after day. The power of this realization was intoxicating."

*At this point the majority of City Springs students are performing above or at grade level in reading and the CTBS/5 results have shown dramatic increases in the years 1998–2001.*

At this point the majority of City Springs students are performing above or at grade level in reading and the CTBS/5 results have shown dramatic increases in the years 1998–2001. Jerry Silbert gave a breakdown of the test scores as follows. In 1998 median student performance on the CTBS in reading was below the 30th percentile. In 2001 the first grade median was at the 82nd percentile. For math first grade students were below the 10th percentile in 1998 and in 2001 the first grade scores were at the 60th percentile.

The consensus is that City Springs is now not just a model DI school, but a model school. Not only has student and teacher behavior transformed, but the school has the data to verify their academic achievements.

Hampstead Hill Elementary, also in Baltimore, is in its fifth year of DI implementation. Hampstead Hill has received Outstanding Achievement Awards based on its MSPAP and CTBS scores. It has adopted a serious, rigorous all-school DI model, and given its achievement on the standardized tests, it is apparent that the model is working well. Hampstead Hill achieved the highest Maryland State Performance Assessment Program composite score in the school's history on the 2000 MSPAP.

Hampstead Hill fully implements the reading, language, math, and spelling programs in grades k–5. In his letter of recommendation for Hampstead Hill, Project Director Gary Davis supplied demographics which give context to some factors with which the school must contend. Hampstead Hill is a low-income school with 560 students with 90% qualifying for free or reduced lunch. The transient rate is just over 30%. In spite of these figures, as Gary Davis notes, "Hampstead Hill is somewhat unique as inner-city schools go. The physical plant is in excellent shape due to a remodel shortly before the implementation of DI. As expected, the students were truly low performing academically; however, the school was not full of behaviorally out of control students. The staff was a veteran one and very entrenched."

The dedication of the staff members is a leading contributor as to why Hampstead Hill has made such great gains. They have been self-motivated in establishing afternoon practice sessions once a week, developing their own data notebook for all teachers to maintain, and establishing grade level teams. By the second year of implementation they were independently able to regroup grade-wide based on the mastery tests and independent work. This has led to the development of a core of excellent coaches who work with new teachers and teachers and students who have problems.

Percentile charts show that students in the first, second, and fifth grades are slightly above the 50th percentile in reading. At least 20% of students in

grades 1–6 are reading at least one program level above grade level, and often more. Math scores have shown increases over the last four years. "The overall trend as one would expect is increased lesson progress for groups in the first three grades. This acceleration in lesson progress is due to the increase in the staff's ability to teach the programs," comments Davis.

And from the perspective of someone who has worked with the staff of Hampstead Hill since the introduction of DI into the curricula, Mr. Davis adds that, "Hampstead Hill is a model DI school. A stroll through the halls or a quick visit to any classroom would tell you this. The staff has put in an incredible effort and time to become one of the best. I think they have earned the recognition that this award would give them."

"There are no excuses. All students can learn." That is the policy that Ron Costa, Principal, and his staff developed at Rio Altura Elementary in Riverbank, California in order to go from the "weakest link" two years ago to a nine out of ten ranking compared to similar schools throughout the state. "Rio Altura has been a model school in our county. Through the implementation of DI programs, Rio Altura has demonstrated that effective teaching assures that **all** children can learn. A schoolwide effort to train and coach staff members was initiated after collecting and analyzing data for the 1998–1999 school year. The data demonstrated significant gains in reading (both decoding and comprehension) for students involved in a pilot study of *Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading*. After schoolwide implementation, Rio Altura's API scores showed a growth of 143 points proving the difference DI makes in student achievement." These words come from Reading Program Coordinators from Rio Altura, Pat Elston and Cyndi Fletcher.

Frank Smith and Linda Youngmayr of the Stanislaus County Office of Education have this to say about Rio Altura. "During the last two years, Rio Altura has developed a statewide reputation for outstanding improvement in its educational program. The State of California's STAR Testing program

> *"They have truly shown what is possible to accomplish when you aim high, take responsibility for student performance, and provide instruction that is designed to ensure student success."*

identified Rio Altura as one of the 10 most improved schools for the 2000–2001 academic year." "Rio Altura is truly an outstanding school. The staff is motivated to assure the highest possible academic attainment for every student. This fact is reflected in all that they do. The atmosphere of the school demonstrates true caring for children and a commitment to accomplish what is best for them. It is this fact that makes our county so eager to send other sites to witness what they have accomplished."

In 1999, 30% of 2nd graders were performing at or above the 50th percentile. A year later, 51% of 2nd graders were at the norm. With a significant number of students at Rio Altura being English Language Learners, only 13% performed at the 50th percentile in 2nd grade in 1999, while in 2000 38% of ELL students were at or above the national norm. The last few years at Rio Altura represent a time of continual and significant growth and improvement. The gains at the school were so impressive that they made the front page of the local newspaper. And as Dr. Cathy Watkins emphasizes, "They have truly shown what is possible to accomplish when you aim high, take responsibility for student performance, and provide instruction that is designed to ensure student success."

## *Wayne Carnine Most Improved Student Award*

Six students were chosen this year from a pool of inspiring examples of student improvement.

Amanda Bhirdo's condition was described to her parents as developmentally delayed, explaining why she was two years behind her peers in her ability to walk, talk, and otherwise develop age-related skills. At four years old Amanda was placed into a special education head-start program to help prepare her for kindergarten. Amanda struggled through kindergarten with the help of a loving teacher although she was academically unprepared for 1st grade. While in 1st grade the school placed her permanently into the special education program. After a discouraging conversation with the school psychologist in which the psychologist predicted a bleak future for Amanda academically and socially, Amanda's mother, Marsha Rodman-Green, determined to dedicate her life to her daughter's success and to other children with learning disabilities.

Marsha contacted Rodney Kerr of SRA/McGraw-Hill who helped provide training and material for Marsha to use with Amanda. Marsha's knowledge of DI originated seven years earlier when it was used with her son, and taught him to read.

Amanda is now eight and in the process of completing *Reading Mastery I* and *Language for Learning*. She is enrolled in a regular education kindergarten program and is on task and reading. Direct Instruction has truly changed Amanda's life. Amanda has since been diagnosed with infantile

autism, replacing the developmentally delayed diagnosis. The doctor who made this diagnosis was so amazed with the skills Amanda had acquired that he told Marsha she had worked her daughter out of autism and encouraged her to continue what she was doing with Amanda.

Amanda has gone from a depressed child with little confidence to one with enthusiasm as she has now experienced the feelings of success and learning and her attitude of "I can't do this" has turned over to represent her new skills and abilities. Marsha has noticed other growth concurrent with her language skills, such as riding her bike, playing hopscotch using the correct feet and not falling down, dressing herself and her dolls. She no longer hides under the table when it is time for her lesson—she doesn't need to hide—she knows she can tackle the tasks at hand.

Marsha attended the Eugene Conference with the knowledge that Amanda's school, Island Christian School in Islamorada, Florida, has hired her as the Reading Specialist to assist children with their reading skills. Marsha was able to personally thank Zig Engelmann for authoring the programs that indeed change lives and Amanda exemplifies the possibilities when a dedicated instructor unwilling to accept failure uses an effective program.

Donte Brooks entered Collington Square Elementary in Baltimore, Maryland as a non-reading third grader. His prior school experience included being told that he was "stupid" and that he would "never learn to read." Needless to say Donte had come to view school as a negative place and himself as someone incapable of learning. In third grade Donte scored too low for placement in *Decoding A*, leading the Curriculum Coordinator, Brenda Griffin, to begin *Fast Cycle I* with him.

The transition to Direct Instruction was not easy for Donte. He did not like being corrected (*at all* says Ms. Griffin) and he consistently said to Ms. Griffin, "I hate you. I want to go back to my old school." Nonetheless Donte and Ms. Griffin worked together and did 8–10 lessons per week. By October they had reached the first storybook. Donte's concept of reading was starting to change. The "I hate you" comments stopped and in May he placed into *Decoding B1*. He achieved two years growth in reading in 10 months. Donte now knows and feels that he can learn and was overheard telling a new student, "Yeah, I couldn't read before, but Ms. Griffin taught me, and now it's just in my head." Donte now experiences a well deserved sense of pride and represents what is meant by the term "Student Improvement."

*His reading increased more than three years with one year of DI in a tutorial setting two to three hours per week.*

Daniel Cahill of South Plantation High in Plantation, Florida entered Koala Learning Center for reading assistance two to three hours per week as a sixteen year old with a reading level of a third grader. Daniel was labeled as dyslexic/learning disabled and has been in special education classes since the early elementary grades. Throughout his school career he has received intense full time services and his parents have spent thousands of dollars in private programs including a private LD school, and intensive one-to-one remediation with one of the area's prominent reading specialists. Despite these efforts Daniel was only at a third grade reading level by the beginning of his ninth grade year.

At the Koala Learning Center Daniel has been instructed with *Corrective Reading, Decoding*. Marvin Silverman, Director of Koala commented that, "Despite a decade of failure, frustration, disappointment, and not being able to reach a literacy level, Daniel was cooperative and did not complain about this last effort to try to improve his reading. He persevered with our center's teacher and never complained about having to attend these remedial sessions." Within a year Daniel had reached the end of level C and tested out on a middle school word recognition level and a high school comprehension level. His reading increased more than three years with one year of DI in a tutorial setting two to three hours per week. Mr. Silverman points out that, "With DI, he showed as much growth in 105 hours of instruction as he did with eight years of effort prior to DI."

Mr. Silverman commends Daniel for "his willingness to try another approach despite all of the frustration and lack of success in the past." It is indeed a pleasure for the Association for Direct Instruction to recognize the tremendous improvement achieved by Daniel and to reward his perseverance as he strives to become a better reader.

Following are the words that Mrs. Daniela Greco, Academy Coordinator for Beach Channel High School in Rockaway, New York, used to describe Natanael Lozado in her letter of nomination for the Most Improved Student. "I have had the pleasure of knowing Natanael Lozado for the past three years. I first became acquainted with Natanael when he was a student in my *B2 Decoding* class. As I worked with him, I began to realize what a fine young man he is to both his teachers and fellow classmates. I knew that one day I would nominate him for the most improved student. This day has finally arrived."

Daniel is sixteen and serves as a model of appropriate behavior for his peers. He is energetic and helpful while suffering with asthma in the winter and

allergies in the summer. Those ailments do not stop him from helping Mrs. Greco in her office, tutoring other students in decoding during his lunchtime, and helping his Spanish-speaking parents with English. Natanael's classroom participation and politeness have yielded positive teacher reports regarding class work and relations with peers and faculty members. In 1999 Natanael's Woodcock Johnson scores were: W.I.: 3.4, W.A.: 1.7, Comp.: 3.9. Natanael attributed these low scores to frequent absences in junior high due to his asthma. Bilingualism may also have contributed to these scores. With the combination of coaching from Mrs. Greco and sheer determination on the part of Natanael, his 2001 Woodcock Johnson scores were W.I.: 7.7, W.A.: 12.7, and Comp.: 10.7. Natanael learned perseverance from his experience. He has been self-motivating and he has reaped high rewards as a result of his determination, laying the path for future success.

Sacrifice and perseverance are two of the characteristics that describe Hadley Quintard and his ability to make great gains during the 1999–2001 school years. Hadley's mother asked the reading teacher, Ms. Jonita Sommers to tutor Hadley using DI curricula starting in November 1999. As a seventh grader at Big Piney Middle School in Big Piney, Wyoming Hadley took the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test in November 1999 and fell into the following percentiles: Vocabulary: 9th (4.0 grade level); Comprehension: 8th (3.4 grade level); Total: 8th(3.7 grade level). These results showed his performance significantly behind grade level and struggling desperately. For Hadley the following months consisted of intensive tutoring coupled with an active extracurricular schedule that included basketball and track. Hadley was tutored four mornings a week and requested 7:30 a.m. sessions to allow him to be in basketball practice after school. January through March Hadley did not have any after school sports and went to tutoring four to five days a week for an hour each day and never missed a scheduled day. During school vacations Hadley took the *Decoding C* book home and did the lessons with his mother. During the summer break of 2000 Hadley's mother drove him to Ms. Sommers' ranch 45 minutes out of town twice a week and Ms. Sommers met them in town once a week. Hadley helped his grandfather in the hayfield everyday, so he came early in the morning when the dew was on during haying. He also gave up some nights of team roping so he could be tutored. When school started that year Hadley and Ms. Sommers worked together four days a week at 7:30 a.m. with Hadley always on time and sometimes early. In that time he one day brought his eighth grade physical science book to tutoring to get help reading and comprehending, but he didn't even need the help. As Ms. Sommers said, "All he needed was some success, which gave him much needed confidence."

In May 2001 Hadley took the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test for the third time. His scores were in the following percentiles: Vocabulary: 14th (5.0 grade level); Comprehension: 31st (7.7 grade level); Total: 27th (6.1 grade level). Overall he has gained 2.4 years on the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test after 1.5 years of instruction using DI material. Hadley has not had a failing grade since he began working with the DI programs.

Ms. Sommers has used DI programs for twenty years and has never seen a student work so hard or give up so much of his own time so he could learn to read. Of Hadley she said, "I have had students gain as much as Hadley or more and even in a shorter time span, but no one has put in the day after day effort he has done without complaining or trying to get out of it. Reading was hard for him, but with the Direct Instruction programs and his perseverance, Hadley has learned how to read!"

Patrick McFadden spoke with great enthusiasm in his nomination letter for Tony Tran from Charles Carroll Barrister Elementary in Baltimore, Maryland. Tony was born in Vietnam and moved to Baltimore when he was three. Tony's parents have limited English speaking skills thus Tony was placed into the school's ESOL program when he entered kindergarten. Because of his limited English Tony did not do well in kindergarten. Tony began DI in kindergarten and by 2nd grade he scored in the 99th percentile in both language and math on standardized tests and tested out of the ESOL program. As Mr. McFadden stated, "He totally embraced the DI system."

"In addition to the amazing amount of academic improvement Tony has made in the last two years, he also serves as a positive example of how to behave in a classroom. He follows the rules of Direct Instruction, from answering on signal to checking and correcting his work. His behavior proves the adage that academic achievement is the key to discipline." Those words from Mr. McFadden summarize the awesome achievements Tony has made with the combination of his own will and his school's use of a research-based program that has again proven effective.

The preceding summaries offer only a glimpse of these outstanding individuals and the contributions they are making nationwide. It is clear to see how the cycle comes full-circle. The schools make the decision to utilize Direct Instruction, allowing the opportunity for dramatic improvement. In the classroom the teachers reach excellence as a result of personal persistence and dedication combined with an effective tool which allows students to grow. And the students are given a chance to realize their full potential and to understand the excitement of learning and mastery. Perhaps as these stories make more headlines and more lives are affected as such, the dream of more children truly learning will be realized. ADI

MIKE BOWLER, *The Baltimore Sun*

# *Teaching Method Makes the Grade*

In the recent flurry of news about school testing locally and nationally, one accomplishment might have been missed, and it's worth noting: Direct Instruction passed the five-year test in Baltimore with flying colors.

In the 1990s, when the highly scripted, phonics-based program began making waves in Baltimore, there were many doubters. Direct Instruction—DI, for short—went against the teaching practices recommended by much of the education establishment. It was considered too regimented. Teachers hated it.

Under another name (DISTAR), it had been tried here in the 1970s but had not lasted. And, like an earlier plan to install the private Calvert School curriculum at a Baltimore public school, it had the disadvantage of having been introduced, promoted and partially funded not by the folks who run the school system, but by well-meaning outsiders.

Give us five years, said DI's sponsors. That's the minimum that should be afforded any school reform. If we can't show sustained progress by 2001, we should fold our tents and go away.

Well, we're still lacking fifth-year results from this spring's Maryland state school performance testing, but the five original DI elementary schools—Hampstead Hill, Roland Park, City Springs, General Wolfe and Arundel—don't have to leave camp. According to results of a national standardized test released last week, they have half a decade of growth to brag about, and the 12 other DI schools in the city are pulling ahead of citywide averages on those same tests.

In reading, all five of the original DI schools outpaced citywide averages on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, taken in March, and in four of five grades their kids scored above the national median. (The fourth grade, for reasons no one can explain, is a problem everywhere.)

City Springs Elementary, smack in the middle of one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, is a case in point. If Baltimore schools in general have done well on the CTBS, City Springs has performed even better, improving reading scores by 54 percentage points in the first grade and 53 points in the fifth since Direct Instruction arrived. During the same period, citywide median percentile scores increased by 29 and 25 percentage points, respectively.

"The proof is in the pudding," says Bernice E. Whelchel, completing her sixth year as City Springs' principal. And she's not just talking about test scores, which these days fly around like spring pollen. Even those of us who are crazy enough to watch scores closely become overwhelmed. Is a school to be judged "good" or "bad" strictly on the basis of how its pupils score on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program or CTBS?

No, the way to judge the difference at City Springs is to visit—and to remember five years ago. The city has imploded the nearby East Baltimore high-rise projects since then, and enrollment is down from the high 300s to 290. That's helped, but it doesn't fully explain the new atmosphere: Out of chaos, there is order and respect. Many more parents are participating. Upstairs, a U.S. history class is eagerly discussing a recent field trip to Monticello, President Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia.

One of the raps against DI is that while it might do a good job at teaching the mechanics of reading with its highly scripted instruction, it falls down when it comes to comprehension.

I saw no evidence of that among the fifth- and fourth-graders in the stuffy U.S. history classroom. They had done their reading with understanding; they knew about the Lewis and Clark expedition, about slavery and even about Jefferson's gardens. I've heard first-graders at City Springs reading with evident understanding, but that hasn't silenced the critics who charge that DI is simply "rote learning."

The program's founder and leader, Siegfried "Ziggy" Engelmann, says he believes that children fail to learn when instruction is unclear or poorly organized. So DI is systematic and highly structured. It's a "step-by-step procedure," says Whelchel, "so that no child can possibly fall through the cracks. You have to be a purist as far as implementing Direct Instruction."

Given the success of DI at City Springs and elsewhere, you would think that city school officials would embrace it enthusiastically—and you would think wrongly. Other programs, after all, also are working in city schools, and these allow more teacher flexibility. Moreover, success among the DI schools is uneven.

If DI were to lose foundation support, it might go the way of so many other promising city school reforms. But Whelchel isn't worried about that just now: "Next year, we're going to knock the socks off the. . . tests again." ADI

Reprinted with permission from *The Baltimore Sun*, May 27, 2001.

JERRY SILBERT

# *A Dozen Suggestions to Make DI Beginning Reading Implementations Produce More Student Learning*

*Jerry Silbert is co-author of the college text, Direct Instruction Reading and Direct Instruction Mathematics. He also co-authored Levels C & D of Reasoning and Writing and levels I & II of Expressive Writing. In the past decade he has been involved in the implementation of the DI model in a number of schools throughout the U.S.*

This paper is addressed to educators who are using the Direct Instruction programs *Reading Mastery*, *Language for Learning* and *Language for Thinking* as a beginning literacy program with at-risk populations and to advocates for children in communities in which Direct Instruction is being used.

There are numerous schools throughout the nation in which Direct Instruction is being used to make very significant gains in student achievement. The challenge now is to create implementations in which all schools in a district using Direct Instruction produce very large gains in student achievement.

Below are 12 suggestions that I believe can lead to greater and more uniform student achievement gains in DI implementations.

## Suggestion 1. More Focus on Bringing Children to Grade Level by End of First Grade

The success of the Direct Instruction Model in producing large gains in student achievement is dependent on what happens before the end of first grade. Bringing children to grade level status by the end of first grade is essential if children are to be successful and score well on tests in first grade and in future grades.

At-risk children who master the content of *Reading Mastery I* and *II* and the content of the first two levels of the Direct Instruction language programs, *Language for Learning* and *Language for Thinking*, by the end of first grade score at or above grade level on standardized tests. Children who just complete Level I by the end of first grade will generally score very poorly on the standardized tests and not improve significantly in their scores in later grades.

The goal of having virtually all children complete and master the first two levels of the *Reading Mastery* and *Language* programs by the end of first grade is not easy to reach, but has been achieved in a number of schools in high poverty areas and is therefore possible.

## Suggestion 2. More Emphasis on Teaching DI in Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten

A quality DI program in kindergarten is essential to have all children reach grade level by the end of first grade. The DI programs must be implemented in kindergarten with a sense of urgency to have most children complete and master the content of the first levels of the reading and language programs.

Full-day kindergartens, low teacher-student ratios, adequate time for instruction and a high quality and quantity of training for the teachers, not only in Direct Instruction techniques but also in classroom organization and management contribute to reaching this goal.

Pre-kindergarten classes during which *Language for Learning* is taught to all children and the DI reading program is taught to more advanced students can play an important role in reaching the goal of bringing all children to grade level by the end of first grade.

## Suggestion 3. More Emphasis on the Direct Instruction Language Programs

The *Language for Learning* program and its sequel *Language for Thinking*, formerly DISTAR Language I and II, play a critical role in preparing children to be good comprehenders. *Language for Learning* teaches important fundamental language concepts and vocabulary that many children have not mastered upon entering kindergarten. Both levels teach important analytical and deductive reasoning skills that help students comprehend sentences and passages.

The DI language programs must be taught in a high quality manner with the students' performance carefully monitored to ensure mastery. Ideally students will master the content of both levels by the end of first grade.

## Suggestion 4. More Instructional Time

If at-risk children are to be able to perform at the same level as their more privileged peers who receive a good deal of instruction at home, the at-risk child must receive a good deal more instruction at school. Just a "business as usual" attitude will not get the kind of gains that are possible.

Below is a brief overview of time requirements that appear to be needed in order to achieve grade level per-

formance for virtually all children by the end of first grade.

In kindergarten a 90-minute a.m. period and a 60-minute p.m. period devoted to teaching Direct Instruction appear necessary to enable all children to reach desired levels. Each instructional group should receive a full 30-minute period for reading instruction every day. For the average and lower performing groups an additional 15–30 minute DI reading period in the afternoon is needed in order to facilitate making the lesson progress needed to complete and master the 160 lessons of *Reading Mastery I* by the end of the school year. The same time allocation would ideally be provided for *Language for Learning*. Providing this level of instruction will be much easier if an extra person such as an aide or auxiliary teacher is made available to teach the language groups. DI language instruction should begin the first week of school. DI reading instruction should begin by the second week for higher performers and by the end of the third or fourth week of school for nearly all the other children.

In first grade and higher, a 90-minute a.m. period and a 90-minute p.m. period are needed for language arts instruction. At the beginning of the school year, each instructional group should receive a 30-minute DI reading period in the morning and a 30-minute DI reading period in the afternoon. As the school year proceeds, when a group is at a stage in the *Reading Mastery* program at which they will easily be able to complete *Reading Mastery II* by the end of first grade with just one period a day, the teacher can utilize the afternoon period to have children read in supplementary reading materials. For example, it is the 60th day of the school year and the group is at lesson 80 in *RM II*. There are 120 school days left in the year and only 80 more lessons to be covered in *RM II*. The afternoon period could be devoted to reading in other materials. In addition to reading instruction each instructional group should have at least 30 minutes a day of language instruction with more time scheduled if needed to complete the second level of language by the end of first grade.

For some children, full morning and afternoon periods will not be sufficient. Extra time after school and during the summer may need to be scheduled if the goal of having children finish *RM II* by the beginning of second grade is to be reached.

*In kindergarten a 90-minute a.m. period and a 60-minute p.m. period devoted to teaching Direct Instruction appear necessary to enable all children to reach desired levels. Each instructional group should receive a full 30-minute period for reading instruction every day.*

In grade two and above, the language arts instruction should include the a.m. and p.m. reading periods. Students who are in *Reading Mastery III* would receive reading instruction in supplementary reading materials during the afternoon period.

## Suggestion 5. More Emphasis on Monitoring Student Mastery

DI is based on mastery teaching. The content taught in the early lessons is prerequisite for success in later lessons. If children are not taught to mastery in early lessons, progress in later lessons will be slowed.

In-program mastery tests in reading and language need to be administered and the results recorded. In reading, emphasis should be placed on fluency as well as accuracy. Teachers need to provide the remediation exercises specified in the teacher's guide when students fail a mastery test. Children having difficulty (not passing two consecutive mastery tests or performing poorly in daily lessons) need to be identified in a timely manner and solutions planned and implemented immediately to enable them to be successful.

The principal of a school must be sure that the DI mastery tests are being administered correctly and that the data reports are reliable. A system through which someone other than the teacher periodically tests students to determine their level of mastery should be established with more frequent testing by someone other than the teacher in classrooms in which student performance is poor or data submitted was not reliable.

## Suggestion 6. More Focus on Implementing the DI Data Management System

The DI Data Management System includes: (a) frequent examination by a school leadership team of the lesson progress and mastery test performance of students in the DI programs, (b) identifying situations in which student progress and performance are at desired levels and providing positive feedback to teachers, (c) identifying situations in which student progress and/or performance are inadequate and planning and implementing solutions to problems causing inadequate performance or progress, and (d) monitoring the effectiveness of proposed solutions.

More specifically:

1. Each week or second week, the principal, coach(es) and grade level teachers meet to examine (1) reports on student performance on the DI mastery tests and (2) reports on the number of lessons that have been taught to each group during the current period.

2. The performance of every child and every group is examined to determine:

   a) individual students who are not at acceptable performance levels,

   b) particular skills which more than 25% of students are having difficulty with,

   c) groups in which more than 25% of students are not at satisfactory performance levels,

   d) groups that have not made acceptable progress in terms of lesson progress towards finishing *Reading Mastery I* by the end of kindergarten or towards finishing *Reading Mastery II* by the end of first grade.

3. The principal, coach and grade level teachers, with the input of a senior DI trainer, plan solutions to improve student learning when mastery test performance and/or lesson progress are not at desired levels.

4. The principal assigns a coach to monitor solutions for individual students. The principals monitor solutions for groups in which more than 25% of the students are failing the in-program mastery tests and groups that are not making desired lesson progress.

5. Each meeting includes a follow up on solutions already implemented in previous weeks to make sure the solutions are effective. If solutions devised at previous meetings have not been successful, modifications should be planned and implemented.

## Suggestion 7. More Inservice Sessions Devoted to Training and Role Playing Practice.

In a DI implementation, the quality and quantity of inservice and in-class coaching provided to teachers and assistants make a significant difference in determining how much students will learn.

Teachers must learn a number of new techniques throughout the school year. On-going inservice training sessions throughout the school year, presented by a qualified DI trainer, followed by practice sessions in which teachers practice the techniques together and receive feedback, need to be provided to all teachers and assistants whose performance is not at high levels of proficiency. Practice sessions can be led by exemplary teachers who have received training in how to conduct inservice sessions. There needs to be administrative monitoring to ensure that the training and practice sessions are productive.

*An important part of a DI implementation is to locate these exemplary DI teachers and prepare them to coach other teachers. Districts that have been using DI for more than a year will most probably have teachers who have reached proficient levels.*

Inservice training and role-playing practice need to occur more frequently early in the school year since the most critical part of DI programs are the initial lessons. The early lessons of DI programs establish the foundation for future learning. Ideally during the first weeks of the school year, teachers would practice 2–3 times a week for 30–45 minutes and thereafter just once or twice a week. Teachers must be brought to high levels of proficiency as early as possible so that they can teach the early lessons well.

## Suggestion 8. More In-Class Coaching

In-class coaching is a critical element of the DI Model. In most school districts, during the first year(s) of implementing Direct Instruction, the district will rely on outside consultants. While there are many excellent individual consultants and consulting firms that provide proficient training, outside consultants alone generally cannot provide the quantity of coaching needed to bring all teachers to high levels of proficiency. In high poverty schools there are often a significant proportion of teachers who will need more frequent coaching than an outside consultant who visits monthly can provide. In order to provide this frequent coaching, local exemplary DI teachers will need to be trained to serve as coaches to initially supplement and eventually take over the coaching provided by outside consultants.

An important part of a DI implementation is to locate these exemplary DI teachers and prepare them to coach other teachers. Districts that have been using DI for more than a year will most probably have teachers who have reached proficient levels.

One model that appears to have great potential for providing an ideal quantity and quality of coaching is based on the work of the RITE project in Houston. Exemplary DI teachers are selected to fill DI coach positions with about one coach for each 15–25 teachers for first year schools and one coach for 30–40 teachers in schools with more than one year experience with DI. These coaches receive on-going training in how to coach from senior DI trainers and are supervised by a senior trainer as they coach teachers.

A second model is to train several exemplary teachers in a school to be coaches and use substitutes to free them to coach their peers. This school-based system is suitable for less high needs schools in which teachers

are readily willing to accept feedback from peers and competent substitutes are available.

An important challenge in creating a coaching support structure is to ensure it is performance oriented. The performance of coaches must be monitored to ensure that they are effective in helping teachers and raising student achievement.

Whatever system is used, a district should ensure that there is sufficient coaching available to bring all teachers to acceptable and then proficient levels in a timely manner.

### Suggestion 9. More Training and Support for Building Principals

The principal must be familiar enough with the details of Direct Instruction to ensure that the elements of the DI Model: professional development, placement; grouping, scheduling, classroom teaching, administration of assessments and data analysis are in place and are being well implemented in the school. The principal must ensure that the teachers are receiving sufficient training and encouragement to reach high levels of proficiency in implementing all components of DI in their classrooms.

Principals need on-going training. Ideally, the principal should attend the inservice training for teachers and actually teach a DI group for several weeks and receive coaching. This experience would only require 30 minutes a day of the principal's time.

Principals need to receive inservice before the school year on organizing the school for DI, and during the school year for on-going elements such as making classroom visits, implementing the data management system, and providing assistance to teachers and students having difficulty. In addition to inservices, principals should visit schools in which DI is well implemented and receive mentoring at their school from a DI principal who has successfully implemented DI in a similar school.

More help should be provided for principals of schools in which undesired student behavior is interfering with instruction.

*A program to encourage children to read at home independently should also be established. The materials a child is to read independently should be at the student's instructional level. Parents ideally would be involved, listening to their children read and taking steps to encourage the child to read at home.*

### Suggestion 10. More Focused District Level Leadership on Raising Student Achievement

School districts place a number of demands on principals. Like any employee, a principal will devote more time to demands that receive the most attention from one's supervisor, in the case of school districts, the principal's supervisor is generally a regional superintendent.

Some districts with multiple schools using DI often create DI coordinator positions. However, because these "coordinators" do not have evaluative authority, their suggestions often do not receive priority from principals. To provide a clearer communication of the district's priority in improving student's reading achievement, ideally, the district should place a district leader who has authority over principals in charge of a DI implementation. This administrator's job evaluation ideally would be dependent in part on the achievement gains of the students in the grades in which DI is being taught. The district leader should receive training in the implementation of DI. Ideally a district leader would be a DI principal who has been successful in using DI to produce big gains in achievement. The DI coordinator would be under the authority of this district leader.

The district leader demonstrates to the principal and teachers where district priorities are placed by meeting on a regular basis (monthly) with the principal and school leadership team to examine and review the lesson progress and student mastery test reports in DI programs. By examining the data, providing positive feedback to those producing desired learning, and following up on the status of interventions taken in response to inadequate student progress or performance, the district leader will demonstrate to principals the priority of the district in utilizing time and resources to facilitate increased achievement.

The district leader supports school personnel by ensuring that they receive a sufficient quality and quantity of professional development support and providing the school with clear authorizations on prioritizing budgeting and time usage to support an implementation which can bring all children to grade level.

### Suggestion 11. More Supplementary Reading

At-risk children need to learn a great deal more at school than their more privileged peers. Teaching children to read early enables children to use reading as a tool to learn more information. Ideally, with good kindergarten instruction, children will reach a point in the DI programs early in first grade where they can begin reading materials from a variety of other sources.

Reading in additional material can begin once children have progressed far enough in the *Reading Mastery II* program to read traditional print, this is about lesson 80 in *Reading Mastery II*. For higher performing children, extra reading materials can be incorporated somewhat earlier.

Structured supplementary reading should be done in materials that are carefully coordinated with the introduction of skills introduced in the *Reading Mastery* program. The teacher's guides for the *Reading Mastery* programs contain suggested reading material. Instruction in reading this supplementary material needs to be structured with difficult words, new vocabulary and comprehension skills explicitly taught. District coordinators can help teachers by having exemplary teachers select materials and make lesson plans that can be shared with other teachers.

A program to encourage children to read at home independently should also be established. The materials a child is to read independently should be at the student's instructional level. Parents ideally would be involved, listening to their children read and taking steps to encourage the child to read at home.

### Suggestion 12. Use Homogeneous Construction of Classrooms to Accelerate Performance of Students.

Acceleration of student progress is critical in schools serving at-risk students. Teaching children to read in kindergarten and first grade is the first step. In addition, a sense of urgency needs to be maintained in later grades. School staffs must keep in mind the goal of preparing children to compete with their more advantaged peers. Even with the higher performing students, there must be a sense of urgency to maximize student learning.

*Constructing classrooms so that the skill level span in classrooms is not too great makes it more possible to accelerate children, as such grouping arrangement makes more efficient use of the time during the entire school day possible.*

Constructing classrooms so that the skill level span in classrooms is not too great makes it more possible to accelerate children, as such grouping arrangement makes more efficient use of the time during the entire school day possible. When the children in a classroom are at the same level, the teacher can provide whole class instruction which is at the instructional level of all students in the class for spelling and writing, supplementary reading, and for content area instruction in areas such as science and social studies.

Classrooms can be constructed to contain instructional groups that are near the same lessons in the reading program. For example, in a school with four second grades, one second grade might have the two highest performing groups and one classroom the lowest performing groups with the middle groups divided between the other two classrooms. The class with the highest performers would have the most students. The class with the lowest performers would have fewer students. Help from extra teaching personnel would focus on the class with the lower performers.

## *A Closing Note*

When high poverty schools begin using Direct Instruction, it is common to find many children even in first or second grade who are a year or two below desired levels. For example, it is not unusual for almost half the second graders in a low-income school beginning DI to be placed somewhere in *Reading Mastery I*. These children are two years below desired levels. The implementation of DI for these children must be designed to significantly accelerate their progress. Simply completing one level of the DI programs a year is not enough. The students will need two full periods a day, an after school period, peer tutoring and summer school. The goal is for children to master significantly more than one lesson a day. Without a high level of urgency, there may be very little gain in test scores with children who began DI in first or second grade rather than kindergarten. This low test score gain can be very discouraging to staff and threaten the eventual success of DI in the school. More importantly without the additional instruction, these children will not be provided with ample opportunity to reach the high levels of achievement that will be demanded of them in later grades. ADI

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# How to Achieve Excellence

## Defining Excellence in Education

In any profession excellence and distinction are based on individual performance. When an individual has accomplished a feat and experienced success, he/she has achieved excellence. Similarly, in education, teaching performances provide the foundation for excellence. Distinction, acknowledgement, and merit are warranted when students have achieved to their fullest potential.

It is evident that student progress, success, and achievement are positive indicators of excellence. Teachers and students have not achieved excellence if students are not progressing or achieving to their potential. On the other hand, if students are successful in acquiring new skills, excellence is the reality. It is apparent in education that the achievements of excellence and student progress/success are one and the same.

## Achieving Excellence

Politicians, administrators, and educators have long contemplated the essential ingredients necessary to fostering student progress and excellence. Little do they know that achieving excellence (and student success) simply requires two essential components. The first is a structured, field-tested, research based curriculum. The second is a highly qualified and skilled teacher who is able to deliver the curriculum in an effective manner.

## The First Component

A well-designed and effective curriculum provides the foundation for the achievement of excellence. Many educators feel that any curriculum, when taught well, will foster excellence and give students success. However, research and field-testing have proven that this is not the case. The quality of the curriculum contributes to the rate of student progress in attaining essential skills. Students are able to achieve more, in a shorter amount of time, with Direct Instruction. This is evident in numerous research articles published on the effectiveness of DI and on a classroom and student level.

Direct Instruction (DI) incorporates all of the essential ingredients that promote student progress. First, in DI curriculum, children are placed at their appropriate instructional level. Appropriately placing students helps ensure individual success during group instruction. Secondly, Direct Instruction introduces skills in a sequenced and structured manner. A structured and well-sequenced curriculum promotes learning at an optimum rate. Thirdly, DI requires students to review previously learned skills. Students build upon previously acquired knowledge. Review also ensures that students have mastered previously taught skills. Finally, DI provides ways for teachers to measure excellence and student progress. Teachers can collect useful data with reading rate graphs, independent work charts, and mastery tests.

## The Second Component

A highly skilled teacher is also necessary in the achievement of excellence. It is impossible to overstate the importance of teachers. When it is taught sloppily or incorrectly, Direct Instruction loses its effectiveness. On the contrary, when in the hands of a master teacher, DI's effectiveness is compounded.

Since time is a commodity in the classroom, teachers must make every instructional minute count. In order for learning to take place at an optimum rate, the classroom must be a structured learning environment. A skilled teacher has clear expectations and classroom rules. Thus, ensuring that more learning and fewer disruptions take place. Similarly, a teacher

### The Susie Wayne Scholarship

Susie Wayne was a friend to many in the Direct Instruction Community, and to many students in the Greater Seattle Area. She was an outstanding researcher, supervisor, and teacher. Her tireless spirit and great sense of humor were all the more remarkable because of critically serious medical problems that resulted in her death in 1996. In memory of her dedication to effective education for all students, the Association for Direct Instruction Board of Directors established The Susie Wayne Scholarship. The annual award of $500 cash goes to a graduate level student majoring in Education.

The basis for the award is an essay competition. Qualified candidates must write a 1,000 word essay titled "How to Achieve Excellence," and must be related to Direct Instruction. The winner for 2001 is Jessica Thompson of Eugene, Oregon who is a student of Special Education at the University of Oregon.

must deliver/teach Direct Instruction effectively. First, he/she should deliver a quick-paced lesson. This engages students and helps diminish off-task behavior. Secondly, the teacher must be enthusiastic about teaching and acknowledge positive student behavior. Enthusiasm and positive comments promote children's self-esteem and motivate them to achieve more. Third, the educator must be able to follow the DI lesson procedures. This involves preparing/pre-reading the lesson, following a script (format), and correcting student mistakes. Finally, the teacher must use data (reading graphs, mastery tests, independent work) to guide instructional decisions. If a student is not doing well, the teacher could provide extra practice and review, or place the student in a lower group. However, if a student is achieving well-above expectations, the teacher can skip lessons or place the student in a higher group.

## *Summary*

In sum, teachers must define excellence in terms of their students' successes. Teacher distinction and student excellence is only warranted when students achieve to their fullest potential. Direct Instruction and highly-skilled educators are necessary to the achievement of excellence. Both components promote student success; which, in turn, makes teacher and student excellence attainable. ADI

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# *Using Direct Instruction Programs to Teach Comprehension and Language Skills to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students: A Six-Year Study*

**ABSTRACT: Over a six year period, teachers at the University High School Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Program in Irvine, California have used Direct Instruction programs in reading comprehension, spelling, and writing with their students. These programs were designed for and have been effective with regular education and remedial hearing students. This six-year study demonstrates that if certain adaptations are made in how the programs are taught, the performance of deaf and hard-of-hearing students can be greatly increased.**

## *Introduction*

Research has shown that deaf and hard-of-hearing students have very serious problems with reading (Lovitt & Horton, 1991), fluency (Cawley, Miller, & Carr, 1990), and text structure (Parmar & Cawley, 1992). Deaf students have particular difficulty with (a) figurative English such as idioms, similes and metaphors (Hughes, Brigham, & Kuerbis, 1986; McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1987); (b) English syntax such as verb systems, negation, conjunctions, complementation, and question structures (Kretschmer & Kretschmer, 1978; Quigley & Paul, 1984; Quigley, Power, & Steinkamp, 1977); (c) pragmatics such as topic maintenance and choice (Brackett, 1983; M. Nichols, personal communication, 1993); and (d) cohesive devices such as pronominalization, temporal adverbs, ellipsis, articles and synonyms (DeVilliers, 1988; Hughes & Moseley, 1988; Kretschmer, 1989). This delay in development of English language, especially in the areas of vocabulary and syntax, interferes with learning to read (Johnson & Evans, 1991; Quigley & Paul, 1989). As a result, most deaf students do not become proficient readers by the time they leave high school, plateauing at about the fourth grade level (Quigley & Paul, 1986).

Students with more profound hearing losses perform at lower levels, as do hearing-impaired Hispanic and African-American students (Holt, 1993). Furthermore, contextual information, which is gained from understanding English structure and syntax, has been found to be even more important for less skilled readers (Stanovich, West, & Freeman, 1981; West & Stanovich, 1973). Research has also shown that limited vocabulary is a serious problem for deaf students (Karchmer, Milone, & Wolk, 1979; LaSasso & Davey, 1987; Silverman-Dresner & Guilfoyle, 1972), particularly those dealing with English function words and common content words (McAnally, et al., 1987).

A review of the research literature shows that there has been limited success in teaching English language to deaf students, regardless of the modality used (Quigley & Paul, 1984). English programs for school age deaf students should include a concurrent focus on all forms of communication, systematic teaching of linguistic competence in semantics, syntax, and pragmatics, and continuous evaluation of progress (Power & Hollingshead, 1982). However, the majority of currently available programs focus on very specific areas of language instruction, most notably syntax or grammar.

Takemori and Snyder (1972) found that few of the programs used with deaf students were actually designed for deaf children, and, more importantly, none were evaluated when used with deaf students. More recently, Wathum-Ocama (1992) surveyed instructional English programs used with deaf students and found that nearly all teachers found age- and interest-appropriateness problems. Nearly half of the teachers noted a serious lack of emphasis on the appropriate English skills.

The effects of poor language-comprehension and vocabulary skills are exacerbated when these students work with other disciplines, such as science and history. For example, 70% of the content and activities in science are drawn from general science textbooks (Raizen, 1988). Tyson and Woodward (1989) labeled these science textbooks as "encyclopedic" compendiums of topics, in which the average hearing sixth grader confronts 300 new vocabulary terms (Armbruster & Valencia, 1989), and the average tenth grader is faced with up to 3,000 new words (Hurd, 1986). For deaf and hard-of-hearing students, language and vocabulary skills provide the key not only to reading comprehension, but also to virtually all other academic school subjects.

Two print programs have been developed specifically for teaching English to deaf students—the *TSA Syntax Program* (Quigley & Power, 1979), which uses reading and writing activities to deduce grammar rules in nine different areas, and *Communicate with Me: Conversation Strategies for Deaf Students* (Deyo & Hallau, 1983), which uses role playing and pictures to focus on conversation skills. A number of computer-assisted specific skill language programs designed for hearing students, such as *Figurative Language* (Abraham, 1984) and *Words and Concepts II* (Wilson & Fox, 1990), have also been used with deaf students. Other programs designed for deaf students utilize computers, computer networks, videotapes, and videodiscs to teach specific aspects of language skills. The ALPHA computer system (Prinz, Pemberton, & Nelson, 1985) attempts to increase conversation between students and teachers. An interactive videodisc program used at the California School for the Deaf at Riverside (Brawley & Peterson, 1983; Osaka, 1987), allows teachers to tailor grammar lessons around a videodisc story. The Electronic Network for Interaction, developed at Gallaudet University (Bruce, Peyton, & Batson, 1993), provides opportunities to use written English in communicating with other students on a computer network. The *Hands On* (Hansen & Padden, 1990) program uses a videodisc and computer to simultaneously present English captioning and ASL in various formats such as reading a story, answering questions, writing a story, and captioning a story. None of these programs have been formally evaluated to prove their effectiveness in teaching English semantics, syntax, or pragmatics to deaf students, and none represent an integrated language program as suggested by Power and Hollingshead (1982).

*By the end of the 96–97 school year, data were available for two cohorts of students who had been involved in the program for four years. The results show that the approach has produced greatly improved student achievement.*

Direct Instruction programs and methodologies were utilized in the Orange County Department of Education Deaf and Hard of Hearing (OCDE D/HH) program. Both the programs and methodology are commonly accepted as effective for use with all types of hearing students, including low-performing, bilingual, and learning disabled. Direct Instruction programs and methods have a long list of general studies validating their effectiveness with hearing students (Becker, 1984; Brophy & Evertson, 1976; Gersten, Woodward, & Darch, 1986; Haynes & Jenkins, 1986; Lockery & Maggs, 1982; Mathes & Proctor, 1988; Moore, 1986; Silbert, Carnine, & Alvarez, 1994; White, 1988). The most recent cumulative analysis of Direct Instruction programs (Adams & Engelmann, 1996) shows that in a simple comparison of mean scores, 87% of the nearly 40 studies analyzed favored Direct Instruction. In a comparison of statistically significant differences, 64% of the studies favored Direct Instruction while only 1% favored non-Direct Instruction programs. The analysis of effect sizes (Cohen, 1988) showed that Direct Instruction programs had an average effect size of .83 (.75 would be considered large and rare in educational research). Prior to the OCDE D/HH program, there had been no documented usage of Direct Instruction programs with deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Six years ago, the OCDE D/HH program made a radical change in instruction for 90% of their high school students in self-contained classrooms. This change involved using Direct Instruction programs to teach comprehension, spelling, and language. In previous years, OCDE D/HH achievement scores were typically above the national average for the deaf and hard-of-hearing population, but those scores represented the composite of both mainstreamed and self-contained students. When the data for self-contained students were analyzed separately, it became apparent that their performance was plateauing at the lower levels expected for self-contained students. Plateauing achievement trends, conflicting concerns between IEP mastery and achievement levels, and parental dissatisfac-

tion with student performance were at the heart of this change in teaching methods and materials. By the end of the 96–97 school year, data were available for two cohorts of students who had been involved in the program for four years. The results show that the approach has produced greatly improved student achievement.

### Program Description

Direct Instruction programs differ from conventional programs in what is taught and how it is taught. The development of critical skills, concepts, and processes in each subject area are meticulously mapped out. Every necessary sub-skill or concept in a subject area, regardless of how small, is directly and precisely taught and consistently reviewed. Each skill is taught in a manner that allows it to be carefully blended into more complex skills and concepts. The amount of teacher direction and prompting is carefully controlled so that students become increasingly independent in applying the skills. Students learn nearly all new skills in teacher-directed situations. Students apply the skills orally, and then practice the skills independently.

The most observable aspect of Direct Instruction programs is how they are taught. Students are taught in small homogenous groups. Student responses are very frequent and usually done in unison on a teacher's signal. This increases the practice each student gets and makes the most efficient use of instructional time. Individual responses are commonly used to check if particular students have mastered a skill or concept. The pacing is rapid in order to keep student attention. The performance criterion for each exercise is high.

The specific Direct Instruction programs used at UHS are the Science Research Associates *Corrective Reading Series—Thinking Basics, Comprehension Skills*, and *Concept Applications* (Engelmann, Osborn, & Hanner, 1989), the *Morphographic Spelling Series—Corrective Spelling Through Morphographs* (Dixon & Engelmann, 1979) and *Spelling Mastery Level F* (Dixon, Engelmann, Steely, & Wells, 1990), and the *Expressive Writing Program, Levels 1* and *2* (Engelmann & Silbert, 1985). Except for *Expressive Writing*, all the programs used are designed as remedial programs for use with hearing students in approximately grades four through eight.

> *The development of critical skills, concepts, and processes in each subject area are meticulously mapped out.*

The problem skill areas that *Thinking Basics* addresses for hearing students are the same problem skill areas that most deaf students have. These problem areas include poor argument and logic analysis skills, deficits in vocabulary and common information, poor skills in following directions, and poor statement analysis skills (which are particularly troublesome for students trying to read and retain information). The specific skills taught in *Thinking Basics* include analogies, deductions, inductions, statement inference, basic evidence, and/or, true/false, synonyms/opposites, classifications, definitions, descriptions, and basic information. Additional levels of the series build on these skills.

The skills that *Morphographic Spelling* effectively addresses for hearing students are many of the same skills important for deaf students. The most significant issue is that of having an effective rule-based approach that generalizes spelling beyond specific word lists. The benefit of the morphographic approach, in addition to providing a rule-based approach, is the potential impact to improve vocabulary knowledge, both for hearing students (Becker, Dixon, & Anderson-Inman, 1980; Chomsky, 1970; Chomsky & Halle, 1968; Dixon, 1991; Simon & Simon, 1973; Venezky, 1970), and for deaf students (Hanson, 1993; Hanson & Feldman, 1991; Hanson, Shankweiler, & Fischer, 1983; Hanson & Wilkenfeld, 1985). In addition, *Morphographic Spelling* effectively deals with the problems of adequate practice, corrective feedback, and cumulative review. Additional levels of the series build on these skills.

The *Expressive Writing* program provides a sequence of basic skills and activities that are common to all expressive writing. Students learn to write basic declarative sentences before learning how to modify those sentences with the use of clauses, pronouns, and phrases. Skills include basic mechanics, sentence writing, paragraph and story writing, and editing.

## Methods

The Orange County Department of Education Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program was established in 1977. It is a regional special day-class program encompassing grades 6 through 12 at Deerfield Elementary, Venado Middle School, and University High School in Irvine, California. All classes are located on public school sites within Irvine Unified School District. The 1996–97 enrollment was approximately 160 students. The ethnic breakdown is 42% Caucasian, 36% Hispanic, and 22% Asian. Approximately 40% of the students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

The 1996–97 OCDE D/HH instructional staff consisted of one FTE Mainstream Resource Teacher, one .6 FTE Career Specialist, 2.8 FTE Speech/Language Specialists, 15 teachers, 17 interpreters, and 17 instructional assistants. Non-instructional staff included one high school principal, one FTE psychologist, and one counselor, with secretarial, audiological, nursing, mobility, vision and APE services at each school.

The students involved in this study were those deaf and hard-of-hearing students at the University High School who were not mainstreamed (approximately 60%). Complete data were available for 15 students in the cohort that began in the 92–93 school year and 27 that began in the 93–94 school year. Data from students who began in the 91–92 school year (the first year of Direct Instruction) was too incomplete to include in the data analysis.

In the years 1991–93, all high school teachers of the mainstreamed students participated in the Direct Instruction implementation. In the remaining years, typically two or three teachers declined to participate. The turnover of teachers participating in the implementation has averaged one teacher per year.

In the fall of 1991, after approximately one week of inservice training, the UHS D/HH program began implementation of Direct Instruction in the areas of reading comprehension, language and writing. Some of the teachers began implementing Direct Instruction immediately while others held off for 3 to 4 months. Some of the teachers taught Direct Instruction every day, while others taught it only once a week or once every other week. During the first year, the teachers were monitored approximately once every two weeks by a Direct Instruction teacher trainer or the principal, who had also gone through the Direct Instruction training along with the staff. During the second and third years, teachers were observed approximately once a month. Training in subsequent years involved several days of after-school inservice training and one or two classroom observations, both done by teachers who had taught the program since its initial implementation.

## Modifications

During the second and third year of implementation, teachers began to experiment with different aspects of the programs to make them more efficient with deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Some adaptations were made in how the programs were taught. Adaptations to the group response format were made to reduce off-task behavior. A group response from deaf/hard-of-hearing students involves signing/fingerspelling at different rates. Teachers developed several strategies for monitoring multiple rate responses, but frequent repetition of both group and individual responses was still necessary and required strategies for reducing off-task behavior during repeated responses. Additional modifications were made to provide more individual turns, to use more modeling of desired student responses, and to adjust the rate of student responses.

*Additional modifications were made to provide more individual turns, to use more modeling of desired student responses, and to adjust the rate of student responses.*

The most difficult modifications in how the program was taught had to do with deciding which signing system to use. The OCDE D/HH program, like most, endorses Simultaneous Communication—signing and speech used simultaneously. However, there was confusion and disagreement over which signing system to use with the Direct Instruction programs. Research also is unclear on whether it is more effective to use American Sign Language (ASL) or some form of manually coded English (MCE) (Brasel & Quigley, 1977; Corson, 1973; Vernon & Kohl, 1971; Weisel, 1988). Although ASL can represent the entire range of language capabilities and constraints (Lillo-Martin, 1986; Padden, 1988; Padden & Perlmutter, 1987; Supalla, 1985), its utility in teaching English is very problematic, and its efficacy in doing so has not been formally evaluated. The attempts to force ASL into English grammatical form (ASL signs and invented forms representing affixes and other grammatical elements produced in English word order) have also been problematic and have not been rigorously evaluated. ASL and some of these MCE forms (SEE and CASE) omit function words, such as "a" and "the," and omit some affixes. Conceptual inaccuracies in some MCE forms present serious misconceptions when teaching about English syntax and semantics. In SEE II, the same sign can be used for very different concepts if that sign meets two of three criteria (written the same, pronounced the same, or signed the same), thus resulting in visual homophones. As a result of these criteria, the SEE II sign for dresser can refer both to a person or a piece of furniture.

Additionally, there has been criticism of MCE forms in general from ASL proponents—that MCE forms violate structural rules of ASL (Charrow, 1975; Marmor & Petitto, 1979), and that certain English elements are not learnable (Gee & Goodhard, 1985; Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989; Supalla, 1991). The fact that many deaf adults are fluent in written English would discredit the latter claim. In relation to violating the structural rules of ASL, acknowledging ASL as a first and preferred language for the deaf does not lessen the need for an adequate internalization of the English language system in order to understand written English. Certainly there are violations of ASL structure in English, but students must be able to literally translate and remember English sentences in order to understand them, especially when dealing with such grammatical structures as similes and metaphors.

The approach taken by the teachers in the University High School study has been to utilize a combination of ASL and CASE. Each has specific strengths and weaknesses for representing and

explaining particular concepts and word functions in English. Some tasks, particularly in comprehension, require CASE for absolute word for word fidelity, while other tasks are more conceptual and can utilize ASL. If careful attention is paid to concept accuracy and sign consistency, ASL and CASE can be used effectively to teach English language skills while still maintaining the preeminence of ASL for general communication.

In addition to modification of how the programs were taught, modifications were also made in what was taught. Wording of student directions was changed to meet the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. The most significant modification was generating and adding pre-lesson vocabulary lists for reading comprehension lessons in order to avoid time consuming vocabulary explanations in the middle of a lesson. Prior to entering the University High School program, the students had been exposed to differing amounts of instruction in ASL, CASE, and SEE II. Consequently, approximately five minutes of vocabulary work and review was needed at the beginning of each lesson to bring all students to a common level of fluency. This vocabulary component included ASL signs that were unfamiliar or difficult for the students (or teachers), invented signs (such as the sign for "morphograph"), and the unique signing utilization of CASE.

## *Results*

Data for all students in the UHS D/HH program are from the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1989). Although this is a commonly used test, it has not been normed for the deaf population. Comparisons in this section are made to the Stanford Achievement Test (The Psychological Corporation, 1989b), a similar test which has been normed for the deaf population. Results of tests of significance are only given for comparisons within the UHS D/HH population.

### Performance Levels Attained

The usage of these Direct Instruction programs with deaf students produced grade-level gains greater than the average for students in self-contained classrooms. Twelfth grade students in self-contained classrooms who had spent four years in the program averaged 5.7 in reading comprehension, 7.0 in spelling, and 7.2 in total language. These grade-level averages are above the national averages for deaf students in self-contained classrooms by 2.8 years, 2.2 years and 4.4 years respectively (as reported by Holt, Traxler, and Allen [1992] of the Gallaudet Center for Assessment and Demographics[CADS]). The Direct Instruction averages are also above the CADS averages for all deaf and hard-of-hearing students (including mainstreamed) by 1.2 years, .9 years, and 2.7 years respectively. Figure 1 displays these results.

### Gain Scores

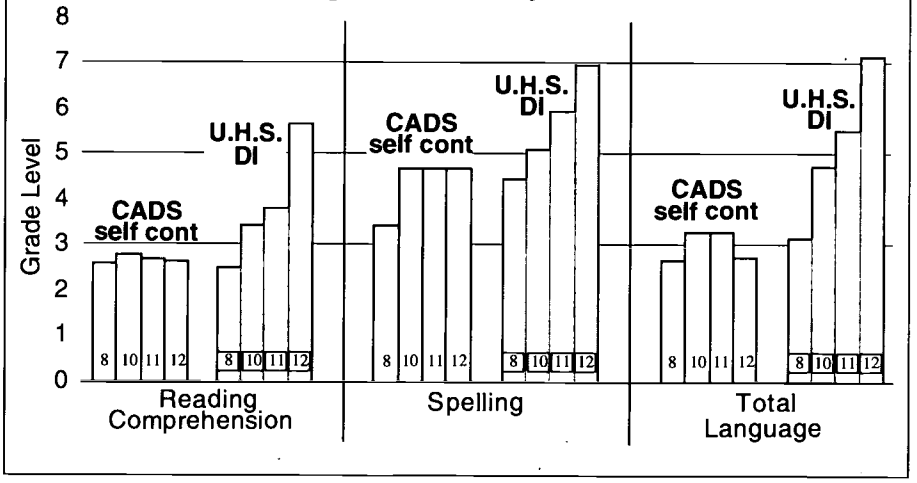
Gain scores for students in the Direct Instruction programs were also greater than gains for the comparison groups. Compared to end-of-year testing in the 8th grade (baseline), 12th grade UHS students in self-contained classrooms averaged gains of 2.5 years in reading comprehension, 3.8 years in spelling, and 3.0 years in total language. Gains over the same period for CADS self-contained students were .0 years, 1.3 years and .0 years respectively. Gains for all CADS students (including mainstreamed) were .4 years, .9 years and .3 years respectively. Figure 2 shows these gain comparisons.

### Importance of Teacher Training and Implementation

The importance of teacher training in Direct Instruction programs and methods has been noted in situations that require changes in classroom practices (Becker, 1986; Gage, 1985), changes in teacher attitudes (Gersten et al., 1986), and field-based experiences (Welch & Kulic, 1988). Of particular importance to implementing Direct Instruction programs is the observed difficulty of training teachers to implement good pacing (Gersten, Carnine, & Williams, 1982; Marchand-Martella & Lignugaris/Kraft, 1992). An additional concern in using Direct Instruction programs with deaf students is the burden placed on the teacher—having to watch five or more students signing and fingerspelling answers at different rates and having

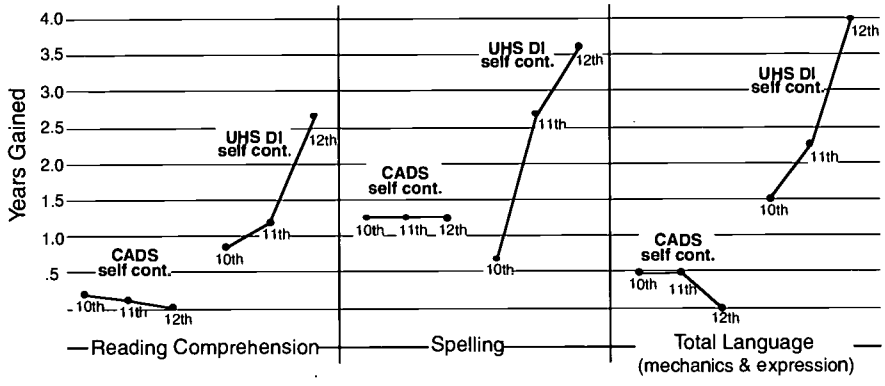
**Figure 1**

*Average grade level performance by grade in school and subject area for the Direct Instruction students for all deaf and hard-of-hearing students in self-contained classrooms.*



## Figure 2

*Average cumulative gains by grade level and subject area for Direct Instruction students and all deaf and hard-of-hearing students in self-contained classrooms.*

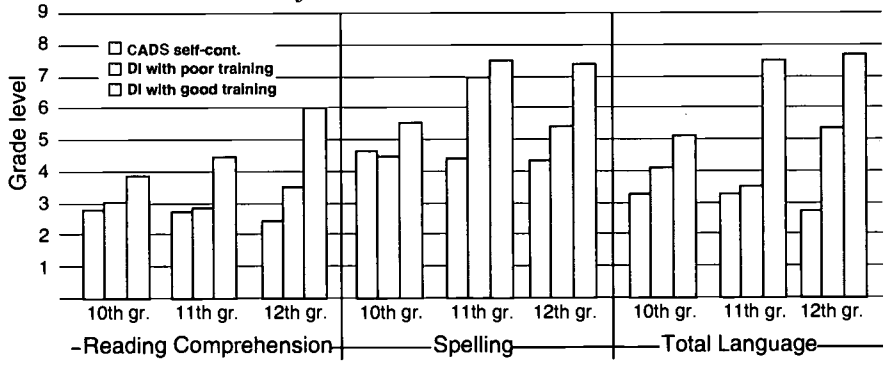



to read scripted instructional presentations and translate those presentations consistently to students in an English signing system. These additional burdens make training teachers of the deaf and hard-of-hearing to use these programs not only more difficult, but more important.

In the University High School study, teacher training and program implementation were critical variables. For years in which most teachers were not sufficiently trained (no inservice or preservice training or no follow-up observations), program implementation was weak (less than 50% of the teachers taught the DI programs three or more times per week); experimental students showed greater gains than 90–91 UHS students (baseline), but not at a significant level. For years in which teacher training and implementation met the minimum levels, experimental student gain scores were significantly greater than the 90–91 UHS students (.001 level). Over the last five years, when UHS students from well-implemented classrooms with well-trained teachers are compared to students from poorly implemented classrooms with poorly trained teachers, students from the well-implemented and trained classrooms always perform at a higher level (significant at the .02 to .001 levels). Figure 3 shows this comparison.

## Figure 3

*Average grade level performance by grade in school and subject area for Direct Instruction students with well-trained teachers, Direct Instruction students with poorly trained teachers, and for all deaf and hard-of-hearing students in self-contained classrooms.*




## *Discussion*

Although 12th grade students in the Direct Instruction programs perform much better than national averages, a great proportion of their gains come in the last year of instruction (11th to 12th grade). In the first two years of high school, the UHS students outperform CADS averages for self-contained classrooms but usually do not outperform CADS overall averages (including mainstreamed students). A great part of this trend is probably due to the fact that the UHS deaf and hard-of-hearing students typically complete less than one-half an instructional lesson each school day and are typically taught the Direct Instruction programs only three days a week. It is not uncommon for students to spend more than two years covering just the introductory level program in a series. The introductory levels of the programs typically focus on basic-level component skills. It is often not until the middle of the second program of a series that these component skills have been developed and practiced enough that they can be brought together into broadly generalizable operations. Many of the students involved in the UHS program do not get to these programs until sometime in their 11th grade year. Consequently, the full impact of the Direct Instruction programs is not as observable until the last year of instruction. By the end of 12th grade, students in the DI programs outperform the CADS overall averages for all deaf students.

A solution at the high school level is to increase the student's exposure to Direct Instruction to five days a week. Another perhaps more desirable solution might be to begin using the

Direct Instruction programs much earlier. To test this latter solution, a sample of both fourth grade and seventh grade students from UHS D/HH feeder schools will begin working with these same Direct Instruction programs during the 1997–98 school year.

As is apparent in Figure 3, teacher training and good classroom implementation (widespread usage at least three times per week) make an enormous difference in student performance. Initially, teachers complained that teaching DI programs seemed awkward, unnatural, robotic, and boring. They said there were too many hands to monitor for correct fingerspelling and signed responses. Many did not see the point of utilizing a scripted lesson presentation. For all teachers, there were problems adapting directions and tasks written for hearing students. Generally, teachers felt it was not until the third year of the implementation that sufficient modifications had been made to make the DI programs work smoothly and most effectively.

Although program and technique modifications have solved many of the original training and implementation problems, there remains the significant problem of having all teachers, especially new teachers, consistently follow the common set of practices that has been developed and that has proven effective. This point is particularly true for the conventions regarding when to use ASL and CASE and what sign conventions to use for many of the vocabulary words. These are critical aspects because they directly affect lesson pacing and mastery.

The implementation of Direct Instruction programs, whether with hearing or deaf students, requires significant changes in how teachers teach. Implementations with teachers of the deaf and hard-of-hearing require additional modifications and additional emphasis to ensure consistency of signing conventions. The data show the effect of good training and implementation. To ensure good training and implementation with teachers of the deaf and hard-of-hearing, on-going teacher observation and training are needed. A preliminary research study has recently been completed which shows the feasibility of using a computer teaching and training program to provide such training while simultaneously presenting lessons to the students.

*Direct Instruction programs in comprehension, spelling, and writing have been shown to produce considerable test-score gains for deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students in self-contained classrooms.*

## Conclusion

Direct Instruction programs in comprehension, spelling, and writing have been shown to produce considerable test-score gains for deaf and hard-of-hearing high school students in self-contained classrooms. To make these programs work efficiently with deaf and hard-of-hearing students, adaptations must be made in how the programs are taught and how to most effectively combine usage of ASL and CASE. Teacher training and widespread consistent usage of the programs are necessary to obtain the greatest impact. Although the high school student gains reported in this study are impressive, earlier and more consistent use of these programs and techniques has the potential of producing students who can attain much higher levels of performance.

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## Author Note

The University High School Program utilizing Direct Instruction is currently in its eighth year and has expanded to include similar programs at feeder schools. An ongoing research study, funded by NICHD, is examining the efficacy of a computerized teacher training and lesson presentation program.

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DONNA HUNT, DIANE WOOLLY, Arkansas School for the Blind
and ANN MOORE, Arkansas Department of Education, Special to *Counterpoint*

# *Arkansas School for the Blind Adopts More Effective Curriculum*

In the spring of 1999, Arkansas School for the Blind (ASB) staff, with support from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) special education staff, developed a grant proposal as part of a strategic planning effort.

ASB has been extensively involved in this effort since the fall of 1997, when the staff came together, along with several parents, alumni, local school special education supervisors, and community leaders to rethink the vision and mission of ASB. After extensive training in the strategic planning process, several study groups were formed to explore and research areas of need, as determined by surveys and discussion groups.

These groups conducted a variety of activities including computer searches, a nationwide letter and telephone survey of curricula at schools for the blind, visitations to schools (in and out of Arkansas), and research of services available to children with visual impairment or blindness.

An identified critical area of need was a more effective curriculum, one that was structured, detailed, consistent from grade to grade and reinforcing to students.

Additionally, the curriculum should address needs for remedial and accelerated learning; include higher order thinking skills; teach beginning phonics, as well as advanced comprehension skills, that would allow students to read and understand secondary textbooks; and teach them how to transfer those skills to future learning.

That was a big challenge. However, the staff, after extensive research, decided to go with Direct Instruction (published by Science Research Associates) as the foundation for their new curriculum. In the fall of 1998, ASB staff learned about the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration or, CSRD grants, that would shortly be available to Arkansas. The group worked diligently and received a grant award in the first round.

This grant, which provided $50,000 for each of the next three years, allowed the staff to begin the extensive effort needed to achieve comprehensive curriculum reform.

ASB serves students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Some students attend ASB for most of their school years. Many others transfer in during their upper elementary and secondary years. These students have a variety of challenges to overcome.

The ASB staff must meet these needs to help students catch up in many cases, and also help them advance to a level of independence that will, in just a few years, allow them to be productive citizens in our communities.

Several ASB staff attended Arkansas Smart Start training in 1998 and recognized that Arkansas was truly promoting inclusion of all students and supporting curricular programs that would make a difference, not just provide rhetoric for the press. ASB staff determined the program which best fit the needs of their students was Direct Instruction. Presentations on this program were made to the staff and ASB board. All agreed that something had to change and soon. Students were coming into secondary classes that could not read the text or complete homework assignments, even if the material was presented orally. This was not just a vision problem; it reflected a lack of basic skills development.

When the staff was notified it had been awarded the CSRD grant, things happened quickly. Students were given a placement test so materials could be ordered over the summer and inservice training could be planned. The initial implementation concentrated on the *Reading Mastery* Program for 1st–6th grades, with kindergarten being added during the second semester. The secondary grades applied the *Corrective Reading, Decoding* and *Comprehension* Programs to either accelerate or remediate the performance levels of many 7th–12th grade students.

Staff recognized that reading affected all other skills areas, including math. However, as staff began to learn more about the Direct Instruction curricula, they decided not to wait to also add the elementary math program (*Connecting Math Concepts*) in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades. Later, the Arithmetic I and the *Language for Learning* curricula were added in kindergarten and in the Learning Center (multi-disability) areas. Other teachers wanted to pilot the *Spelling*

*Mastery* and the *Morphographic (Corrective) Spelling* programs.

Now, the Direct Instruction curricula have expanded to include *Connecting Math Concepts* in 4th, 5th and 6th grades. Secondary teachers are also using *Corrective Math* (through pre-algebra) programs with older students.

During the initial phase, teachers began to determine which students needed to use Braille, large print or standard print. Most beginning Direct Instruction programs are already written in larger than standard print and would, therefore, work for several students with little adaptation. Most teachers, however, had to learn to adapt the Direct Instruction visual cues and information for the Braille readers, while others worked mostly with users of print. Even at that very early stage (first semester, 1999), success stories abounded for both Braille and print students.

To share their success stories, ASB staff and Ann Moore of the Arkansas Department of Education Special Education Office, have conducted presentations at several conferences sponsored by various professional organizations, including the Arkansas Council for Exceptional Children, or CEC, in 1999 and 2000, the ADE's Special Show 2000 and the Association for Educational Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

The CSRD grant received by ASB has curriculum reform at its heart, but it also incorporates character development, parent involvement, and adaptive technology. Some of ASB's CEC presentations have included panel discussions on the Direct Instruction curricula and adaptations for Braille readers.

These panels also included teachers from Clinton, Portland and Valley Springs elementary schools. Other group presentations have emphasized the Character Development Program (WOW, CoRT Thinking and Six Thinking Hats) and use of adaptive technology.

The presenters are always well received and get high marks on the session evaluations. (Let us know if you would like more information or to schedule a presentation.)

> *"It is work," as one teacher puts it, "but it's work that works for students!"*

Several ASB staff had the privilege of joining over 780 educators from all over the world (including several Learning 24/7 staff who work with Arkansas' Smart Start Initiative) who attended the National Association for Direct Instruction (ADI) conference in Eugene, OR, over the summer. Other Arkansans attending included staff members from the Corning and Drew central school districts. All were able to update their skills and share with other educators the successes they have had with their students using Direct Instruction.

ASB's Direct Instruction coach, Cindy Paxton, from Ruidoso, NM, also attended the ADI conference. She participated in an institute on training high school students to tutor other high school students for college credit, using the Direct Instruction *Corrective Reading* Program.

Paxton will apply this information in expanding the use of structured peer tutoring at ASB. Other Arkansas sites that implemented the Direct Instruction curricula this school year, including the Gateway Charter School and the Mt. Judea School District, will benefit from other ideas she acquired at the conference.

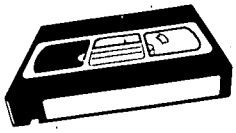
Direct Instruction has been directly linked to improving test scores and reducing behavior-related discipline referrals in many sites in Arkansas, as experienced elsewhere around the nation.

The curriculum does require intensive teacher training and dedicated teachers who are willing to follow the highly structured program that incorporates extensively researched effective school practices. "It is work," as one teacher puts it, "but it's work that works for students!"

That also seemed to be the impression of former U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, as he toured several Delta area schools on August 25, 2000. Two of those schools were Wilmot and Portland Elementary Schools in the Hamburg School District. Those schools gained outstanding student achievement through the use of the Direct Instruction curricula. During the tour, Secretary Riley, Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, and ADE Director Ray Simon, all expressed appreciation for the efforts of staff and parents at those two schools, which have received national recognition for their accomplishments.

The ASB staff realizes it has a long way to go, but is confident it is on the best track possible. Administrators, teachers and parents can already see results in many areas—students who are better readers, more attentive listeners, better at following directions, better able to apply these strategies outside of the classroom, and better able to think!

*The Arkansas School for the Blind invites you to call or come and see them in action. Article compiled by Donna Hunt, Diane Woolly (ASB) and Ann Moore (ADE). For further information call ASB at (501) 296-1812. Jim Hill is the superintendent at ASB.* ~~ADI~~



# Videotapes on the Direct Instruction Model

ADI has an extensive collection of videos on Direct Instruction. These videos are categorized as informational, training, or motivational in nature. The informational tapes are either of historical interest or were produced to describe Direct Instruction. The training tapes have been designed to be either stand-alone training or used to supplement and reinforce live training. The motivational tapes are keynote presentations from past years of the National Direct Instruction Conference.

## Informational Tapes

***Where It All Started***—45 minutes. Zig teaching kindergarten children for the Engelmann-Bereiter pre-school in the 60s. These minority children demonstrate mathematical understanding far beyond normal developmental expectations. This acceleration came through expert teaching from the man who is now regarded as the "Father of Direct Instruction," Zig Engelmann. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Challenge of the 90s: Higher-Order thinking***—45 minutes, 1990. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction strategies. Includes home-video footage and Follow Through. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Follow Through: A Bridge to the Future***—22 minutes, 1992. Direct Instruction Dissemination Center, Wesley Elementary School in Houston, Texas, demonstrates approach. Principal, Thaddeus Lott, and teachers are interviewed and classroom footage is shown. Created by Houston Independent School District in collaborative partnership with Project Follow Through. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

***Direct Instruction***—black and white, 1 hour, 1978. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction compiled by Haddox for University of Oregon College of Education from footage of Project Follow Through and Eugene Classrooms. Price: $10.00 (includes copying costs only).

## Training Tapes

***The Elements of Effective Coaching***—3 hours, 1998. Content in *The Elements of Effective Coaching* was developed by Ed Schaefer and Molly Blakely. The video includes scenarios showing 27 common teaching problems, with demonstrations of coaching interventions for each problem. A common intervention format is utilized in all scenarios. Print material that details each teaching problem and the rationale for correcting the problem is provided. This product should be to used to supplement live DI coaching training and is ideal for Coaches, Teachers, Trainers. Price...$395.00 Member Price...$316.00

***DITV—Reading Mastery 1, 2, 3 and Fast-Cycle Preservice and Inservice Training***

The first tapes of the Level I and Level II series present intensive preservice training on basic Direct Instruction teaching techniques and classroom management strategies used in *Reading Mastery* and the equivalent lesson in *Fast-Cycle.* Rationale is explained. Critical techniques are presented and demonstrated. Participants are led through practical exercises. Classroom teaching demonstrations with students are shown. The remaining tapes are designed to be used during the school year as inservice training. The tapes are divided into segments, which present teaching techniques for a set of of upcoming lessons. Level III training is presented on one videotape with the same features as described above. Each level of video training includes a print manual.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Reading Mastery I* (10 Videotapes) | $150.00 |
| *Reading Mastery II* (5 Videotapes) | $75.00 |
| *Reading Mastery III* (1 Videotape) | $25.00 |
| Combined package *(Reading Mastery I–III)* | $229.00 |

***Corrective Reading: Decoding B1, B2, C***—4 hours, 38 minutes + practice time. Pilot video training tape that includes an overview of the Corrective Series, placement procedures, training and practice on each part of a decoding lesson, information on classroom management / reinforcement and demonstrations of lessons (off-camera responses). Price: $25.00 per tape (includes copying costs only).

## Conference Keynotes

These videos are keynotes from the National Direct Instruction Conference in Eugene. These videos are professional quality, two camera productions suitable for use in meetings and trainings.

### *27th National Direct Instruction Keynotes*

***Lesson Learned...the Story of City Springs, Reaching for Effective Teaching, and Which Path to Success?*** 2 Tapes, 2 hours total. In the fall of 2000 a documentary was aired on PBS showing the journey of City Springs Elementary in Baltimore from a place of hopelessness to a place of hope. The principal of City Springs, Bernice Whelchel addressed the 2001 National DI Conference with an update on her school and delivered a truly inspiring keynote. She describes the determination of her staff and students to reach the excellence she knew they were capable of. Through this hard work City Springs went from being one of the 20 lowest schools in the Baltimore City Schools system to one of the top 20schools. This keynote also includes a 10-minute video updating viewers on the progress at City Springs in the 2000-2001 school year. In the second keynote Zig Engelmann elaborates on the features of successful implementations such as City Springs. Also included are Zig's closing remarks. Price: $30.00

***Commitment to Children—Commitment to Excellence and How Did We Get Here... Where are We Going?***—95 minutes. These keynotes bring two of the biggest names in Direct Instruction together. The first presentation is by Thaddeus Lott, Senior. Dr. Lott was principal at Wesley Elementary in Houston, Texas from 1974 until 1995. During that time he turned the school into one of the best in the nation, despite demographics that would predict failure. He is an inspiration to thousands across the country. The second presentation by Siegfried Engelmann continues on the theme that we know all we need to know about how to teach—we just need to get out there and do it. This tape also includes Engelmann's closing remarks. Price: $30.00.

**State of the Art & Science of Teaching and Higher Profile, Greater Risks**—50 minutes. This tape is the opening addresses from the 1999 National Direct Instruction Conference at Eugene. In the first talk Steve Kukic, former Director of Special Education for the state of Utah, reflects on the trend towards using research based educational methods and research validated materials. In the second presentation, ***Higher Profile, Greater Risks,*** Siegfreid Engelmann reflects on the past of Direct Instruction and what has to be done to ensure successful implementation of DI. Price: $30.00

***Successful Schools... How We Do It***—35 minutes. Eric Mahmoud, Co-founder and CEO of Seed Academy/Harvest Preparatory School in Minneapolis, Minnesota presented the lead keynote for the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference. His talk was rated as one of the best features of the conference. Eric focused on the challenges of educating our inner-city youth and the high expectations we must communicate to our children and teachers if we are to succeed in raising student performance in our schools. Also included on this video is a welcome by Siegfried Engelmann, Senior Author and Developer of Direct Instruction Programs. Price: $15.00

***Fads, Fashions & Follies—Linking Research to Practice***—25 minutes. Dr. Kevin Feldman, Director of Reading and Early Intervention for the Sonoma County Office of Education in Santa Rosa California presents on the need to apply research findings to educational practices. He supplies a definition of what research is and is not, with examples of each. His style is very entertaining and holds interest quite well. Price: $15.00

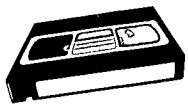
***Moving from Better to the Best***—20 minutes. Closing keynote from the National DI Conference. Classic Zig Engelmann doing one of the many things he does well... motivating teaching professionals to go out into the field and work with kids in a sensible and sensitive manner, paying attention to the details of instruction, making sure that excellence instead of "pretty good" is the standard we strive for and other topics that have been the constant theme of his work over the years. Price $15.00

***Aren't You Special***—25 minutes. Motivational talk by Linda Gibson, Principal at a school in Columbus, Ohio. Successful with DI, in spite of minimal support. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: $15.00

***Effective Teaching: It's in the Nature of the Task***—25 minutes. Bob Stevens, expert in cooperative learning from Penn State University, describes how the type of task to be taught impacts the instructional delivery method. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: $15.00

***One More Time***—20 minutes. Closing from 1997 National DI Conference. One of Engelmann's best motivational talks. Good for those already using DI, this is sure to make them know what they are doing is the right choice for teachers, dents and our future. Price: $15.00

*continued on next page*



# Videotapes on the Direct Instruction Model...continued

***Keynotes from 22nd National DI Conference***—2 hours. Ed Schaefer speaks on "DI–What It Is and Why It Works," an excellent introductory talk on the efficiency of DI and the sensibility of research based programs. Doug Carnine's talk "Get it Straight, Do it Right, and Keep it Straight" is a call for people to do what they already know works, and not to abandon sensible approaches in favor of "innovations" that are recycled fads. Siegfried Engelmann delivers the closing "Words vs. Deeds" in his usual inspirational manner, with a plea to teachers not to get worn down by the weight of a system that at times does not reward excellence as it should. Price: $25.00

***Keynotes from the 1995 Conference***—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Anita Archer, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University, speaking on "The Time Is Now" (An overview of key features of DI); Rob Horner, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Effective Instruction for All Learners;" Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Truth or Consequences." Price: $25.00

***Keynote Presentations from the 1994 20th Anniversary Conference***—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Jean Osborn, Associate Director for the Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois, speaking on "Direct Instruction: Past, Present & Future;" Sara Tarver, Professor, University of Wisconsin, Madison, speaking on "I Have a Dream That Someday We Will Teach All Children"; Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "So Who Needs Standards?" Price: $25.00

***An Evening of Tribute to Siegfried Engelmann***—2.5 hours. On July 26, 1995, 400 of Zig Engelmann's friends, admirers, colleagues, and protégés assembled to pay tribute to the "Father of Direct Instruction." The Tribute tape features Carl Bereiter, Wes Becker, Barbara Bateman, Cookie Bruner, Doug Carnine, and Jean Osborn—the pioneers of Direct Instruction—and many other program authors, paying tribute to Zig. Price: $25.00

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## What is ADI, the Association for Direct Instruction?

ADI is a nonprofit organization dedicated primarily to providing support for teachers and other educators who use Direct Instruction programs. That support includes conferences on how to use Direct Instruction programs, publication of *The Journal of Direct Instruction (JODI)*, *Direct Instruction News (DI News)*, and the sale of various products of interest to our members.

## Who Should Belong to ADI?

Most of our members use Direct Instruction programs, or have a strong interest in using those programs. Many people who do not use Direct Instruction programs have joined ADI due to their interest in receiving our semiannual publications, *The Journal of Direct Instruction* and *Direct Instruction News*. *JODI* is a peer-reviewed professional publication containing new and reprinted research related to effective instruction. *Direct Instruction News* focuses on success stories, news and reviews of new programs and materials and information on using DI more effectively.

## Membership Options

☐ $40.00 ***Regular Membership*** (includes one year subscription to ADI publications, a 20% discount on ADI sponsored events and on materials sold by ADI).

☐ $30.00 ***Student Membership*** (includes one year subscription to ADI publications, and a 40% discount on ADI sponsored events and a 20% discount on materials sold by ADI).

☐ $75.00 ***Sustaining Membership*** (includes Regular membership privileges and recognition of your support in *Direct Instruction News*).

☐ $150.00 ***Institutional Membership*** (includes 5 subscriptions to ADI publications and regular membership privileges for 5 staff people).

☐ $30.00 ***Subscription*** 4 issues (1 year) of ADI publications.

✔ Canadian addresses add $5.00 US to above prices.

✔ For surface delivery overseas, add $10.00 US; for airmail delivery overseas, add $20.00 US to the above prices.

✔ Contributions and dues to ADI are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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***New from the Association for Direct Instruction***
***A tool for you...***

# Corrective Reading Sounds Practice Tape


Dear *Corrective Reading* User,

A critical element in presenting *Corrective Reading* lessons is how accurately and consistently you say the sounds. Of course, when teachers are trained on the programs they spend time practicing the sounds, but once they get back into the classrooms they sometimes have difficulty with some of the sounds, especially some of the stop sounds.

I have assisted ADI in developing an audio tape that helps you practice the sounds. This tape is short (12 minutes). The narrator says each sound the program introduces, gives an example, then gives you time to say the sound. The tape also provides rationale and relevant tips on how to pronounce the sounds effectively.

Thanks for your interest in continuing to improve your presentation skills.

Siegfried Engelmann
Direct Instruction Program Senior Author

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# ADI Books Price List

The Association for Direct Instruction distributes the following Direct Instruction materials. Members of ADI receive a 20% discount on these materials. To join ADI and take advantage of this discount, simply fill out the form and include your annual dues with your order.

| Title & Author | Member Price | List Price | Quantity | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Teach Your Children Well*** *(1998)*<br>Michael Maloney | $13.50 | $16.95 | | |
| ***Preventing Failure in the Primary Grades*** *(1969& 1997)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann | $19.95 | $24.95 | | |
| ***Theory of Instruction*** *(1991)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann & Douglas Carnine | $32.00 | $40.00 | | |
| ***Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons*** *(1983)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann, Phyllis Haddox, & Elaine Bruner | $16.00 | $20.00 | | |
| ***Structuring Classrooms for Academic Success*** *(1983)*<br>S. Paine, J. Radicchi, L. Rosellini, L. Deutchman, & C. Darch | $11.00 | $14.00 | | |
| ***War Against the Schools' Academic Child Abuse*** *(1992)*<br>Siegfried Engelmann | $14.95 | $17.95 | | |
| ***Research on Direct Instruction*** *(1996)*<br>Gary Adams & Siegfried Engelmann | $19.95 | $24.95 | | |

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