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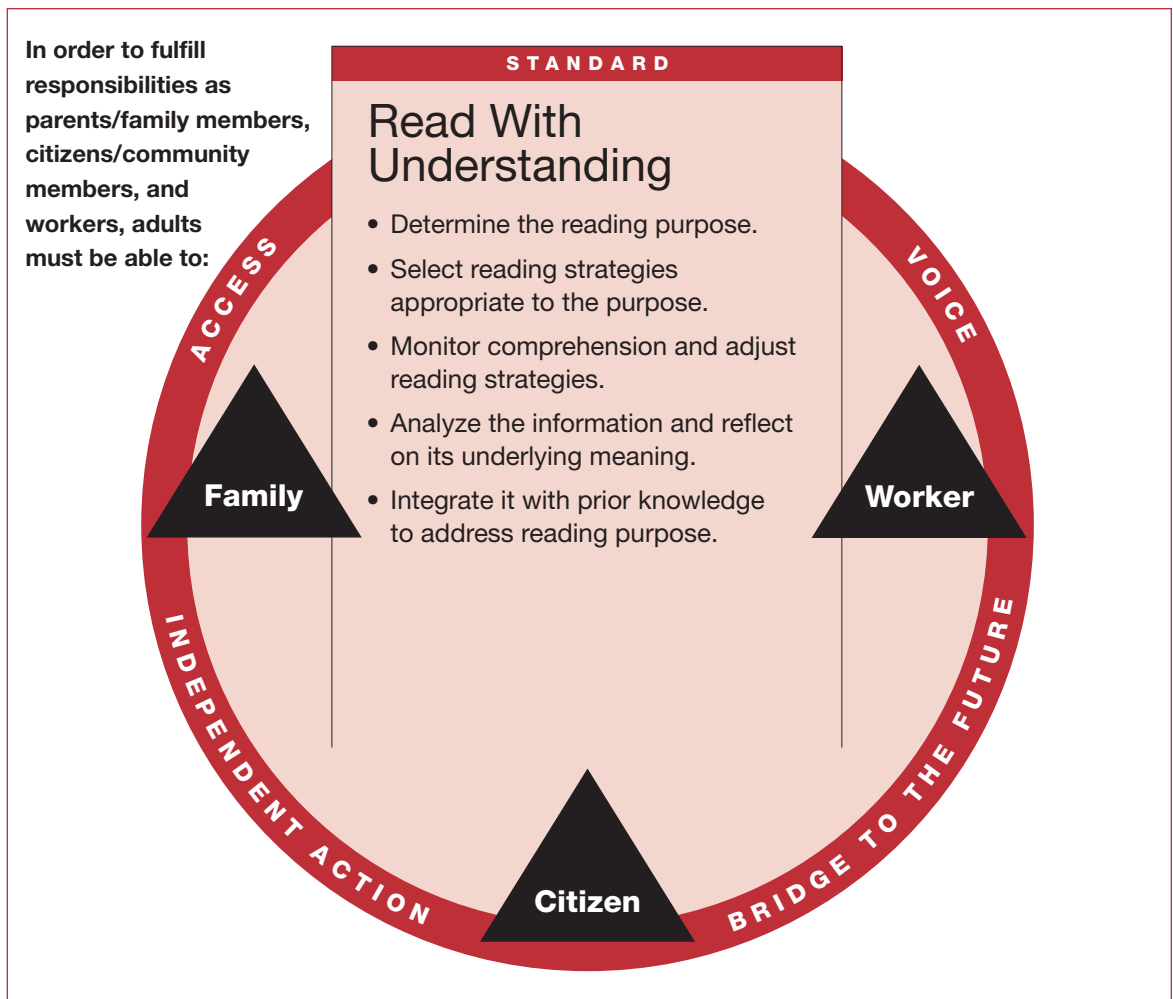
## Read With Understanding

In this issue we focus on the EFF Standard *Read With Understanding* and research-based instructional practices that will help students reach their goals. Many articles in this issue are based on work carried out as part of the EFF Reading Project, a two-year partnership between the National Institute for Literacy and the National Center for Family Literacy integrating research on the teaching of reading into EFF's purposeful and contextual approach to instruction.

*This issue of HOT Topics is about one of the hottest topics in education today—reading.*

The EFF approach to teaching and learning embeds researched-based reading instruction in the broader context of a standards-based approach to adult education. This approach is also based on solid research about how standards improve instruction and accountability. Standards make the goals and content of teaching and learning activities transparent to the teachers and students and make clear what knowledge and skills should be the focus

See *Read With Understanding*, page 2



## Read With Understanding,

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of instruction and assessment. The EFF Standard *Read With Understanding* is one of sixteen EFF Standards that define the core knowledge and skills that adults need in their roles as family members, community members and workers.

Teachers want to learn and use the most valid instructional practices available that will result in higher levels of student achievement. In the first article, Amy Trawick introduces the key research on reading instruction and explains how the EFF Standard *Read With Understanding* frames the four elements of evidence-based instruction. The issue also includes practical application strategies and models for teaching and learning used in the ten programs that participated in the EFF Reading Project as well as an article by Marilyn Gillespie on teaching reading to ESL students.

The article “Using the EFF Teaching and Learning Cycle to Plan Reading Instruction” describes how two teachers used the EFF Teaching/Learning Cycle to plan and carry out standards-based instruction focusing on *Read With Understanding*.

One of the ways that standards-based instruction improves instruction is by integrating assessment at every step of the teaching/learning cycle. The article “RWU Assessment Prototype” is a brief update on the development of assessment tools for the EFF Standards. The *Read With Understanding* assessments, developed as the prototype for accountability assessments for all the EFF standards, complete the circle of goals, instructional practices, assessment, and accountability needed for standards-based educational improvement. ●

### The EFF/NCFL Reading Project

Equipped for the Future and the National Center for Family Literacy received funding from the Partnership for Reading to develop materials and a professional development process aimed at helping teachers and administrators learn how to use research-based reading instruction to support adult students in learning to read more effectively. Teachers and administrators from ten program teams participated in piloting the training curriculum. They took part in three training sessions, received technical assistance between sessions, and designed and implemented a series of lessons integrating researched-based reading instruction into an EFF teaching/learning approach.

#### The programs that took part in the project:

FACE Programs at the Blackwater Community School, Coolidge, Arizona; the Chi Chi'I Tah/Jones Ranch Community School, Vanderwagon, New Mexico; the Crownpoint Community School, Crownpoint, New Mexico; the Little Singer Community School, Winslow, Arizona; and the Rough Rock Community School, Chinle, Arizona. The Groves Adult High School Even Start, Middletown, Delaware; Susanna Wesley Even Start, East Prairie, Missouri; Easton Even Start, ProJeCt of Easton, Incorporated, Easton, Pennsylvania; Southwest Corner Even Start, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania; and Norfolk Even Start, Norfolk, Virginia.

## *Read With Understanding:* Up Close and Personal

by Amy R. Trawick

Over the past two years more and more adult and family literacy teachers have become aware of what gets talked about as “the reading research”—that body of evidence that supports particular reading instructional practices in the areas of alphabets, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In developing the materials for the EFF Reading Project, our goal was to integrate these findings about effective reading instruction into the EFF approach to teaching and learning. This article explores the connections we made between the EFF Standard *Read with Understanding* and the reading research—and how teachers and programs can use this information to support students in reading to accomplish important purposes in their lives.

### Connecting Reading Research to RWU

*Read With Understanding* (RWU) is one of 16 EFF applied learning standards. Like the other fifteen EFF Standards, RWU is conceptualized as an integrated skill process that adults use to accomplish goals and purposes in their lives. The components of the *Read With Understanding* Standard (see page 1), describe a process that skilled readers engage in as they make sense of the

symbols on a page. The first component states that the reader determines the reading purpose; however, a reader does not necessarily carry out the remaining components in sequential, discrete steps. Rather, the components are integrated as the reader draws on sets of underlying skills in order to read with understanding to accomplish his or her purposes.

Recent reports that review and synthesize research on reading instruction have

helped EFF to identify the underlying skills that readers integrate during the reading process. The report *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction* (Kruidenier, 2002) discusses “emerging principles” from the relatively small base of adult reading instruction and supports these with findings from *Teaching Children to Read* (National Reading Panel, 2000), a report on K-12 reading instruction based on a much larger body of research. The reports organize these instructional principles around four elements: alphabets, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. As the EFF Reading Project studied these four elements, it became clear that they could be thought of as sets of *knowledge, skills, and strategies*.

**Knowledge** refers to what the reader knows about each reading element. For instance, in alphabets, the skilled reader knows that written spellings usually systematically represent the sounds of spoken words. This knowledge can be used when trying to figure out, or decode, unknown words. In the area of comprehension, knowledge consists of such things as knowing that readers read for a purpose and that reading can break down and require specific “fix-up” strategies.

**Skills** refers to what the reader can do with that knowledge as he or she reads. For example, in the area of alphabets, it is helpful to have knowledge that *b* says /b/, *a* might say /a/, and *t* says /t/; it is even more useful for reading purposes to be able to apply this knowledge in the skill of decoding when one encounters the word *bat*. In the area of comprehension, the reader must have the skill of determining a purpose for reading. Similarly, a skilled reader knows how and when to monitor comprehension.

**Strategies** refers to intentional ways that readers perform skills. For example, Joe, a novice reader, sees the sentence, “The bat hit the ball with a smack” and gets stuck at the word *bat* (a skill). He decides to try to decode the word by ap-

The Four Elements	
Four Elements to Include in Reading Instruction	Reading Research Working Group Defines Four Elements
<b>Alphabets</b> <i>Phonemic Awareness and Word Analysis</i>	<p>The whole process of using the written letters in an alphabet to represent meaningful, spoken words is called alphabets.</p> <p>Alphabets includes both phonemic awareness (PA) and word analysis (WA). Students with good PA know how to manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken English.... Students with good WA know how individual letters and combinations of letters are used to represent the sounds of spoken English.</p>
<b>Fluency</b>	<p>Fluency is the ability to read with speed and ease. When readers are fluent, they read accurately, without making mistakes in pronunciation, and with appropriate speed and rhythm.</p>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<p>Vocabulary is a term used to refer to all of the words in a language. Our own vocabulary consists of the individual words we understand or know the meanings of.</p>
<b>Comprehension</b>	<p>Reading comprehension is understanding a text that is read, or the process of “constructing meaning” from a text.</p>

plying one of several possible strategies. He might try segmenting the word into individual sounds--/b/+/a/+/t/. Or, he might decide to look for a word he knows inside the larger word. To decode *bat*, then, he might find the word *at*, put a /b/ in front of it—/b/+/at/—and come up with *bat*. He might use another strategy, comparing the unknown word to a full word he knows—*cat*—substituting a /b/ for the /k/. Any of these strategies might be used for accomplishing the skill of decoding.

More complex strategies aid the reader in using comprehension skills. Susan has a variety of strategies that will

help her determine the main idea and supporting details of a text (a skill). She might first look for headings or numbered sections, knowing that authors often try to mark their main points. She might read the first sentence or paragraph in a section and compare following sentences or sections to the first to see if it captures an idea bigger than the others. She could draw a graphic organizer to help her see the relationships. Or, she might use different colored highlighters and write notes in the margin as she works out her hypothesis and keeps track of her thinking. Again, each of these

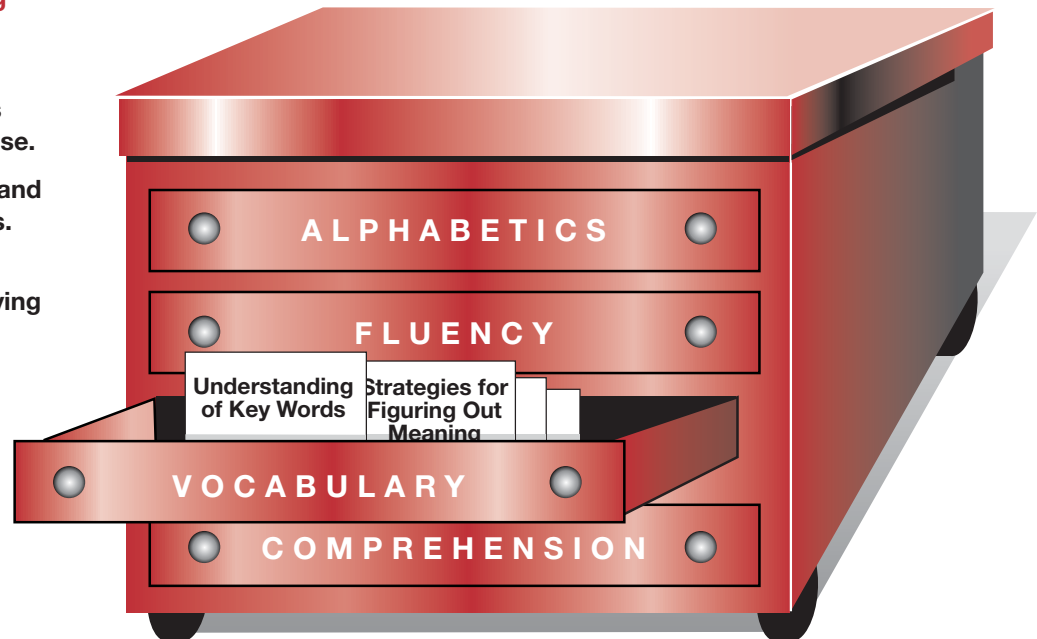
(continued on page 4)

## The Reader's Tool Chest

### Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies Used Flexibly and in Combination to Read With Understanding

#### Read With Understanding

- Determine the reading purpose.
- Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose.
- Monitor comprehension and adjust reading strategies.
- Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning.
- Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose.



### Up Close and Personal, continued from page 3

strategies, applied appropriately, can help her accomplish the skill of finding the main idea and supporting details.

This scheme of knowledge, skills, and strategies outlined for alphabets and comprehension can also be applied to fluency and vocabulary, the other two elements named specifically in the reviews of reading research.

#### Expert Performance of RWU

Consider how a skilled reader approaches the reading process. We might think about this process as choosing tools from a reading toolbox. Necessarily, the toolbox is large, and it contains a variety of knowledge, skills and strategies. Each one is useful in certain situations, and the skilled reader knows when and how to use them.

What does this toolbox look like? Re-

search on how people develop expertise tells us that the knowledge base of experts is not only broad but also organized for efficient retrieval. So instead of a hodgepodge of tools thrown willy-nilly into a box, we want to be sure that we envision an organized toolbox for our skilled reader, maybe even a tool chest with drawers representing key sets of knowledge, skills and strategies. Because these drawers are organized, the skilled reader has easy access and can accomplish a wide range of tasks in a wide range of situations. In fact, a skilled reader chooses wisely among these tools, using them flexibly and in combination, as she works through each of the components that make up the integrated skill process *Read With Understanding*.

For example, as a reader monitors her comprehension (the third RWU compo-

nent), she may realize that something in the passage doesn't make sense. She may then zero in on certain words that she thinks she might have mis-read, applying appropriate tools from her alphabets drawer. If she concludes that word recognition is not the issue, she might check her understanding of key words, borrowing from her vocabulary drawer. If the passage is especially difficult and she had originally read it very slowly, she might decide to re-read the passage more fluently (fluency drawer) and see if understanding flows more easily. Or, she might decide she needs a graphic organizer to help her make sense of the information (comprehension drawer).

The point is, that in the course of trying to read with understanding, this reader and other skilled readers pull from the tools they have available to them, choosing those that address the issue at

hand. A skilled reader is able to draw appropriate tools from the tool chest, knowing when and how to use them, because he has metacognitive abilities. Metacognition is the awareness of one's own thinking and the ability to monitor and regulate thinking to achieve cognitive goals. In designing instruction using the Standard *Read with Understanding*, teachers consider ways to support readers in regularly attending to their own understanding and making decisions about how to solve problems as they read.

### Further Implications for Teaching

Research with students in adult basic education classes has shown that unlike skilled readers, who have equally developed sets of tools across all four elements, students in adult and family literacy programs are more likely to have strengths in some of the sets and gaps in others. Teachers should assess students' skills in order to identify their strengths and gaps, consider the implications for their ability to *Read With Understanding*, and focus instruction where needed.

The recent synthesis reports on reading instruction identified effective instructional practices that help readers build the sets of knowledge, skills, and strategies that are the focus of the EFF Reading Project. In general, the reports conclude that two approaches are essential for building expertise in reading: explicit instruction in knowledge, skills, and strategies and opportunities to use and practice these learnings in reading texts. In teaching *Read With Understanding*, teachers provide explicit instruction about these knowledge, skills, and strategies within the context of larger activities that engage students in reading material in pursuit of their role-based goals. Addressing these goal-related contexts provides the motivation for students to read, which in turn reinforces learning and facilitates further growth in each of the sets of knowledge, skills, and strategies.

### Conclusion

What is clear from the data gathered by EFF in its assessment research is that adult readers at all levels of development draw on/work through all the components in the *Read With Understanding* Standard. However, the knowledge, skills, and strategies available to the novice reader are much more limited than those available to an expert reader. These differences frame the reader's access to both texts and tasks, and are perceptible on the performance continuum, which illustrates what performance looks like at different points in the process of building expertise in *Read With Understanding*. (See pages 12 and 13.)

The key to moving readers along the continuum toward expertise is effective instruction in the *Read With Understanding* Standard. This includes supporting students in building their tool chests of knowledge, skills, and strategies. It also requires giving students practice in choosing the right tool at the right time as they attempt to construct and apply meaning in reading activities grounded in topics and tasks that matter to them. ●

### References:

Kruidenier, John (2002). *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy, Partnership for Reading.

National Reading Panel (2000). *Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and its Implications for Reading Instruction* (Report of the Subgroups). Washington, D.C.: National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

**For more information on the EFF Reading Project visit**  
<http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/family/eff/effrp.html>

“The EFF Reading Project training made it possible for practitioners in family literacy programs to understand and to apply a standards-based approach to teaching reading with both children and adults, based on research. Teachers involved in the project, most of whom had little prior training in teaching reading, began to create learner profiles based on tools which were designed to assess learners' decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills in reading. Teachers began to employ the types of instructional strategies evidenced through research to be effective to address phonemic awareness, phonics and word analysis, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension with children and with adults. Teaching learners a variety of strategies, based on their particular area of need, has made a difference in learners' motivation and their reading progress.”

—Susan Finn-Miller,  
*Professional Development Specialist  
 Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

“The more parents and teachers understand the reading process, the better they are able to make decisions about their own and their children's learning.”

—Nancy Sledd,  
*National Center for Family Literacy*

# Learning to Read in English

by Marilyn Gillespie



*Learning to read is challenging for any adult, but especially so for adults who are also learning how to speak English. Unfortunately, very little research has been undertaken with this population of learners. This year the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) completed a thorough review of what research has been undertaken with adult learners. In addition, they examined second language reading research undertaken with K-12 learners and provided key findings that are useful to practitioners working with adults. (Burt, Peyton & Adams, 2003). This article contains a summary of their findings.*

## **ESL Literacy Learners are Diverse**

The authors point out that adult ESL literacy is especially complex because adults come from such diverse backgrounds and have so many widely differing previous educational experiences. Since students are often placed in classrooms based on their oral proficiency in English, the literacy levels within a single ESL classroom may span from those with almost no literacy to those with college degrees or higher. In classrooms where ESL learners are grouped by literacy level, students' oral language abilities may range from beginner to advanced; the structures of their first language writing system may vary widely (such as between Spanish and Chinese); and, they may have quite different prior experiences with school.

## **Components of Second Language Reading Proficiency**

NCLE's review suggests that first language reading ability is a less significant predictor of second language reading ability than is second language proficiency, especially among lower proficiency learners. They suggest four components of second language proficiency that are among the most important for teachers to take into account.

**Vocabulary Knowledge.** To improve vocabulary knowledge, and to provide students with many opportunities to read comprehensible texts, teachers can preview text-specific vocabulary with students before learners start to read. In addition, they can explicitly teach high-frequency vocabulary.

**Syntactic Proficiency.** Studies also show that students who understand the structures of English are better able to understand the underlying meaning of written texts. English language learners need to learn about the relationship between form and meaning and to identify cues that signal that connection (for example,

the use of the *-ed* to form an adjective, as in "a parked car"). This implies that teachers need to integrate grammar instruction with reading instruction and to use what students read as a context to examine and learn about grammatical structures. As students get better at syntactic processing, more mental space is freed up for understanding the larger meaning of a reading passage.

**Phonological processing.** Research shows that explicitly teaching the letter-sound correspondences in the English writing system through phonics instruction can improve English language reading ability. Teachers can use matching letters to sounds; matching morphemes (units that signal meaning, such as past tense markers), meanings and pronunciation; oral reading and choral reading to improve phonological processing.

**Schema Activation.** An important part of reading comprehension involves "reading between the lines" or using our background knowledge of the world to fill in what is not stated explicitly in a text. To help learners to build schema, teachers can provide background knowledge on a topic before beginning to read by selecting texts that build on ideas and concepts students are already familiar with. For unfamiliar themes they can use visual aides and other kinds of pre-reading activities such as having students brainstorm ideas about a topic and compare practices in their home countries and in the U.S. ●

For more information, see: Burt, M.; Peyton, J.K.; Adams, R. (2003) *Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research*. Washington, DC: The Center for Applied Linguistics. Copies of this publication can be requested for free from the Center for Applied Linguistics:

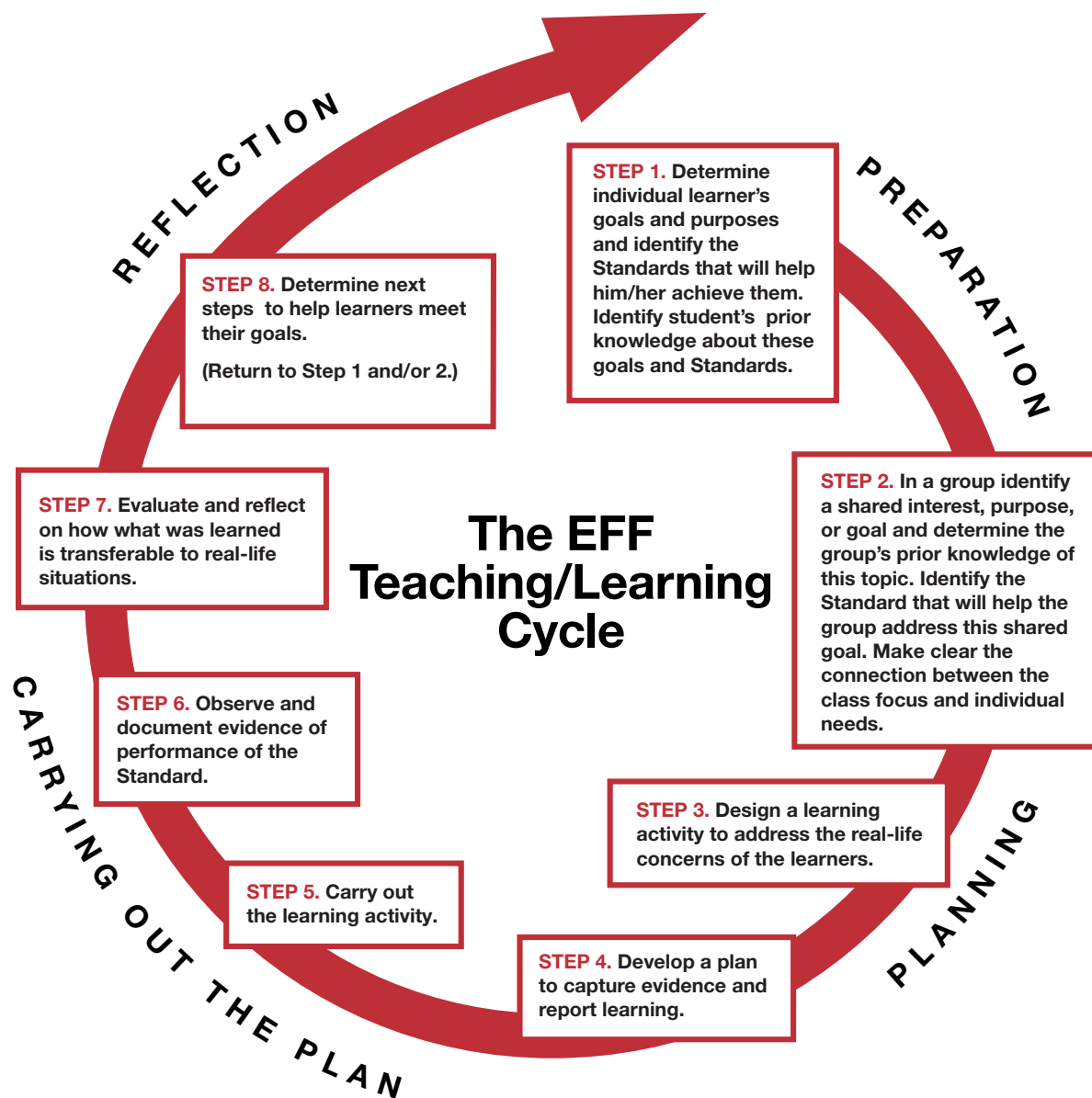
<http://www.cal.org/ncle>  
Telephone: 202-362-0700

# Teaching/Learning Toolkit

<http://cls.coe.utk.edu/efftlc>

The new online EFF Teaching/Learning Toolkit provides practitioners with resources to use the EFF Teaching/Learning Cycle in adult education settings.

[Examples](#) | [Tools](#) | [Steps](#) | [Standards](#) | [Support](#) | [Home](#)



## ON - GOING PRACTICES

- Work with learners to continually revisit and revise their goals.
- Engage learners, throughout, in identifying and applying their prior experience and knowledge to their learning.
- Build in opportunities throughout the activity for learners to reflect on and monitor their own developing knowledge, skills, and learning strategies.
- Make sure throughout that learners clearly understand what they are learning and why.
- Adjust the learning activity to reflect emerging goals and learning needs.

# Using the EFF Teaching and Learning Cycle to Plan Reading Instruction

**B**elow is an illustration of how Cheryl Williams and Patricia Murchison, two teachers who participated in the EFF Reading Project, used the EFF Teaching/Learning Cycle. Cheryl and Patricia teach in an Even Start Family Literacy Program in a large early childhood development center in Norfolk, Virginia. One day they heard a heated discussion among the parents they teach about junk food and healthy

snacks for their children. Cheryl and Patricia recognized an opportunity to help these parents learn more about healthy snacks while improving their reading comprehension. The table below describes how they used the EFF Teaching/Learning Cycle to plan and carry out this learning activity focused on improving reading comprehension in order to learn more about improving their children's eating habits. ●

Cycle Steps	Step-by-Step Activities
<p><b>1. Determine individual learner's goals and purposes and identify the Standards that will help him/her achieve them.</b></p> <p><b>Identify student's prior knowledge about these goals and Standards.</b></p>	<p>Individual learners in the program identified their primary goals as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• passing the GED Exams</li> <li>• improving reading comprehension to understand work-related materials and information they receive from community agencies.</li> </ul> <p>All students identified the EFF Standard: <i>Read With Understanding</i> as a standard that would help them achieve these goals and self-assessed their ability to use the standard during intake. Students also took the TABE, and Cheryl reviewed the diagnostic information provided by the test. She also administered Independent Reading Inventories to some students to gain insight into the knowledge, skills, and strategies they were using.</p>
<p><b>2. In a group, identify a shared interest, purpose or goal and determine the group's prior knowledge of this topic.</b></p> <p><b>Identify the Standard that will help the group address this shared goal. Make clear the connection between the class focus and individuals' needs.</b></p>	<p>Cheryl led the class in discussing an issue they had with the snacks, which they and other parents were bringing in for the children at the Center. Students decided that their concern was reflected on the Parent/Family Member Role Map in the Broad Area of Responsibility: Meet Family Needs and Responsibilities. They wanted to find out how to make healthy snacks and to share this information with other parents. They knew that some of the material they found on this topic would be difficult to read, and they wanted to learn reading strategies that would enable them to build their skills so they could understand and learn from this more difficult material.</p> <p>The class decided to focus on the Standard <i>Read With Understanding</i> so that they could make progress on their larger goals as well.</p> <p>Cheryl's goal was to bring in a variety of reading materials at their instructional level, but text that would challenge them, as well. She was prepared to select from the EBRI (Evidence-Based Reading Instruction) strategies to accomplish this goal.</p>
<p><b>3. Design a learning activity to address the real-life concerns of the learner(s).</b></p>	<p>Students determined that they would read and discuss what was involved in making healthy snacks and getting children to eat them and then share this information with the other parents by making and putting up posters in the Center. Cheryl used the components of the standard RWU as a guide to planning instruction and then guided the students in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formulating questions as a way of determining their purpose for reading</li> <li>• selecting reading materials: pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, food labels, books, and internet information</li> <li>• developing the knowledge, skills, and strategies in word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension processes to support the components of the RWU standard</li> <li>• reflecting on their strategy use.</li> </ul>



Cycle Steps	Step-by-Step Activities
<p><b>4. Develop a plan to capture evidence and report learning.</b></p>	<p>Cheryl planned to include opportunities for students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read aloud to practice and assess fluency</li> <li>• Complete the <i>Read With Understanding Diary</i> to develop their metacognitive awareness of their own reading and to give her insight into strategies that were and were not working for them</li> <li>• Show their understanding of the content in the posters they created.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Carry out the learning activity.</b></p>	<p>Cheryl engaged students in a KWRL activity (see below) as a way for students to generate questions about the topic, and then students used these questions to determine their purposes for reading texts. She set aside a portion of each class to engage students in strategy lessons related to <i>Read With Understanding</i>. The focus of these strategy lessons was determined from her observations of students' progress. Lessons included skimming, using text features to locate information, and identifying main idea and details. Students then used (and, thus, practiced) these strategies in small groups as they read their self-selected articles. Cheryl also regularly led a lesson called "Unlocking Words" to support students in building word-level strategies.</p>
<p><b>6. Observe and document evidence of performance of the Standard.</b></p>	<p>Cheryl led the class in filling out their RWU Diaries and provided opportunities for completing the Diary on their own. She reviewed the Diaries, noting strengths and gaps in how students were performing Read With Understanding. These more structured assessments of student reading were supported by her own informal observations and note-taking. She used these assessments to inform her daily lessons. She also realized that students seemed to use the same strategies again and again, and she decided to introduce new strategies during the next T/L cycle.</p>
<p><b>7. Evaluate and reflect on how what was learned is transferable to real-life situations.</b></p>	<p>Students completed a written reflection at the end of each day and at the end of the cycle. During these reflections, they noted material they had read, evaluated its difficulty (for them), and wrote about changes they were noting in their reading. They also reflected on how they might use the reading strategies they were learning in other situations. Most students found connections with their work-related goals, and others described how these strategies would help them when they took the GED tests. Cheryl followed up with class discussions about these potential applications.</p>
<p><b>8. Determine next steps to help learners meet their goals.</b> <i>(Return to Step 1 and/or 2)</i></p>	<p>Students noted that they tended to resort to re-reading when their comprehension breaks down and wondered what else they could do. As they discussed developing a new shared priority, what effective discipline looks like, they wanted to continue to explore other "fix-up" strategies.</p>

**K-W-R-L Shared Priority: Providing healthy snacks for children**

What do I <b>know</b> ?	What do I <b>want to know</b> ?	What <b>resources</b> are available?	How will I show what I have <b>learned</b> ?
<p><i>Healthy snacks help children grow.</i> <i>Healthy snacks give them healthy teeth.</i> <i>Healthy snacks give them healthy skin.</i> <i>Some healthy snacks are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheese/crackers</li> <li>• Raw vegetables</li> <li>• Fruits</li> </ul>	<p><i>Why should our kids eat healthy snacks?</i> <i>Effects of healthy snacks?</i> <i>How often? How much?</i> <i>What are healthy snacks?</i> <i>What are unhealthy snacks?</i> <i>How can I encourage kids to eat healthy snacks?</i> <i>What are the risks of not giving kids healthy snacks?</i></p>	<p><i>Nutrition books</i> <i>Parenting books/magazines</i> <i>WIC</i> <i>Pamphlets</i> <i>Internet</i> <i>Food labels</i> <i>School child nutritionist</i></p>	<p><i>Snack chart</i> <i>Memo – Providing healthy snacks</i> <i>Newsletter</i> <i>Workshop</i> <i>Bulletin Board</i> <i>Posters</i></p>

# The RWU Diary: A Tool for Reflection and Assessment

**D**uring the EFF Reading Project, we developed two important tools for reading and reflection and assessment: *The Read with Understanding Diary* and *The Read with Understanding Guide*. We were looking for a way to assess use of the standard during actual reading, and we wanted something that could be used at any reading level by either teachers or students. Of more importance, we wanted a tool that would demonstrate the power of the *Read With Understanding* Standard.

Teachers may use the diary to take notes as they observe students reading. They can then ask questions as a way of getting more specific information about students' reading abilities and strategies. Informal conferences such as these provide forums for the question/answer/assessment process. For example, imagine that a student has read an article of specific interest to her:

- The teacher asks, "Why did you decide to read this section?" ***The teacher is able to gain insights into the student's purpose for reading.***
- The teacher asks "Where have you read something new? Could you read that section to me?" ***The teacher notes fluency and the strategies the student uses to figure out unknown or difficult words.***
- The teacher asks "Did anything you read give you trouble? Where did that happen? What gave you the difficulty? What did you do?" ***The teacher is able to gain information about how well students monitor comprehension and adjust reading strategies.***

Over time, these informal conferences can help the teacher and student build a picture of the banks of strategies students are drawing from to Read With Understanding and then set new goals for reading improvement.

Teachers and students can use the RWU Diary/Guide in a number of other ways as well:

- The teacher can "prompt" strategy use by asking questions from the Guide.
- The students can refer to the Guide on their own when their comprehension breaks down.
- If the student has been working to develop a particular reading strategy, the teacher might suggest that he/she read a selection incorporating the strategy and use the Diary to record the experience.
- Students might use the Diary on their own, as they reflect on their use of components as they develop metacognitive awareness.
- Copies of completed diaries can be kept in student portfolios. Teacher and student can review them periodically to track strategy use and to see what kinds of insights the student is gaining into his/her reading. ●

## READ WITH UNDERSTANDING DIARY

TEXT: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Read With Understanding	What did you do? How did you do it?
• Determine the reading purpose.	
• Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose.	
• Check comprehension and adjust reading strategies.	
• Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning.	
• Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose.	

## READ WITH UNDERSTANDING GUIDE

TEXT: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Read With Understanding	What did you do? How did you do it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Determine the reading purpose.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>What is your general purpose in reading this text?</b></li> <li>▶ <b>What are some specific things you want to get out of this reading?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Read the title and look at the pictures. What do you notice about the way the text looks? Are there headings? Turn the headings into questions. What are the questions you think this text will answer?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Should you read this text fast or slowly?</b></li> <li>▶ <b>How often will you stop to check your understanding?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Every heading/page/chapter</li> <li>▶ <b>How will you keep up with the answers to your questions?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Make a chart</li> <li>▶ <b>How often will you make new predictions/questions?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Every heading/page/chapter</li> <li>▶ <b>What will you do if you come to word you don't know?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Tips for Tackling Long Words</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Check comprehension and adjust reading strategies.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Tune in to whether or not you are understanding as you read.</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Stop every paragraph or page and:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover the text and tell yourself what you read.</li> <li>• Answer any questions you wrote at the beginning.</li> <li>• Think of new questions for the next section.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ <b>Use different strategies when you get stuck:</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Reread, break down words you don't know, use context clues, use the glossary or margin notes, look at pictures/charts on the page.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Can you summarize the main ideas from the readings?</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Can you make sense of the author's writing?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Making a graphic organizer or text map to "see" the information in a different form.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Did you meet your general purpose? Your specific purpose? How do you know?</b>  <i>TRY:</i> Writing or telling someone what you learned or the answer to your pre-reading questions.</li> </ul>

# RWU Assessment Prototype

## A Scenario

Several beginning ESL students in Mary's mixed level class in the local correctional facility are preparing for an end-of-instructional-cycle assessment that will let them know if they are ready to move to a more advanced reading level. For the past four weeks, they have focused on reading about family and community relationships, using material drawn from the newspaper and from students' family stories. Read with Understanding Level 2 (on page 13) and the EFF Teaching/Learning Cycle are the guides that Mary has used in developing her teaching plans. She developed learning activities and instruction that included multiple opportunities for students to assess their reading skills.

These 'instructionally-embedded' assessment activities mirror the type of performance assessment that students will take for accountability purposes. Students are used to documenting the evidence of their reading performance: they are comfortable using a tape recorder for oral reading; they are used to being observed as they use the reading strategies they have learned; and are familiar with using rubrics to rate their performance.

From the online EFF assessment task collection, Mary selects the most appropriate Level 2 Read With Understanding performance assessment for her students. She chooses an assessment task that can be administered to a small group of students, with individual oral reading. The task calls for students to read two simplified utility bills (one for telephone services and one for electricity), write simple one or two word responses to short questions, and respond orally to questions about the utility bills.

She administers the task to her students and scores their reading performance using a scoring rubric that accompanies the assessment. Because she periodically checks her scoring with another trained scorer and because she has kept up to date with training in scoring assessments, Mary is confident that her scores of 'proficient' for two students and 'advanced' for the third are valid and reliable.

She administers two more assessment tasks to these students. On the basis of the scores from the three tasks, all three students exit Level 2 and move to Level 3.

This assessment scenario is almost a reality. It is based on the experience of a teacher who piloted Level 2 Read With Understanding assessment tasks during the spring of 2003, one final step in the preparation of EFF Read With Understanding Assessment Tasks. The process and tools for using EFF reading performance tasks will be fully described in the *EFF Read With Understanding Accountability Assessment Handbook*, in production. The Guide will include:

- the full RWU Performance Continuum, a summary developmental description of six levels of performance on the Standard;
- "Use Scenarios," narrative descriptions of the implementation and use of the assessment tasks in a variety of state administrative, program, and classroom settings;
- sample model assessment tasks for the six EFF RWU Levels, with examples of learner performance;

- guidelines for developing instructionally-embedded assessments;
- guidelines for administering, scoring and reporting tasks for accountability purposes; and
- guidelines for training scorers.

The classroom scenarios will be similar to the one given above, giving more detail about the manner in which instructionally-embedded assessment tasks and accountability assessment tasks may be selected, administered, scored and reported to meet the particular needs of the learner and the instructional context.

The Guide will be available in early 2004 for use by state and program administrators. For more information, contact the EFF Assessment Consortium Co-Directors:

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## EFF RWU LEVEL 2

### At Level 2 Adults Are Able To:

#### 1. Read With Understanding

- Determine the reading purpose.
- Select reading strategies appropriate to the purpose.
- Monitor comprehension and adjust reading strategies.
- Analyze the information and reflect on its underlying meaning.
- Integrate it with prior knowledge to address reading purpose.

#### 2. Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

- Decode and recognize everyday, simple words in short, simple text by breaking words into parts, tapping out/sounding out syllables, applying pronunciation rules, using picture aids, and recalling oral vocabulary and sight words;
- Demonstrate familiarity with simple, everyday content knowledge and vocabulary;
- Monitor and enhance comprehension (using various strategies such as rereading, restating, copying and rephrasing text, making a list of new words, or using a simplified dictionary);
- Recall prior knowledge to assist in selecting texts and in understanding the information they contain.

#### 3. Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

- Read and comprehend words in small blocks of simple text slowly but easily and with few errors.
- Independently accomplish simple, well-defined, and structured reading activities in a range of comfortable and familiar settings.

#### 4. Accomplish a Variety of Reading Purposes

- Accomplish a variety of goals, such as:
  - ✓ Reading aloud a picture book with very simple text to a young child.
  - ✓ Reading a short narrative about a community concerns in order to identify and think about one's own community issues.
  - ✓ Reading about entry-level job duties in order to decide whether or not to apply.
  - ✓ Reading simple greeting cards to choose an appropriate card for a friend.
  - ✓ Reading a simple chart about job benefits to figure out if hospitalization is covered.
  - ✓ Reading utility bills in order to understand how and when to pay them.
  - ✓ Reading short narratives about immigrant experiences to reflect on and learn about one's own heritage.
  - ✓ Reading the newspaper weather forecast to decide on appropriate clothes for a weekend trip.

# Family and Child Education (FACE) Programs Participate With Purpose in the RWU Project

Teaching with the EFF Standard RWU includes creating a real world context for instruction by identifying shared priorities that provide a purpose for practicing reading, constructing meaningful learning activities that address that purpose, and identifying appropriate texts that support the purpose and student goals. These texts must also provide opportunities for students to use the Four Reading Elements: alphabets, fluency, vocabu-

lary, and comprehension. Participants in the FACE cohort of the EFF Reading Project drew on cultural, familial, and personal interests and goals as the contexts for reading instruction in the adult education component of the program. A consistent goal for all parents in FACE programs is to support their children's literacy development. The purposes described here focus on bringing reading activities and strategies into other components of their family literacy programs as well.

FACE Program	Purpose for Reading	Learning Activities	Selected Text	Instruction in RWU
<b>Blackwater Community School</b> <i>Gila River Reservation</i> <i>Coolidge, Arizona</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To access information about the history of Gila River Indian Reservation</li> <li>To understand loss of the O'Otham Language as a result of river diversion and relocation of tribes</li> <li>To discover ways to reclaim the language and culture and share these with children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessed internet articles describing desert life and history of Gila River</li> <li>Listened to elders tell stories</li> <li>Read recipes and created Rebus Charts for children in English and O'Otham</li> <li>Created Desert Scrapbooks and translated into O'Otham</li> <li>Created books for children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>A Pima Remembers</i> by George Webb</li> <li><i>Pima Indian Legends</i> by Anna Moore Shaw</li> <li>Variety of internet articles</li> <li>Variety of children's literature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practiced note taking and highlighting main ideas</li> <li>Rewrote passages in their own words</li> <li>Summarized passages to build comprehension</li> <li>Created vocabulary charts of O'Otham and English terms</li> <li>Engaged in repeated readings of text to children</li> </ul>
<b>Chi Chi'I Tah/Jones Community School</b> <i>Navajo Nation</i> <i>Vanderwagon, New Mexico</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To access information about topics of interest related to television programming</li> <li>To make decisions related to children and adult television viewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generated questions about the cartoon, <i>Sponge Bob</i></li> <li>Read articles to find answers about origination and opinions of program</li> <li>Developed methods to guide children's viewing of TV programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internet articles</li> <li><i>TV Guide</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzed story structure evident in cartoons and children's books</li> <li>Identified character traits and motivations</li> <li>Compared and contrasted different points of view</li> <li>Created "Word Banks" to study vocabulary and created a "Word Wall"</li> <li>Learned to write definitions, using the dictionary as guide</li> <li>Made "Flash Cards" to use in dyads.</li> </ul>
<b>Crownpoint Community School</b> <i>Navajo Nation</i> <i>Crownpoint, New Mexico</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify developmentally appropriate social/emotional growth in children</li> <li>To develop vocabulary for labeling and discussing feelings</li> <li>To become more understanding of self, of other adults, and of children</li> <li>To support young children in their literacy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovered and named different feelings experienced by characters in short stories and short biographies</li> <li>Identified and named their own feelings</li> <li>Developed communication strategies to discuss positive and negative feelings</li> <li>Discussed how to help children to name their own feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variety of children's literature</li> <li>Short stories</li> <li>Short biographies</li> <li>Community resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher read aloud daily to model fluency</li> <li>Participated in dialogic reading with children to monitor comprehension</li> <li>Developed concept maps to categorize types of feelings and associated terms</li> <li>Created a "Word Wall" of relevant vocabulary</li> </ul>

FACE Program	Purpose for Reading	Learning Activities	Selected Text	Instruction in RWU
<b>Little Singer Community School</b> <i>Navajo Nation Winslow, Arizona</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To access information about Navajo history</li> <li>To learn about Navajo rights</li> <li>To discover how to take action related to rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participated in small and large reading groups</li> <li>Wrote daily reflection and response pages related to history</li> <li>Created art works based on responses to the readings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Dinetah: An Early History of the Navaho People</i> by Lawrence Sundeborg</li> <li>Chapters and articles about Manueliot, Navajo leader</li> <li>Treaties</li> <li>Biographies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practiced using text features common to history texts: timelines, photo captions, bold print</li> <li>Explored underlining as a strategy for locating important information</li> <li>Participated in daily discussion related to the reading and its connection to their reading purposes.</li> </ul>
<b>Rough Rock Community School</b> <i>Navajo Nation Chinle, Arizona</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To access information about health issues prevalent among these and other families in the community: diabetes, depression, and alcoholism</li> <li>To learn how to take action in order to Walk in Beauty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed and graphed major diseases that affect the families in the program</li> <li>Selected focus (diabetes) and made a KWRL chart to guide their reading</li> <li>Small groups read and reported to large group</li> <li>Developed Power Point presentations to share</li> <li>Developed Four Directions Wheel with information on disease and diet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>A Journey to Wellness</i></li> <li>Navajo Curriculum: <i>Walking Across the Navajo Nation</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read to find answers to self-posed questions on KWRL chart</li> <li>Used charts and graphic organizers to summarize information gained from reading in order to share with others</li> <li>Adapted a commercial phonics program to correspond with the Navajo alphabet</li> <li>Developed a culturally appropriate alphabetic system</li> </ul>

### Using Purposeful Instruction to Build Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies: Examples From Other Programs

**Adult students in Wyndham, Maine,** decided to give a gift to a district superintendent who was leaving the school system. Knowing that she liked to listen to books-on-tape in the car, the class created an audiotape of each class member reading a special text. Each student selected a favorite poem, short narrative, or children’s book and developed fluency through Read-Aloud practice sessions. When they were satisfied with their oral reading, they made a tape recording and presented it to the superintendent.

These students also participated in weekly book discussion clubs. Each student assumed a role—selector, questioner, summarizer, life connector, or vocabulary enricher—and came to the group prepared to participate in a rich discussion of the selected text.

#### Parents in the Southwest Corner Even Start Program in Pennsylvania

used graphic organizers to analyze book chapters. The herringbone organizer was a favorite for separating main ideas from detail.

The Pennsylvania group adapted the RWU Diary by rewriting the Standard in simple language. Each component was posted on a separate sheet of chart paper. As students learned new strategies, they were noted on the appropriate charts. After each in-class reading experience, students wrote in their diaries and recorded use of newly learned strategies.

#### Parents in the Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center in Missouri

read to their children during Parents and Children Together Time. They developed fluency by reading children’s books aloud in practice sessions with other adult students, who provided feedback. Then, they shared the books with their children.

#### Parents in the Manchester Literacy Center in Delaware

engaged in “concept sorts,” dividing words related to their career study into categories. Students then shared with each other the reasons for their decision-making, making clear the connections they saw between the various terms.

#### A student in Easton, Pennsylvania,

developed a pamphlet about safety in the home by summarizing material she had been reading. She worked with her teacher to plan the “safety” book because of an incident in which her son pulled a tablecloth off a table on which was a lighted candle. She started thinking about the need for safety, talked with her teacher about it, and then went to the library to research the topic. Her pamphlet was added to the rich collection of texts available for student use in the classroom. ●

*EFF Hot Topics* (Highlights on Teaching Topics) is a publication of the EFF Center for Training and Technical Assistance. Each issue concentrates on a specific topic, highlighting examples of actual practice and offering strategies and tools for using EFF in the classroom.

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## Online Resources

■ **The Equipped for the Future website** is a LINCS Special Collection. Visit this site to learn more about EFF, the NIFL's standards-based system reform initiative. The EFF website will provide you with information on such topics as: the history of EFF, the Content Framework and Standards, EFF publications, EFF resources, and EFF training events.

*Site address:* [www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff](http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff)

■ **The Equipped for the Future Online Discussion** features targeted discussion about the EFF initiative. Subscribe to the discussion, or read the archived messages for this or previous years. This online forum is the logical place to turn for EFF information and resources, and to join in the ongoing conversation about EFF by people using EFF.

*Site address:* [www.nifl.gov/lincs.discussions/nifl4eff/equipped\\_for\\_future](http://www.nifl.gov/lincs.discussions/nifl4eff/equipped_for_future)

You can also subscribe to the list by sending an e-mail message to: [listproc@literacy.nifl.gov](mailto:listproc@literacy.nifl.gov) (Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message type: Subscribe NIFL-4EFF your first name your last name)

■ **Equipped for the Future publications** may be ordered from the ED Pubs Clearinghouse. EFF publications are free of charge, unless otherwise noted. Online versions of the documents can be accessed directly, including the *EFF Content Standards*, the *EFF Voice* newsletter, the *EFF Assessment Report*, and the *EFF Evaluation Report*. For the complete list of EFF publications and products, go to:

[www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/eff\\_publications](http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/eff_publications)

■ **The Partnership for Reading website** is another rich resource for information on reading instruction. *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction* cited in Amy Trawick's article can be downloaded at:

[http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/adult\\_ed/adult\\_ed\\_1.html](http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/html/adult_ed/adult_ed_1.html)

The web version, *Adult Education Reading Instruction Principles and Practices* has additional information on instructional practices and is found at:

[http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adult\\_reading/adult\\_reading.html](http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adult_reading/adult_reading.html)

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