



Reading Recovery® Center
University of Kentucky

The Practice Page

A Newsletter for Kentucky Reading Recovery Professionals

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An exciting time for Reading Recovery® professionals
by Dr. Judy Embry

Most of you have recently returned from the national conference in Columbus with new ideas and a deeper understanding of Reading Recovery. There is good news to share about Reading Recovery at both the national and state levels as well.

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), a branch of the United States Department of Education (USDoE) and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), has just released its three-year independent review of the experimental research on Reading Recovery. The evidence that Reading Recovery is an intervention based

on scientific research is now documented and acknowledged by the USDE and IES. The WWC found that Reading Recovery has positive effects on students' alphabetic skills and general reading achievement. Potentially positive effects, their next highest rating, were found on fluency and comprehension outcomes. This report adds an authoritative, independent assessment

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View the What Works Clearinghouse research report on Reading Recovery at www.whatworks.ed.gov!

Statewide conference to be held July 2007

Compiled by Heather Hartley
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Due to the success of the 2006 Statewide Reading Recovery Conference, teachers' requests and evaluation comments, the Reading Recovery Center at the University of Kentucky will hold a second conference for Reading Recovery professionals on July 18th and 19th in Lexington.

The conference will focus on the recently released guidebooks entitled *Literacy Lessons for Individuals* by Dr. Marie Clay, and will be held at the Lexington Convention Center in downtown Lexington.



Senator Dan Kelly and Dr. Judy Embry with Teacher Leaders at last year's conference.

Registration for the conference will open tentatively in early April and will cost \$30.00. Please watch the Reading Recovery Center's Web site for updates and announcements.

Reading Recovery® professionals visit General Assembly

compiled by Heather Hartley
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On Wednesday, February 28th, Dr. Embry and Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) Executive Director Dr. Susan Cantrell along with Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders across the state, met with Senator Dan Kelly and presented him with a notebook of testimonials submitted by teachers, school administrators, and parents about Reading Recovery. While on the Senate Floor, Senator Kelly read from Andrea Cole's testimonial (see right). Andrea is a Reading Recovery teacher at Kit Carson Elementary in Madison County.

"Mike didn't just learn to read, he learned to enjoy it."

Reading Recovery Testimonial submitted by Andrea Cole, Kit Carson Elementary

Mike didn't like coming to Reading Recovery, even during roaming. When I asked him what was wrong he said, "I don't like reading." I promised him that if he came with me every day and did his homework each night that he would like reading. After just a few weeks in the program he looked at me and said, "I like reading now." Mike made tremendous progress and still likes to read. His attitude about learning and school in general totally changed. Now when I see



Senator Dan Kelly, CCLD Executive Director Dr. Susan Cantrell, Reading Recovery Director/Trainer Dr. Judy Embry, and Senator Jack Westwood with Teacher Leaders from across the state.

Mike, he has a smile on his face. Mike made me realize the true power of this intervention! Mike didn't just learn to read, he learned to enjoy it. His improved attitude has also made him more willing to engage in classroom tasks. Without Reading Recovery his feelings may have never changed.

Legislators & administrators view Reading Recovery lessons



Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Margie Linde, Reading Recovery teacher Karen Liebert, Representative Larry Belcher, and Reading Recovery Trainer/Director Dr. Judy Embry along with a parent and students.



Reading Recovery Director/Trainer Dr. Judy Embry, Washington County Schools Superintendent Larry Graves, Reading Recovery Statewide Teacher Leader Lindy Harmon, Burgin Independent Superintendent Richard Webb, North Washington Elementary School Principal Robin Cochran, and Burgin Independent Principal Marty Collier.



Representative James Comer, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Debbie Rush, Site Coordinator Cecilia Stephens, and Monroe County Schools Superintendent George Wilson.

Would you like more information about Reading Recovery?
Please visit
[www.readingrecoverycenter.org!](http://www.readingrecoverycenter.org)

Don't miss the June 2007 Leadership Academy

by Karen Birdwhistell, Teacher Leader
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In 2002, Vyetta Reynolds, principal of Munfordville Elementary, and I had the opportunity to attend the Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) Leadership Academy in Washington D.C. We had just begun implementing Reading Recovery® at Munfordville Elementary during the 2001-2002 school year. As an instructional supervisor in Hart County, I was trying to learn as much as I could about Reading Recovery in order to assist other schools in our district in obtaining this wonderful intervention for struggling readers at their schools. Vyetta and I were thrilled to hear Dr. Marie Clay speak about the difference that Reading Recovery can make in the lives of struggling readers! We came back very motivated to share the good news with other schools in Hart County.

Now, five years later, we are fully

implemented in all five of the elementary schools in our district!

This year, Teacher Leaders from across the state will be headed to the Washington, D.C. area in early June for the 2007 Teacher Leader Institute & North American Leadership Academy.

During this action-packed week we will not only attend excellent professional development, we will also advocate for Reading Recovery in our nation's capitol! The RRCNA will request Capitol Hill appointments for every participant who would like to meet with elected officials. Thankfully, our own Dr. Judy Embry will be presenting a session at the conference to prepare us for what to say and what to expect during our Capitol Hill visits.

Conference participants will have the opportunity to attend two keynote

sessions, three general sessions, and up to 12 out of 38 concurrent sessions. Sessions expanding on *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005) will provide participants with fresh insights into the most powerful ways to improve student learning outcomes, promote high-quality teacher professional development, and facilitate positive change at all levels of the educational system.

Having attended the Leadership Academy once before, I am very excited to be going back to Washington again this year - this time as a Teacher Leader!

**Make a gift to the
Reading Recovery
Council of North America**
by Glynda Kelso, Teacher Leader and
RRCNA Development Committee
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An exciting time for Reading Recovery professionals

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of experimental research evidence about Reading Recovery. To view this report please visit www.whatworks.ed.gov and click on 'beginning reading.'

On March 1, Lindy Harmon, statewide Teacher Leader at the University of Kentucky (UK), Jacque Austin director of curriculum and assessment at Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), and Jeff Hawkins executive director of Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (KVEC) testified before the Senate Education Committee in Frankfort. All three did an outstanding report on explaining the role and importance of Reading Recovery as an effective intervention with struggling readers. Check out our Web site (www.readingrecoverycenter.org) for a link to the online video and see page two for more details.



Front: KVEC Executive Director Jeff Hawkins, JCPS Curriculum and Assessment Director Jacque Austin, Statewide Teacher Leader at UK Lindy Harmon. Back: Teacher Leader Marla Smith, Reading Recovery Trainer/Director Dr. Judy Embry, and Teacher Leader Vickie Slone.

Many of you are also looking forward to attending the 2007 Teacher Leader Institute & North American Leadership Academy in June in Vienna, Virginia. I encourage you to take advantage of the Capitol Hill appointments to meet with your U.S. senators and congressperson made by RRCNA.

Also, we are excited to announce a statewide conference for you in July (see page one for more details). Last year's conference was a great success and we look forward to providing you with more high quality professional development opportunities.

We in Kentucky would like to make as big a splash as we did last year with our donations in support of RRCNA. Reading Recovery in Kentucky can continue to show our support by donating to RRCNA during the next few weeks. Help us make Reading Recovery available to every child who needs it. Your tax-deductible gift will help to bring one of the most successful international reading and writing interventions to struggling readers across North America. Others across the country gave over \$22,000 to RRCNA at the conference in Columbus as part of Development Committee Chairperson Trika Smith-Burke's matching campaign.

If you would like to donate to this worthwhile fund, please mail your donations by April 30, 2007 to: Glynda Kelso, 2819 Riedling Drive, Louisville, KY 40206. As long as you write a check (made payable to the RRCNA) it is a tax deductible donation. If you would rather give cash, give it to your Teacher Leader and she can write a check for the cash she receives from you. Our grand total will appear in the next newsletter along with a big thanks to all. Thanks for your generosity.

Making a difference at the local level: Reading Recovery® implementation in Daviess County

by Sherry Sharp, Teacher Leader
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For those teachers and administrators still searching for an intervention to help the lowest at risk first grade students, there is hope. Many times administrators and teachers stumble onto the research on Reading Recovery and start toward full implementation from a small step. It rarely happens quickly, but from that first entry into Reading Recovery—via web research, or word of mouth from another district, administrator, or teacher—a seed is planted.

That seed started growing in Daviess County, Kentucky from the research and curiosity of principals Connie Morgan and Diane Embry. Connie Morgan says, “Reading Recovery was ‘the dream program’ for which I had been searching.”

A few years ago Connie spent an entire day of her spring break on the beach talking about Reading Recovery with a Reading Recovery teacher from Pennsylvania. At that point Reading Recovery was still considered an impossible dream for this small rural western Kentucky school. Thanks to the Kentucky Read to Achieve grants, Reading Recovery was implemented at West Louisville Elementary school at the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. Connie has seen this dream become a reality as, one-by-one, six year-old children have become true and confident readers. Without the success they have gained in Reading Recovery, many of them would have considered reading a chore throughout their lives.

Diane Embry also entered Reading Recovery from a Read to Achieve grant in 2005. Diane comments, “Reading Recovery is a lifeline for first grade students who



Sandie Price, a Reading Recovery teacher at West Louisville Elementary reading with a student.

struggle in reading.”

With three excellent teachers-in-training in the Ohio County training class of 2005-2006, interest in Reading Recovery elevated in Daviess County. An informational session was held for Superintendent Tom Shelton and Elementary Director Vicki Riley with behind-the-mirror lessons featuring Amy Haycraft and Heather Nally from Audubon Elementary.

From that informational session, grants were written and awarded to East View Elementary, Burns Elementary, and Sorgho Elementary. Burns Elementary principal Dr. Amy Shutt, a strong supporter of Reading Recovery, had seen Reading Recovery at work in Muhlenberg County a few years earlier. Dr. Shutt took the needs of Burns Elementary to the PTO and asked for an

additional Reading Recovery teacher to achieve full implementation. With high priorities for reading at Burns Elementary School, a half day salary was awarded with the help of the PTO to achieve full implementation for Reading Recovery.

From a small seed of research and high recommendations of Reading Recovery teachers, Daviess County is reaching at-risk students with strategic activities that grow avid readers. If you are at the stage where the seed is just in your hand, take heart. Plant the seed and great things can grow.

If you would like more information on how to expand Reading Recovery in your district please contact Dr. Judy Embry, the University trainer for Reading Recovery in Kentucky at 859-257-7859.

Have you joined the Reading Recovery teacher listserv yet?

by Heather Hartley
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The Reading Recovery teacher listserv is an e-mail communications tool that allows Reading Recovery teachers to communicate on a statewide basis. Also,

the Reading Recovery Center sends e-mails to announce conference information and updates.

If you are an active Reading Recovery

teacher or teacher-in-training and would like to join the listserv, please e-mail Heather Hartley at heather.hartley@uky.edu to join the listserv.

Kentucky Reading Recovery® teachers participate in the National Reading Recovery Conference

by Sheila Poore, Teacher Leader
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Amidst the gray days of February and the blustery chill of Columbus, Ohio, Reading Recovery teachers find warm cheer every year at the National Reading Recovery Conference. This year, there was added anticipation as everyone looked forward to learning more about Dr. Marie Clay's latest research. Forecasts of single-digit temperatures and snowy roads did little to dissuade thousands of Reading Recovery specialists from arriving in "their" windy city armed with coats, scarves, and *Literacy Lessons, Parts 1 and 2*.

The National Reading Recovery Conference this year featured keynote speakers Richard Allington, Linda Dorn, and Bruce McMillan, as well as Reading Recovery Trainers such as Billie Askew, Mary Fried, and Maribeth Schmitt. Session topics included notable themes from *Literacy Lessons*; timely discussions on evidence-based educational mandates; and timeless issues such as change over time in student learning, serial order, teacher talk, and word work.

The conference opened with an exuberant talk by Dick Allington renewing focus on best practices. According to Dr. Allington, effective literacy instruction must include five



Reading Recovery teachers from the Jefferson County Public Schools are fortunate to receive district funding and Read To Achieve grants which support their attendance at the National Reading Recovery Conference.

pillars: access to interesting text and choice; matching students with appropriate texts; reciprocal positive effects of reading and writing; classroom organization which balances whole class teaching with small group and side-by-side instruction; and availability of expert tutoring. Reading Recovery teachers know firsthand the value of one-on-one instruction provided by highly trained teachers. Some students must be offered more intensive and expert instruction if they are to maintain appropriate pace of acceleration. Ensuring that such children have access to expert tutoring is essential if no child is to be left behind. Conference participant Tammie Motley, from the Jefferson County Public School system, noted how closely Dr. Allington's elements of literacy instruction match the work of Dr. Clay's emphasis on reciprocity between writing and reading, diversity of student text, the importance of familiar

reading at instructional levels, and expert tutoring.

Reading Recovery teachers from Kentucky also found help and guidance in several sessions regarding serial order. Fay Dorval, Gina Finnell, and Jenny Grimes found Mary Ann McBride's session entitled, "It Only Works One Way, But Which Way?" especially enlightening. Jenny noted that it helped her to "become more aware of directionality, sequencing in letters and words and serial order," and that "how you drive home the point" to the student is what matters.

Effective teacher talk was a theme that conference participants also heard in their sessions. In *Literacy Lessons*, Dr. Clay cautions the teacher to talk sparingly and to think about the purpose of the talk. Mary Ann Heckler, from Louisville, was impressed with the focus on talking "with the child and less at them for oral language purposes." She will make a point now to make it "short and sweet" and to share her own life stories with her students. Dianna James, from Cochran Elementary, will keep in mind that teacher talk "should extend the learning and present opportunities for the teacher and student to build a relationship."

Emily Rodgers and Mary Fried, both trainers from the Ohio State University, offered presentations which helped to clarify the importance of the word work procedures introduced by Dr. Clay in *Literacy Lessons, Part 2*. Dr. Rodgers



Reading Recovery teachers Robin Bolt, Lisa Johnson, and Mary Barnes were inspired by Dick Allington's speech.

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Kentucky Reading Recovery teachers participate in the National Reading Recovery Conference

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Reading Recovery teachers Gina Finnell, Jenny Grimes, Mary Ann Heckler, Laura Knight, Mary Barnes, Suzie Aebersold, Tammie Motley, Stephen Burch, and Dianna James met after the conference to discuss what they learned.

reminded conference participants of the need to focus more on teaching children how to look at words and less time on teaching them how to work with words. Students must slow down so they can know where to look and what to look for.

North Carolina Teacher Leader, Pamela Grayson, gave suggestions to refine the component of the new book orientation and first reading. She directed conference participants to be careful observers as they provide the child with opportunities to problem solve in the new book. Suzie Aebersold, from Jeffersontown Elementary, loved the idea of making the new book like a “dessert” that the children look forward to sharing at the end of the lesson in a successful reading. Laura Knight, from Minor’s Lane Elementary, noted that this session reminded teachers to be “reflective and observant so that they choose books with the child’s schema and language in mind.”

Jenny Grimes and Gina Finnell were motivated to keep a “success jar.” They

learned in one conference session to put a marble in a jar for each success that students experience, such as when a child begins to monitor and self-correct, moves up a level in texts, or successfully discontinues the Reading Recovery intervention.

Mary Barnes, from Johnstontown Road Elementary in Jefferson County, also noted that this year’s conference offered more sessions for administrators in schools with Reading Recovery. She realizes the importance of inviting principals and other school administrators to observe Reading Recovery lessons. She found the session on budgeting “helpful in ensuring success for Reading Recovery in schools and districts.”

As usual, Kentucky Reading Recovery professionals greatly benefited from their participation in the conference. The inspirational stories and the refinement of their own learning helped them to forget all about the frigid weather in downtown Columbus.

Measurable gains made in CATS scores at Fredricktown Elementary School

Excerpted from *The Link*—a Washington County Board of Education Newsletter—Fall 2006

CATs scores were a mixed bag for Fredricktown Elementary School (FES) this year. Frustratingly, the school missed its goal by only one tenth of a point. The combined score for FES was 85.3 and the goal was 85.4. However, measurable gains were made in the critical area of reading with the elementary portion of the school scoring just over 105.

Last year FES was the recipient of a Reading Recovery grant. Most of the grant money is used to pay reading expert and veteran teacher, Jackie Reed. School leader, Eric Hardin, attributed the gains in reading to Mrs. Reed’s leadership. “Mrs. Reed is a treasure. She knows reading the way a good mechanic knows the inside of a car. She can diagnose a problem, come up with a solution, and then implement it. I think we have all learned something about reading from her.”

Jennifer Smith, the K-1 teacher at FES, repeated Hardin’s statement; “I didn’t feel that I truly knew the best way to teach reading until I started collaborating with Jackie.”

“My philosophy of teaching is that the foundation must be laid in the primary,” said Jackie Reed.

“She knows reading the way a good mechanic knows the inside of a car. She can diagnose the problem, come up with a solution, and then implement it.”

Would you like another copy of this newsletter? Visit www.readingrecoverycenter.org and click on “The Practice Page” Spring 2007.

Talk isn't cheap: conversation in the Reading Recovery® lesson

Presented by Dottie Best, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader

Conference session summarized by Marla J. Smith, Teacher Leader
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One of my teachers-in-training, Summer McCarley from South Christian Elementary in Hopkinsville, chose to share her notes about this session with the training class following the conference in Columbus. The topic was authentic conversation between Reading Recovery teachers and their students. I was so impressed with the information conveyed through her presentation that I felt it was appropriate to share it with Kentucky's Reading Recovery network.

Conversation drives the Reading Recovery lesson. When we speak, we do not assume that the listener cannot think; we expect them to bring knowledge to relate to what we are talking about. Yet the most common error made by adults about the learning of young children is that we can *bypass* what the child is thinking, and just *push* new knowledge into the child. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The conversation between the Reading Recovery teacher and her student should start when the child is picked up from the classroom. It is recommended that the Reading Recovery teacher always walk the student to and from the classroom in order to give time for authentic conversation. The Reading Recovery teacher should make the child a "co-worker" during the conversation. Dr. Marie Clay in *Literacy Lessons, Part 2*, on page 50, states that we are constructing and composing as we speak, listen, read, and write messages. By engaging the child as a co-constructor, we are helping the child to develop his or her oral language as well as helping to build neural networks in the child's brain to facilitate more effective processing during reading and writing tasks. The following cautions for the teacher as he or she engages the child in authentic conversation are as follows: 1) inquire instead of interrogating the child; 2) take turns and; 3) invite the child to initiate, respond, and evaluate the conversation.

One behavior that might occur when a teacher and child co-construct in a



Reading Recovery teacher Summer McCarley with a student.

conversation includes the teacher taking an interest in what the child is interested in as well as using the language surrounding the child's interest. After an initial response by the child in a conversation, the teacher might reformulate or expand on what the child said. The teacher may also find it necessary to adjust his or her language to fit the child's understanding.

For the child as a co-constructor in the conversation with a teacher, one of the things that the child may do is to imitate appropriate language. The child may also construct new utterances. Dr. Clay in *Literacy Lessons, Part 2*, on page 51, states that the "length of a child's utterance is a reliable indicator of growth in early oral language skills." The child may also make some new connections as a result of the conversation with a co-constructing teacher. Dr. Clay also tells us in *Literacy Lessons, Part 2*, on page 50 that the teacher-child conversation should be used to help compose the child's story during the writing portion of the lesson. Reading Recovery teachers must create

opportunities for the child to talk, and then talk *with* them not *at* them.

There are several elements that are present in good conversations. The first element is allowing for appropriate wait time by the teacher in order for the child to think and then respond. A good conversation element is a joint focus for the interchange. During a good conversation, an observant teacher can help the child to uncover confusions as they talk together. Good conversations also include statements that are personal. Co-constructing teachers also help the conversation to be grounded in experience while allowing the child to extend his or her own learning.

In closing, we as Reading Recovery professionals should be mindful of the value of authentic conversations with the Reading Recovery children that we serve. We must take every opportunity available to initiate and engage our children in sharing past experiences as we open up language avenues to create new experiences.

"...be mindful of the value of authentic conversations..."

Kudos to Reading Recovery® professionals!

Carla Hinkle recognized by Knox County Board of Education



Carla Hinkle with Knox County Board of Education board member Randall Young.

The Knox County Board of Education recognized Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Carla Hinkle from Boone Elementary School at its September 26th board meeting.

Carla was a presenter at the first statewide conference of the Reading Recovery program held in Lexington this past summer. More than 300 Reading Recovery teachers from Paducah to Pikeville came to learn new applications and procedures in this literacy intervention program that is having a positive impact

on so many children.

In Knox County alone, the program is operated at Boone, West Knox, Lay, Artemus, Flat Lick, and Girdler.

Furthermore, what makes Knox County unique in this part of the state is that Boone School operates a training center for Southeastern Kentucky for Reading Recovery. This is due in no small part to Carla, who was the district's first Reading Recovery teacher and who wrote the grant to establish the center at Boone, which is renewable on an annual basis.

Reading Recovery Teacher Jennifer Springate named Teacher of the Year by Woodford County Schools

Excerpted from the Woodford Sun article by Bob Vlach

Jennifer Springate has been a Reading Recovery teacher at Huntertown Elementary for six years. She has been named Teacher of the Year at Huntertown Elementary School.

What Huntertown's Teacher of the Year has witnessed during those years can only be described in her words as "absolutely incredible."

Bev Clarke recognized by the Russell Independent Board of Education & receives National Board Certification

Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Bev Clarke was recently recognized by the Russell Independent Board of Education with a plaque for "[her] dedication to the Russell Primary Reading Recovery Program and Training Site. [Her] exceptional contribution is acknowledged with grateful appreciation by the Russell Independent Board of Education September 25, 2006."

Also, on March 8, 2007 Bev received her National Board Certification from the



Russell Primary School Principal Debbie Finley, Bev Clarke, Russell Independent Superintendent Dr. Susan Compton, and Dr. Judy Embry.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in Frankfort. This certification measures a teacher's practice against high and rigorous standards.

Debra Puckett, Greenville Elementary, wins scholarship to the National Reading Recovery Conference in Columbus, Ohio and complete bookroom from Harcourt Brace



Reading Recovery teacher Debra Puckett with students.

Debra Puckett, Reading Recovery teacher at Greenville Elementary, won a \$500 scholarship to the National Reading Recovery Conference in Columbus, Ohio. Debra was chosen from a national group to attend the conference at little or no cost to her district. Debra and University Trainer Dr. Judy Embry, University of Kentucky represented Kentucky at a scholarship luncheon for recipients.

Debra was also the winner of a complete bookroom for her school from publisher Harcourt Brace. Representative Janel deBoer drew her name from the many entries at the Columbus conference.



Sherry Sharp top member recruiter for RRCNA

Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Sherry Sharp was a top recruiter of new members for the Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) in the fall of 2006. She was awarded a \$250 gift certificate by RRCNA to use at one of their associate member companies. Sherry has chosen Pioneer Valley books for her Reading Recovery students.

