

Reading Recovery® in Kentucky

2005-2006

Judy Embry

Purpose

This executive summary examines the reading outcomes of students enrolled in Reading Recovery in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In addition, a comparison is made between students receiving Reading Recovery services and those who do not.

Background

Reading Recovery is an intense, short-term intervention model of instruction for students experiencing difficulty in reading. This intervention provides a 12-20 week, daily one-to-one series of lessons for second year primary (first grade) students. Students receive daily 30-minute lessons, taught by specially trained teachers, as a supplement to classroom literacy instruction.

Reading Recovery began in Kentucky in 1988-1989 in one school district. In 2005-2006, Reading Recovery has grown to over 225 schools. In 2001, Kentucky became a certified training site for Teacher Leaders as it met rigorous standards to become a University Training Center (UTC) for Reading Recovery in North America

The Reading Recovery Center is located at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Judy Embry, Trainer/Director of the University Training Center, directs the training and monitoring of Teacher Leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

Kentucky's Reading Recovery for the academic year, 2005-2006, has provided intervention services to 3,183 primary (first grade) students in 75 school districts. Three hundred and seventy-eight Reading Recovery Teachers have assisted in this process (see Table 1).

Table 1: Level of Implementation

Year	Districts	Schools	Teacher Leaders	Teachers	Students
2005-2006	75	229	14	378	3,183

Reading Recovery is designed to serve the lowest literacy achievers in the second year primary (first grade). The goal of Reading Recovery is to assist the lowest literacy learners to become independent readers and writers. Students are discontinued when they can complete classroom literacy activities without tutorial assistance and can function independently within the average reading range of their class.

Methodology

Data for this study were collected on a random-sample population of second year primary (first grade) students in a school not receiving Reading Recovery services. This information serves as comparison data and provides an “average” base. If a random-sample student is taken into Reading Recovery during school year, the student’s data is removed from the random sample. The performances of Reading Recovery students are compared with the academic achievement in reading of the random sample.

When a student exits Reading Recovery, a status category is assigned. The five categories are: 1) discontinued 2) recommended after a full program of 20 weeks 3) incomplete program at year’s end 4) moved while being served 5) none of the above.

Table 2 (below) provides numbers and percentages of students in each category served at the University of Kentucky Site.

Table 2: End of Program Status

Discontinued* N %	Recommended N %	Incomplete N %	Moved N %	None of the above N %
1,796 (56%)	608 (19%)	535 (17%)	186 (6%)	58 (2%)

*Discontinued Children who are successful independent readers

Of the students receiving Recovery Reading instruction in 2005-2006, 1,796 (56%) became successful readers and writers, enabling them to participate in literacy instruction with the average second year primary (first grade) students in their classrooms. The remaining students who received a fall program, 608 (19%) benefited from this intervention but were unable to reach a level of proficiency needed to successfully discontinue Recovery Reading after 20 weeks.

Five hundred thirty-five (17%) students received incomplete programs while 244 (8%) either moved to another school or left the program for other reasons, such as placement in special education, returning to kindergarten, etc.

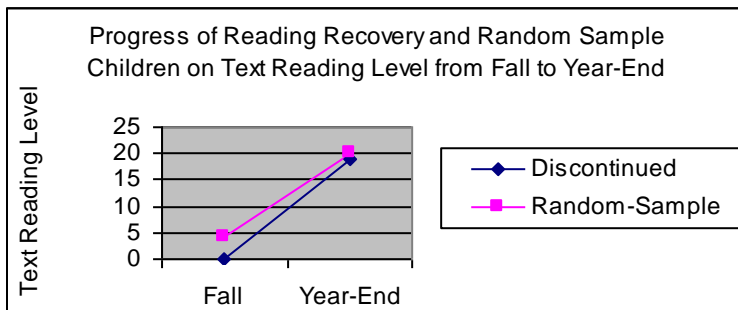
Random Sample Population of Non-Reading Recovery Students

In 2005-2006, data were collected by the National Data Evaluation Center for the national random sample population for the United States. This information was used to set the average reading band for each of the Kentucky sites. It is important to remember that the Reading Recovery students were the lowest performing students in the second year primary (first grade) as they began the school year. Figure 2 represents the gain these students made in reading over the course of the school year as compared to the gain of the random sample population.

This study tracks the progress of Reading Recovery students after exiting the program. Reading Recovery students are expected to continue to improve their reading achievement with

supportive classroom instruction. Students complete the Observation Survey at the point of discontinuing and at the year's end. Figure 2 charts this continued growth.

The findings indicate that students who were in performing in the bottom 20% in reading are now experiencing success.



Conclusions

The goal of Reading Recovery is to have the lowest 20-25% of the second year primary (first grade) population reading and writing independently with the average of their peers within a 12-20 week period of time. This site report has addressed the success of the program during the 2005-2006 school year. Of the 2,404 students, 75% with full or partial program were discontinued because they achieved reading levels comparable to the average level of their peers. Many students who did not discontinue showed significant gains in all areas of the Observation Survey.

Reading Recovery students participated in programs that were approximately 15 weeks long, averaging 3.6 sessions per week. A continuing challenge is to effectively teach students five sessions per week within a 12-20 framework of daily lessons.

Administrators, parents and teachers endorse the outcomes of Reading Recovery as an effective early intervention model of instruction as evidenced by their supportive comments. Here are a few examples:

Administrators

“Reading Recovery has made a great impression with the teachers at our school. All teachers agree that several children in the program were bound for a second year of first grade. However, the intervention of the Reading Recovery program has allowed them to move on.”

“Reading Recovery provides intense intervention for our struggling first graders. It is wonderful to have such an experience and well-trained literacy leader in our building. I see our children being successful in the classroom.”

“Classroom teachers are impressed with the wide array of strategies and procedures used by the Reading Recovery teachers. They have asked for more professional development and common planning time so that they can work collaboratively and learn from the good things going on in Reading Recovery.”

“Test scores have improved with those students who have been involved in Reading Recovery.”

“I had a parent in my office just this morning, discussing the positive changes in their child’s reading due to Reading Recovery. This parent realized not all schools have Reading Recovery, and she expressed how grateful she was that we did!”

“Our teachers are very positive about the strides out students make with the Reading Recovery intervention.”

Parents

“I really have noticed such a big improvement in my child’s reading. I think that it’s the best reading program so far. I have never seen such improvement before in other programs with my children.”

“Reading Recovery enhanced my child’s experience in school not just by improving his reading skills dramatically but gave him a sense of being special and important. He looked forward to going to school because of this program.”

“He says he loves his reading class and it shows in his eagerness to read at home. The program has helped him so much.”

“My son has a completely changed attitude about reading and school for that matter. He reads all the time now. Before, it was tears every night.”

“It is a blessing! It has touched our whole family in so many ways! It has done wonders for my child and the outlooks for him with school. This is a child who really, really hated school. The Reading Recovery teacher has done wonders for my son!”

“It has made a wonderful difference in my child’s life, she seems more sure of herself.”

“This program has been wonderful! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your diligent, hard and I am sure at times, exasperating work. It has been so exciting to watch her aspire from a nonreader to a reader. The personal attention focused on her reading is priceless!”

“Reading Recovery affected my child’s experience in school with more support, structure, responsibility, goals, and remarkable improvement, in turn more self-esteem.”

Teachers

“I have loved, loved, loved my Reading Recovery training because every session is pertinent to my teaching. All teachers should be as lucky as to get regular training in their specialty or grade level-not just a ‘one-workshop fits-all.’ ”

“I think the program is very valuable to our school. This program gives the students an extra support of confidence that they need. Even after on of my students left the program, he still asks me if he can borrow one of my books to take home.”

“I feel that Reading Recovery has been very beneficial to our school. The children involved have gotten a much better start in reading.”

“I have looked at teaching reading in a different light. After 21 years of teaching reading, I have learned new strategies.”

“Watching children who have been labeled as ‘special needs’, or ‘unteachable’ learn and be excited about reading.”

“I had one parent talk about how their child wouldn’t stop reading at home.”