Practical, Research-Based Techniques for Teaching Students with Intellectual Disabilities to Read

Dr. Jill H. Allor
Tammi Champlin
Dept. of Teaching and Learning
Institute for Reading Research
Southern Methodist University
Overview of Project Maximize:

Project Staff

Principal Investigator
Jill Allor, Ed.D.

Co-Prin. Investigators
Patricia Mathes, Ph.D.
Kyle Roberts, Ph.D.

Project Coordinators
Tammi Champlin
Francesca Jones, Ph.D.

Research Teachers
Karen Britton
Bea Jolly
Deirdre North
Janet Montana
Chuck Toney
Rosi Criswell
Part-time teachers

Research Assistants
Timothea Davis
Jennifer Cheatham

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www.smu.edu/maximize
maximize@smu.edu
Overview of Session

- Research Study

- Overview of Curriculum

- Literacy Strands
  - Oral Language/ Vocabulary
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Phonics/Word Recognition
  - Fluency
  - Comprehension

- How to Teach
- IEP Examples
- Student Examples
Overview of Project Maximize:

Purpose

Determine if a **comprehensive**, phonics-based, direct instruction **reading program** would be effective in teaching early reading and language skills to **students with IQs ranging from 40-79**
Overview of Project Maximize: Design

- Longitudinal – 4 years (05-06 through 08-09)
- Random assignment to intervention or contrast group
  - Within school
  - Within IQ range (40-54; 55-69; 70-79)
- Students in Grades 1-4 when they began the study
Current Participants (08-09)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note: 186 different students participated at least one year; 3rd - 6th grade in 08-09</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Contrast</th>
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<tr>
<td>Borderline IQ (70-79*)</td>
<td>$n = 18$</td>
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<td>Moderate IQ (40-54)</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$n = 56$</td>
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Literature Review: Reading and Intellectual Disabilities (ID)

- Minimal amount of research
- Focused on mild ID, not moderate ID
- Focused on isolated subskills
  - Even students with moderate to severe levels of ID can learn to automatically recognize a fairly large number of words (sight words)
  - Phonics research is promising

Browder, Wakeman, Spooner, Ahlgrim-Delzell, & Algozzine, 2006; Conners, Rosenquist, Sligh, Atwell, & Kiser, 2006
Literature Review: Reading and Intellectual Disabilities (ID)

No research has been conducted to determine whether students with ID can learn to read by fully processing the print and meaning of connected text, as is consistent with current theories of reading development.
Research Questions

Do students with IQs between 40 and 69…

1. …make significant progress on a variety of standardized measures of reading-related variables?

2. …who participate in a comprehensive reading intervention outperform similar peers receiving typical special education instruction?
Design and Participants

- Longitudinal – 2 to 3 academic years (05-06 through 07-08)
- **Random assignment** to *intervention* or *contrast* group, within each of the 10 schools
- Grades 1-4 when they began the study
- IQs ranged from 40-69
- treatment, $n = 34$; contrast, $n = 25$
- Intervention ranged from 46 to 106 weeks (mean = 79.54; $SD = 15.37$)
Intervention: Components

- Early Interventions in Reading (EIR)
  - Foundation, Level 1*, Level 2*
  - *published by SRA/McGraw-Hill
- Supplemental language instruction
- Supplemental home-school connection materials
- Instructional Sessions
  - Daily by research teachers for 40-50 minutes
  - Taught in groups of 1-4
Curriculum: *Early Interventions in Reading*

- **“Foundation” Level (60 Lessons)**
  - Skills typically taught in kindergarten
  - In press
- **Level One (120 Lessons)**
  - Skills typically taught in first grade
  - Published
- **Level Two (120 Lessons)**
  - Skills typically taught in second-third grades
  - Recently published

*Students began in either “Foundation” or Level One*
Curriculum: Critical Features

- Explicit and Systematic
  - Explicit strategies
  - Cumulative review
  - Careful sequencing
- Phonics-based
- Fast-paced
- Immediate Feedback
- Teaching to Mastery
  - Lessons or lesson components repeated, as needed
- Increased Opportunities to Respond
Activity 4
Sounding Out

(Have students turn to page 26 of Activity Book A.)
(Hold continuous sounds for about 2 seconds, but quickly move off stop sounds. There should be no pauses between sounds when sounding out.)
Now you’re going to sound out words on your own. Point to each sound when I tap, and say the sound until I tap again. Do not stop between sounds. You will hum the word. Then you will read the word.
(Demonstrate by placing your finger next to the word in, and say.) Place your finger under the /ii/ sound. (Monitor.) When I tap, you say the first sound. (Tap.) /ii/
(Wait 2 seconds, and tap again for the /nn/ sound. Be sure students hold the sound until you tap again.)

Read it fast. in
Good job sounding out by yourselves. Let’s continue!

Repeat the process with the following words: am, ram, fan, rim, man.

Individual Practice

(Provide individual practice.)
You are sounding out and reading words! Excellent! I’ll put a check mark on the Mastery Sheet.

Activity 5
Stretch and Spell

(Direct students to the correct section of the activity sheet.)
Now I will say a word, and you will spell it.
First, I will say the word fast. Then, you will stretch it.
Listen for each sound as you stretch it. Then write the letters for each sound in the order you heard them.

First word. Fists up.
Stretch and. /aaa/nnn/d/
(Hold up one finger for each sound as you stretch the word.)

Write each sound in the order you heard it. Stretch the word in your head while you write it. And.
(Monitor to see if each student writes the letters in the correct order.)

Read the word you spelled. and
Excellent stretching and spelling! Next word.

Repeat the process with the following words: in, act, raft, rat, mint.

(Scaffold as necessary.)
Good job stretching and spelling. We have finished this activity, and I am going to put a check mark on the Mastery Sheet.

Activity 6
What Word Now? Game

(Use the marker board for this game. Begin by writing the word on the board.)

Note: Use the following format to play this game:
1. Sound it out.
2. Read it fast.
3. Change 1 phoneme.
4. Sound it out.
5. Ask students, “What word now?”

We are going to play the game called What Word Now?
(Point to it, and say.) Sound the word out. /iii/t/
Read the word fast. it
(Add 1 to it, and say.) Now I’ll change the word.
(Point to it, and say.) Sound it out. /fft/iii/t/
What word now? fit
Results: RQ #1 (progress across time regardless of treatment)

- Main effects for time were significant on all measures ($p < .001$; $F$ values ranged from 16.48 to 66.08)

- Summary: On average, participants made educationally meaningful, statistically significant progress on standardized measures of reading and language after 2-3 years of instruction
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)

Phonemic Awareness

- ANOVA analyses of pre-post measures (see Table 3 and Fig. 1)
- Statistical significance on 2 of 3 PA measures (time X treatment); remained significant after Bonferroni correction
- Effect sizes: .53, .66, .66
- HLM analyses of PSF (see Table 4 and Fig. 2)
- Best modeled as having quadratic change and an interaction effect between this change and trmt
- Predicted value of score of avg child after 105 weeks of instruction was 34.53 (contrast, 17.83)

**Phonemic Awareness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blending Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>ES = .66*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segmenting Words</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>ES = .66*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing

*p < .05
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)
Reading – Phonemic Decoding

- ANOVA analyses of pre-post measures
  - Statistical significance on 1 of 2 measures (time X treatment); no longer significant after Bonferroni correction
  - Effect sizes .58,.49

- HLM analyses of NWF
  - Best modeled as having quadratic change and an interaction effect between this change and trmt
  - Predicted value of score of avg child after 105 weeks of instruction was 55.49 (contrast, 32.73)
Reading – Phonemic Decoding

Word Attack\textsuperscript{a}
ES = .58\textsuperscript{*}

Phonemic Decoding Efficiency\textsuperscript{b}
ES = .49

\textsuperscript{a}Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery (W-scores)
\textsuperscript{b}Test of Word Reading Efficiency
\textsuperscript{*}p<.05
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)

Reading – Word Identification

- ANOVA analyses of pre-post measures
  - No statistically significant differences found on either measure
  - Effect sizes .51,.26
Reading – Word Identification

Letter-Word Identification $^a$
ES = .51

Sight Word Efficiency $^b$
ES = .26

$^a$Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery (W-scores)
$^b$Test of Word Reading Efficiency

- Treatment Pretest
- Treatment Growth at Posttest
- Contrast Pretest
- Contrast Growth at Posttest
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)

Reading – Oral Reading Fluency

- HLM analyses of ORF
  - Best modeled as having quadratic change and an interaction effect between this change and trmt
  - Predicted value of score of avg child after 105 weeks of instruction was 44.30 (contrast, 26.67)
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)

Language

- ANOVA analyses of pre-post measures
  - No statistically significant differences
  - Effect sizes .46, .50, .34
The graph shows the comparison of expressive and receptive vocabulary scores between pretest and posttest.

**Expressive Vocabulary**
- **ES = .46**

- **Posttest:** Dark blue and light blue combined (approximately 38)
- **Pretest:** Dark blue (approximately 30)

**Receptive Vocabulary**
- **ES = .50**

- **Posttest:** Dark blue and light blue combined (approximately 57)
- **Pretest:** Dark blue (approximately 40)

**Note:**
- **Expressive Vocabulary Test**
- **Receptive Vocabulary Test**
- **Treatment Pretest**
- **Treatment Growth at Posttest**
- **Contrast Pretest**
- **Contrast Growth at Posttest**
Results: RQ #2 (impact of treatment)

Comprehension

- ANOVA analyses of pre-post measures
  - Negligible differences
  - Not statistically significant and ES = .04
Reading – Comprehension

ES = .04

Passage Comprehension

Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery (W-scores)

- Treatment Pretest
- Treatment Growth at Posttest
- Contrast Pretest
- Contrast Growth at Posttest
Limitations

- Performance among students highly variable
- Though relatively large sample size for population, it is a relatively small sample size for the statistical methods
- Intervention was complex and comprehensive, making it difficult to determine which parts were causing positive effects
- Large number of measures required to assess outcomes, but increases probability of Type I error
Conclusions

- Support for use of scientifically-based reading instruction for students with low IQs (ID range)
- IF provided intensive, comprehensive instruction over an extended period of time
- Individualized and with high degrees of fidelity
“Jacob”

- Grade: 5th (began study in 2nd grade)
- IQ: 53
- Diagnosis: MR / Williams’ Syndrome
- Placement: general education classroom with special education resource/inclusion
Jacob’s Story:

- Jacob struggles with language and working memory
- Extremely social child who interacts with everyone in school; advanced social skills often mask his learning differences
- Requires modifications for behavior and instructional issues
- After receiving instruction for three years, Jacob is about three-quarters of the way through Level 1
Modifications used

- Shortened lessons in the beginning to reduce frustration and accommodate short-term memory issues
- Provide student with extra practice on “tricky words” to increase ORF scores
- Teacher uses Velcro board, allowing Jacob to manipulate words and form sentences
- Cumulative review style games and puzzles are sent home to involve parents and provide student with extra practice
- Daily positive reinforcements such as using a marble jar or praise jar to encourage appropriate behavior and participation
Growth in Phonemic Segmentation Fluency for Jacob

Growth in Phonemic Segmentation Fluency for Jacob


phonemes per minute

probe number

Benchmark

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

1 4 9 10 8 16 17 25 31

Growth in Nonsense Word Fluency for Jacob
Growth in Oral Reading Fluency for Jacob

Benchmark
“Not me,” said Grace. “I like spiders. My sister and I have a spider club.”

“That is a garden spider,” said Grace. “It has eight eyes!”
“It has lots of legs too,” said Mike.
“Yes, all spiders have eight legs,” said Grace.
Techniques for Teaching Oral Language and Vocabulary

- Oral Language – talk, talk, talk
- Vocabulary
  - Short, kid-friendly definitions
  - Real-life applications; thumbs-up/down game
  - Pictures, video and gestures; acting out words
  - Direct teaching of morphographs (prefixes/suffixes/roots)
- Word Journals
Techniques for Teaching Phonemic Awareness

- Variety of Activities
  - Rhyme Time, First Sound Game, Say the Word (blending), Stretch and Blend, Vowel Discrimination

- Focus on Blending and Segmenting
  - Blending -- teacher says sounds one at a time and child says word
  - Segmenting – teacher says word and child says sounds one at a time
  - TIP: Stretch and Connect
Example IEP Objectives

 Orally blend onset and rime into a word
 Orally blend 2-5 phonemes into a word
 Orally segment words with 2-5 phonemes into individual phonemes
Techniques for Teaching Phonics/Word Recognition

- Letter-Sound Correspondence
- Sounding Out
  - Student led
  - Teacher led
  - Chunking
- Tricky Words (high-frequency sight words)
Example IEP Objectives

- Pronounce short vowel words in which each letter represents its most common sound, including cvc/cvcc/ccvcc patterns (e.g. cat, best, stamp)
- Pronounce high frequency, irregularly spelled sight words (e.g. come, one)
“Bart”

- **Grade:** 5th
  - (began study in 2nd)
- **IQ:** 52
- **Diagnosis:** MR
- **Placement:** self-contained special education classroom for students with MR
Bart’s Story:

- Bart has struggled with behavior; often noncompliant and has had to be restrained on several occasions.
- Bart thrives in structured, organized environments where he is able to experience success; chaotic situations cause immediate meltdowns.
- Bart has suffered from numerous health problems which have led to multiple surgeries and chronic absenteeism.
- As Bart’s reading has improved, behavior and attitude have improved.
- Bart finished year 3 toward the end of Level 1.
Modifications used:

- Work with homeroom teacher on a positive reinforcement system (tokens)
- Daily verbal and written communication with parents
- One-on-one, structured instruction to minimize distractions and foster success
- Cumulative review style games and puzzles are sent home to involve parents and provide student with extra practice
- Use manipulatives to increase comprehension – “Build the Main Idea”
Growth in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency for Bart

Growth in Phonemic Segmentation Fluency for Bart

- 2005-2006
- 2006-2007
- 2007-2008

Benchmark

phonemes per minute vs. probe number
Growth in Nonsense Word Fluency for Bart


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<th>sounds per minute</th>
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<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>18</th>
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<td>2006-2007</td>
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Benchmark
Growth in Oral Reading Fluency for Bart

Growth in Oral Reading Fluency for Bart

words per minute

probe number


Benchmark

0  10  20  30  40  50  60  70

1  5  9  10  18  25  26  33  40  41  44  47  50
What Can Bart Read??

Sample Text

The squire told Lord Jay:
"Tell Queen Fay that
King Ray may sail a fancy kite
before dinner tonight."

Lord Jay told a mayor:
"Tell Queen Fay that
King Ray may have berries on ice
for dinner tonight."
Techniques for Teaching Phonics/Word Recognition

- Reading Fast First
- Advanced letter-sound correspondence
- Feedback
  - I, We, You
  - (model, lead, test, review)
Activity 3
Letter-Sound Introduction
(Hold up the ol letter-sound card. Point to ol, and say:) When you see these two letters together, they say /ɔʊ/.
What sound do these letters make? /ɔʊ/.

Individual Practice
(Give individual turns.)
Let's practice words that have ol in them. First sound out the underlined part. Then read the whole word.
(Touch under cold.) Sound out the underlined part. /ɔʊ/.
Read the word. cold
Yes, cold. Next word.

Repeat the process with the following words: scold, mole, roll, mold, golden, troll, fold, old, unfold.

Individual Practice
(Provide individual practice with 2–3 words per student.)
(Check off this activity on the Mastery Sheet, and continue with the next activity.)
Curriculum: Immediate Feedback and Modeling

Model: “My turn” or “I”
Lead: “Our turn” or “We”
Test: “Your turn” or “You”
Retest: “Backing up”
Techniques for Teaching Fluency

- Decodable Texts
  - “Story-Time Readers”
- Unison Reading
- Fluency Goals
  - “Beat the Clock”
    - Individual
    - Partner
Example IEP Objectives

- Orally read an ending first grade level passage with appropriate prosody at least 40 words per minute
Linking Word Recognition and Meaning

- Sentence strip activity
- Sentence level comprehension
- Practice with word recognition
Reading Comprehension

- Wh Questions
- DDD 2008 San Diego\clip 9 9 30 2008 comprehension Bart.mov
“Kenny”

- Grade: 4th grade (began study in 2nd grade)
- IQ: 68
- Diagnosis: MR
- Placement: General education classroom with inclusion support
Kenny’s Story:

- Kenny is a very respectful student who wants to please; works hard
- Very little support at home
- Gets bogged down with vocabulary
- Struggles with comprehending long texts
- Kenny finished year 3 in the middle of Level 2
Modifications Used:

- Break down long texts into shorter, more manageable “chunks”
- Short, kid-friendly definitions for unknown vocabulary words; keeps a word journal
- Daily verbal and written communication with parents and classroom teacher
Growth in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency for Kenny

Benchmark

Phonemes per minute

Probe number

Growth in Phonemic Segmentation Fluency for Kenny

2005-2006
2006-2007
2007-2008

Benchmark

Phonemes per minute

Probe number
Growth in Nonsense Word Fluency for Kenny
Growth in Oral Reading Fluency for Kenny

Growth in Oral Reading Fluency for Kenny

Benchmark
What Can Kenny Read??
Sample Text

**Hurricanes**

Hurricanes are very dangerous storms that form over oceans. The oceans are near land areas known as the tropics. The temperature is very high. The ocean water around the land is very warm. Hurricanes need hot land and very warm water to form.

Hurricanes form in five places. They form in the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean. If they move fast, they can travel far. Some hurricanes that hit the United States start near Africa!
Example IEP Objectives

- Pronounce multisyllabic words made up of the following patterns and syllable types: CVC-CVC (e.g. rabbit)
- Apply flexible strategy for determining the pronunciation of unknown multisyllabic words
Techniques for Teaching Comprehension

- “Context Clues”
  - Reading and writing connections
- “Story Grammar”
- “Sequencing”
- “Content Web”
- “Making Inferences”
- “What I Know” and “What I Learned” Charts
Example IEP Objectives

- Identify the main idea of a paragraph in 10 words or less
One more child… After 1 year, PSF (benchmark = 35)
After 3 years… PSF (benchmark=35)
After 1 year… NWF
(benchmark = 50)
After 3 years, NWF
(benchmark = 50)
After 2 years, ORF
(first grade benchmark = 40)
After 4 years, ORF
(first grade benchmark =40)
Conclusions

- On average, students with ID respond favorably to a comprehensive reading intervention consistent with current scientifically-based reading instruction.
- An extensive amount of instructional time was required to achieve basic literacy skills.
- On average, our students required approximately 3 years to reach minimum levels of ending first grade level.
- Performance among our students was highly variable.
Practical Applications

- Seek out reading interventions with proven effectiveness
- Implement with high degrees of fidelity over a long period of time
- Individualize instruction
- Seek out expertise of reading coaches, speech therapists, and behavior experts
Project Maximize

- Principal Investigators
  Dr. Patricia Mathes
  Dr. Jill Allor

- Project Coordinators
  Dr. Francesca Jones
  Tammi Champlin

For further information:
www.smu.edu/Maximize
champlin@smu.edu

Southern Methodist University
Department of Teaching and Learning
Institute for Reading Research