



Reading Recovery®

Winter 2006

The Practice Page

A Newsletter for Kentucky Reading Recovery® Professionals

www.readingrecoverycenter.org

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of Kentucky's Reading Recovery® newsletter

by Dr. Judy Embry

Happy New Year from the Reading Recovery University Training Center. We embark on another new year with a new set of challenges and opportunities for all of us in Reading Recovery.

The first set will come to us through Read To Achieve. Read To Achieve is legislation sponsored by Senator Dan Kelly in 2004 to place effective early literacy interventions in the schools of Kentucky.

In my opinion, Reading Recovery is the most effective early literacy intervention. To keep this vital Read To

Achieve funding for our children, it is imperative that each and every one of you contact your legislator in the House and Senate. Your phone call and/or email is your voice being heard in Frankfort. This is a critical time in the budget; if our voices are not heard right now there may not be new funding for Read To Achieve for another two years.

Our second set of challenges and opportunities will come to us through Dr. Marie Clay's new books. Yes, Dr. Clay is giving us Part 1 and Part 2 in Literacy Lessons: Designed for Individuals. This will take the place of our old Reading Recovery Guidebook. We will all begin expanding our new learning through our zone of proximal development

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Dr. Judy Embry, First Lady Glenna Fletcher, Senator Dan Kelly, and others watch as Governor Ernie Fletcher signs Senate Bill 19.

Reading Recovery® continues to grow in Kentucky

by Lindy Harmon, Teacher Leader

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Kentucky State Senator Dan Kelly of Springfield has been a supporter of Reading Recovery for many years after observing lessons behind the mirror and seeing the impact accelerated progress can have on a child's life. He is a well-respected member of Kentucky's Legislature, serves as Senate Majority Leader, and is a champion for Reading Recovery. He has arranged for Reading Recovery professionals to testify before the

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Senate Education Committee members and others in each of the General Assemblies for the past eight years. Reading Recovery professionals are now included on state level committees and invited to meetings concerning literacy initiatives for the state. Senator Kelly has helped to institutionalize Reading Recovery in Kentucky.

Senator Kelly was instrumental in the passage of Senate Bill 186 during Kentucky's 1998 General Assembly. This literacy bill enabled the state to develop the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) which houses the University Training Center for Reading Recovery, and set up a competitive grant system to provide additional funding for literacy instruction across the state. Many of these funds have been used to promote the growth of Reading Recovery. Again during the 2000 General Assembly, Senator Kelly was able to obtain funding to send Dr. Judy Embry to Texas to become Kentucky's first University Trainer. This funding also provided assistance to the first Teacher Leader training class in Kentucky. We were able to train ten new Teacher Leaders across the state in June of 2002. He was awarded the 2002 National Teacher Leader Award, one of only four awarded nationwide, for his work on getting more Teacher Leaders to cover teacher training across Kentucky. Senator Kelly continued to improve literacy legislation by focusing on early intervention and in April 2005, Governor Ernie Fletcher signed the Read To Achieve Bill into law. This funding is focused on providing every elementary school in Kentucky with highly trained early intervention teachers.



Senator Dan Kelly

"...Dan Kelly is truly a champion for Reading Recovery and for the children of Kentucky!"

In April 2005, Senator Kelly traveled to Washington D.C. to present the progress Kentucky has made over the past eight years at the North American Leadership Academy and Teacher Leader Institute. While there, he accompanied Dr. Judy Embry and a group of Teacher Leaders to Capitol Hill to visit with Senator Mitch McConnell, Senator Jim Bunning, Representative Ed Whitfield, and Representative Anne Northup. He was, as always, a consummate professional as he asked each congressman for their support of legislation promoting the ideals and goals of early reading intervention for both regular education and special education students. Senator Kelly's presentation to conference attendees was thoughtful and inspiring to those Teacher Leaders returning to their states to work with legislators on literacy initiatives.

Many of the Read To Achieve grants funded in the spring of 2005 will provide funding for Reading Recovery teacher training across Kentucky this fall. By the time you receive this newsletter, second round funding decisions will have been made and the number of teachers in training will again increase. Spring 2006 will bring a new General Assembly session and possibly additional funding for this important initiative. It is truly an exciting time for Reading Recovery in Kentucky. We surely would not have accomplished so much without the commitment and foresight of Senator Kelly.

If you would like to read more about Senator Kelly's valuable and extensive work for Reading Recovery in Kentucky, please see past issues of the [Journal of Reading Recovery](#). His story was showcased in the inaugural issue in Fall 2001 with the article titled "One Rico at a Time: Kentucky's Bipartisan Support for Reading Recovery." It was included again in Fall 2002 in the Implementation Section and also in Spring 2004 in the RRCNA News Section.

I cannot think of a person more deserving of being showcased in our inaugural issue of Kentucky's Reading Recovery newsletter. At a time when there are too few heroes, the Honorable Senator Dan Kelly is truly a champion for Reading Recovery and for the children of Kentucky!

Legislators and administrators are key figures in growing Reading Recovery®

by Sherry Sharp

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The mission of the University of Kentucky Training Center is to provide Reading Recovery to all children in Kentucky who need the intervention. That ideology and



From left, Rep. Brent Yonts, Muhlenberg Co. Supt., Dale Todd, Dr. Judy Embry, Teacher Leader Sherry Sharp, and Ohio Co. Supt. Soretta Ralph.

goal is easy to articulate in an “if I were in charge of the world” kind of way. The difficulty is in the details of making that happen. This is one story to illustrate the real world way of making that happen. I started working with local representatives and senators to help educate them about the Reading Recovery program by inviting Representative Brent Yonts, Kentucky Representative from District 15 to view a lesson.

Representative Yonts graciously accepted the invitation, as did Superintendent Soretta Ralph (Ohio County), Dale Todd (Muhlenberg County), and other administrators from their respective districts to view the lesson.

Before the lesson had even begun, Rep. Yonts commented, “I already know this is a great program just by the enthusiasm I hear from the teachers involved as we talked before the lesson began.” The lesson was conducted by Reading Recovery teacher Paulesa Davis from Drakesboro Elementary. All came away with a great respect for Reading Recovery and what it can do for the students of Kentucky.

The accomplishment would be well defined the next day in a fax from Representative Brent Yonts.

“I was not aware of such a program going on that involved multiple counties in funding, training, and addressing issues. I believe that the program is one which needs to be expanded. Such programs not only teach reading and expand the mental horizons of the student but also, in the long run, lessen the drop-out rate, reduce the crime rate, and improve society’s overall capabilities.”

Following his visit, Representative Yonts joined the grassroots effort to expand Reading Recovery by delivering information packets to other legislators in the state.

One of the strengths of our ongoing efforts is to cultivate bipartisan relationships in which Kentucky’s students and educators are not held hostage in the debate over budget issues. All students who need early intervention in reading should have access to Reading Recovery.

The future of the intervention is brighter because leaders who have had the opportunity to observe it in action view Reading Recovery as a catalyst to powerful learning. The work we do with legislators and administrators is vital to our success. Looking forward and taking opportunities to inform our leaders of the benefits of Reading Recovery is a job for all of us!



Teacher Leaders Develop Strategic Plan

by Claudia Castenir

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As Reading Recovery® professionals we work to equip our students with the tools necessary to engage in strategic activity. In the same vein Jean Bussell, former executive director of the Reading Recovery Council of North America, has worked with the Commonwealth's Teacher Leaders to equip them with the tools necessary to develop



Front from left: Marla Smith, Lindy Harmon, Glynda Kelso, back: Jean Bussell, Vickie Slone.

a strategic plan for the future of Reading Recovery in Kentucky. Using a technique known as Open Spaces, Jean guided the group through the development of a vision statement ("all Kentucky children who need Reading Recovery will receive it"), and a mission statement ("Kentucky achieves and sustains full implementation of Reading Recovery").

The teacher leaders along with Dr. Judy Embry, Kentucky's Reading Recovery university trainer, developed four goals with corresponding objectives to support these statements. The goals relate to advocacy, maintaining quality, integrity and fidelity, research and evaluation, and team building. You have probably seen evidence that several of the objectives are well underway. Many of you contacted your legislators in support of the "Read To Achieve" legislation helping meet advocacy objectives. This newsletter is one tool in working toward maintaining quality implementation and building a sense of community among Reading Recovery professionals.

Our strategic plan is a working document. While Dr. Embry and the Teacher Leaders may be responsible for keeping it alive and functioning, it will take each and every one of us working across the state to complete our mission and reach our vision. Together it is a "mission possible."

"...it will take **each and every one of us** working across the state to complete our mission and reach our vision. Together it is a '**mission possible.**'"



Reading Recovery® Chuckles

by Janet Duvall

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I realized there were some control issues between one of my students and me one day when she had a funny reaction after I told her that I would be prompting her for some new words in her writing spree. Sure enough, even though I was prompting for different words than she had written on her previous writing sprees, she continued writing words that she felt sure that she had mastered. I

praised this initiative but repeated that I wanted her to write some different words. At that, she grabbed a piece of paper from the table and drew a line on it explaining that "this is the side for the words I want to write and that is the side for words you want me to write." After looking more closely at the sadly off-center line she'd drawn, she quickly rotated the paper 180 degrees and amended "I mean **this** is the side for the words I want to write and **that** is the side for the words you want me to write!" Needless to say, we squeezed in some very small words on my side that day.

If you have a humorous or touching story that you would like to have considered for publication, please email it to Heather Hartley at Heather.hartley@uky.edu.

Breaking Words

by Vickie Slone

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As Reading Recovery® teachers, we prepare students to notice the different ways in which words work. As Marie Clay states (1993):

Slowly throughout the reading and writing work of the Reading Recovery lessons the child is introduced to different ways of

- *constructing a new word in writing*
- *or working out a new word in reading.*

(p.43)

In this article, we focus on Section 10 of the Guidebook, “Linking Sound Sequence with Letter Sequence” or breaking words. During this part of the lesson, the child is both constructing words and taking words apart to become more aware of how words work and how to link what he knows to get to new words. It is important that teachers realize that the purpose is not teaching isolated words but how words work.

Marie Clay gives us specific directions for breaking words. The first step is to help the child understand the task. We, as teachers, must demonstrate what we are asking the child to do, as well as ensure that we are working with the familiar words that the child knows in the beginning. Marie Clay tells us to:

- *Give the child the correct magnetic letters and ask him to make a word he knows on the magnetic board.*
- *Have him construct the word and take it apart many times.*
- *Say, “Look at the word. Say it slowly and run your finger under it.” (p.44)*

We must help the child to create a link from the known word to the new word and then back again to the known. This should be carried throughout the series of lessons. Research has shown that by having children use both hands that both parts of the brain are engaged and a stronger link is created. It is important that when you are having the child take the word apart that he is using both hands and pulling the words apart.

We must also make sure that the child is visually focused on the word and saying it slowly as he runs his finger under the letters. The sounds should match as he is running his finger under the word.

The Guidebook states, “we should begin with words that are known. These words can come from what the

student can write.” (p.27) This enables the child to see the connection between writing and reading and to build a foundation of words. We want to make this task as easy as possible for the child. A starting point for breaking words could be having students break words apart using onsets and rimes. Begin with a familiar set of words. It is important that as the child begins to take control of this process, the teacher asks him to add more to the activity. A scale of help is provided to increase the difficulty of the task. (p. 45)

The teacher needs to help the child make the connection so that what he knows in reading will be used in writing and vice-versa. The child constructs words in writing and analyzes words in reading. When a child reads, he is going from letter to sound, whereas when a child writes he is going from sound to letter. It is important therefore that in making and breaking we teach children to



Margie Linde, Reading Recovery teacher from Bullitt County, teaches a student to break apart words.

do both through our prompting. When asking a child to go from letter to sounds, we may ask a child to change the ‘l’ in *like* to a ‘b’. We then would ask the child to read the word. When going from sound to letter, we would say, “What would you need to change *like* to *bike*?” This is providing the sound and having the child provide the letter. By using these prompts, we are helping the child to make the link from what he learns in making and breaking to writing and reading.

Breaking words is only 1-3 minutes of the lesson, yet makes a wonderful connection between reading and writing. It is important that we remember to start with the known, demonstrate the task and support at each shift, and use appropriate prompts to help the child go from sound to letter and letter to sound. Remember our goal is to have the child know how words work and how to use this knowledge in reading and writing.

Clay M. M. 1993. *Reading Recovery: A Guidebook for Teachers in Training*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Osborne, D., *Communicating How Words Work: Pp. 10-12: The Running Record*. Fall 2000.

**Read to Achieve
photographs**
Frankfort 2004



Vickie Slone, Dr. Judy Embry, Lindy Harmon, and Marla Smith.



First Lady Glenna Fletcher addresses the crowd as the Governor, Senator Dan Kelly, Education Cabinet Secretary Virginia Fox, and others look on.



Dr. Judy Embry, Glenna Fletcher, Senator Dan Kelly, Dr. Susan Cantrell, Dean Cibulka, Education Cabinet Secretary Virginia Fox, and others look on as Governor Fletcher signs the Read To Achieve legislation.



Hot Sites

**Reading Recovery[®]
Council of North America**
www.readingrecovery.org

**Find your state legislators'
information here:**
[http://www.lrc.ky.gov/
whoswho/whoswho.htm](http://www.lrc.ky.gov/whoswho/whoswho.htm)



Dr. Judy Embry, Vikki Hall, Lindy Harmon, Glynda Kelso, Vickie Slone, Dean Cibulka, Sherry Sharp, Marla Smith, and Dr. Susan Cantrell.

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beginning in the fall of 2006 through continuing contact and training classes. Dr. Clay will be signing her new books during the National Reading Recovery Conference this February in Columbus.

The third set of challenges and opportunities will come to us through communications at the state level. This is the inaugural newsletter from the University Training Center to help us unite as Reading Recovery professionals.

As you visit the newsletter through the website or hard copy we invite you to send articles, comic relief through your teachings or any child's insights, or updates that may need to be posted for the whole state. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

The Practice Page, Kentucky's Reading Recovery newsletter, is published by the University of Kentucky's Reading Recovery Training Center. It is distributed online without charge at www.readingrecoverycenter.org. Please send comments, suggestions, or material for consideration to **Heather Hartley** at heather.hartley@uky.edu.

