

Reading Recovery[®] Executive Summary

School Year 2003-2004

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Reading Recovery is a short-termed intervention model of instruction for low children who need intense intervention in literacy. This intervention provides a 12-20 week, daily one-to-one series of lessons for second year primary (first grade) children.

The purpose of this executive summary is to examine Reading Recovery outcomes of all children served in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In addition, it compares their performance with a group of children not receiving Reading Recovery services.

The Reading Recovery Project

Reading Recovery is designed to serve the lowest literacy achievers in the second year primary (first grade). Children receive daily 30-minute lessons, which are taught by a specially trained teacher, as a supplement to classroom literacy instruction. Positive effects can be documented in any school regardless of the instructional method used in the primary classroom. The goal of Reading Recovery is to assist the lowest literacy learners to become independent readers and writers within the average literacy setting in the classroom. Children are discontinued (successful, independent readers) as soon as they can profit from classroom literacy instruction without further tutorial assistance within 20 weeks.

Background

Reading Recovery began in Kentucky in 1988-1989 school year within one school district. In 2003-2004, Reading Recovery has expanded to serve over 66 school districts. In 2001, Kentucky became a certified training site for Teacher Leaders as it met rigorous standards and guidelines and became a University Training Center (UTC) for Reading Recovery in North America. The Reading Recovery Center is located at the University of Kentucky which trains and monitors Teacher Leaders throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky under the direction of Dr. Judy Embry, Trainer/Director of the University Training Center. Reading Recovery in Kentucky during the academic year, 2003-2004, has provided intervention services to 2,393 primary (first grade) children in 189 schools within 66 school districts with the assistance of 275 Reading Recovery teachers and 14 Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders (See Table 1).

Table 1 Level of Implementation
University of Kentucky's Reading Recovery Center

Year	Districts	Schools	Teacher Leaders	Teachers	Children
2003-2004	66	189	14	275	2,393

Research Documentation

Research documentation is based on *An Observation Survey* designed by Marie Clay. It consists of six tasks dealing with the reading and writing processes. Reading Recovery students are asked to complete these tasks at

both time of entry and time of discontinuing (when children are able to function independently within the average reading range of their class).

Further research data are collected on a random-sample population of second year primary (first grade) children in the school not receiving Reading Recovery services in order to provide an "average" base across the site. If a random-sample child is taken into Reading Recovery at any point in the school year, that child's data is removed from the random sample. Therefore, the performance of the Reading Recovery children is measured against the higher levels of academic achievement of the random sample.

How Successful Are Reading Recovery Children?

Reading Recovery documentation accounts for all children served *even if for only one day*. At the end of a child's program, 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 provides numbers and percentages of children in each category. A graphic display of percentages of the total number served is shown in Figure 1.

Table 2 End-of-Program Status of Reading Recovery Children Served at the University of Kentucky's Reading Recovery Center

End of Program Status				
Discontinued*	Recommended	Incomplete	Moved	None of above
N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
1405 (59)	435 (18)	365 (15)	125 (5)	63 (3)

*Discontinued-children who are successful, independent readers.

The following graphic shows that of the children receiving Reading Recovery instruction in 2003-2004, 1,405 (59%) became successful readers and writers enabling them to participate in literacy instruction with the average second year primary (first grade) children in their classrooms.

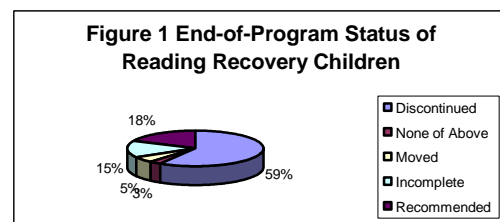


FIGURE 1

Of the remaining children, 435 (18%) benefited from this intervention but were unable to reach a level of proficiency needed to successfully discontinue after 20

weeks in Reading Recovery. Because of insufficient time in the school year, 365 (15%) children received incomplete programs while 188 (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

In 2001-2002, data was collected on non-Reading Recovery children (random sample population through five Kentucky teaching sites: Fort Knox, Jefferson Co., Kentucky Valley Education Cooperative, Morehead, and UK. This information was then used to set the average reading band for each of the Kentucky sites. It is important to remember that the Reading Recovery children were the lowest performing children in the second year primary (first grade) as they began the school year. Figure 2 represents the gain these children made in reading over the course of the school year as compared to the gain of the random sample population.

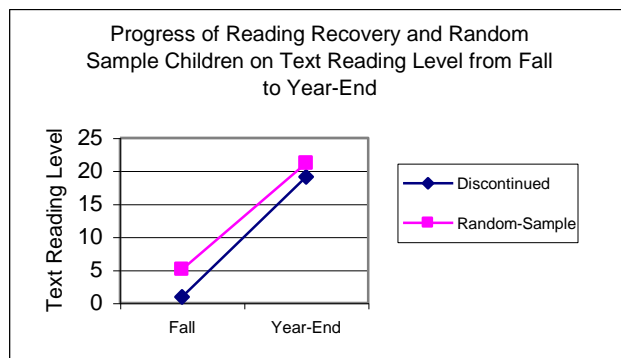


FIGURE 2

Continued Progress of Discontinued Reading Recovery Children

An important question to ask about the intervention is whether or not progress continues after the intervention is removed. Reading Recovery children are expected to continue to improve their reading achievement with supportive classroom instruction. In order to support this statement, students are given the tasks of *Observation Survey* at the point of discontinuing as well as again at the year's end. Figure 2 charts this continued growth, reflective of both a self-extending system and supportive classroom teaching.

The average statewide text level reading for the discontinued Reading Recovery child was **19.1**.

This assessment task involves reading leveled texts (approximately 250 words) containing many episodes, numerous lines of text with various layouts.

The findings here are impressive in that a group of students who were expected to experience failure in learning to read and write 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 in a given school district independently reading and writing with the average of their peers within a 12-20 week period of time. This executive summary has addressed the success of the program during the 2003-2004 school year. Of the **1,846 (76%)** with full or partial program were discontinued (successful, independent readers) because they were able to achieve reading levels near the average of their peers. Many program children who did not discontinue showed significant gains in all areas of the *Observation Survey*.

Reading Recovery children participated in programs that were, on average, **14.8** weeks long, averaging **3.6** sessions per week. A continuing challenge is to effectively teach children 5 sessions per week within a 12-20 framework of daily lessons.

Administrators, parents and teachers all 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 is a critical intervention for struggling readers."

"Reading Recovery has significantly reduced the number of students who require retention or special education services."

"Reading Recovery is the single most effective reading program implemented at our school."

Parents

"My son's eyes light up now that he has learned to read. His self-esteem is 100% better. I really feel this is the greatest program for children with reading problems."

"Reading Recovery has greatly improved her school experience. She has more confidence and has made the honor roll. She enjoys school more and constantly wants to read now."

"I am so amazed, thankful, and proud of how this program really does help children who can't read, giving them self-esteem, making them realize, 'hey, I can read!'"

Teachers

"This is a plus for our school. Some students would not be reading if they had not gone through Reading Recovery. I would recommend every school to become involved."

"The Reading Recovery teachers at my school work collaboratively with my students through school-wide

literacy groups. I would have never made it through this year without their support, guidance and expertise.”