



RESEARCH
REPORT

Second Chance Reading®

Executive Summary

Introduction

With the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* and *Put Reading First* recognized scientifically based reading research and recommended effective practices for reading instruction in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. The instructional recommendations continue to be applied to the development and implementation of reading programs and supplemental reading programs to address the goal of all students acquiring grade-level reading skills by grade 3.

Meeting these needs will require expanding the discussion of reading instruction from Reading First—acquiring grade-level reading skills by third grade—to Reading Next—acquiring skills that can serve youth for a lifetime. (Reading Next 2004, p. 3)

As students progress, the concern shifts to all students remaining at or above grade level and developing lifetime reading ability. Recognizing the extensive reading instruction research presented by the National Reading Panel and the wealth of research on adolescent literacy and content-area instruction, educators collaborated to focus the nation on adolescent literacy. The needs of adolescent learners and the importance of professional development for middle grade teachers became evident. In 2001, the International Reading Association and National Middle School Association jointly adopted and published *Supporting Young Adolescent's Literacy Learning*. In 2004, educational researchers met with representatives of Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Alliance

for Excellent Education to discuss and address the issues surrounding adolescent literacy in the United States. Their publication, *Reading Next—A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy: A Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York*, serves as a source of recommendations for researchers, policy makers, and educators.

Sundance Publishing's *Second Chance Reading* offers effective literacy instruction for struggling readers in the middle grades. *Second Chance Reading* is designed to address the needs of students who have not developed the basic reading skills and strategies needed to understand the more complex content required in the middle grades.

Second Chance Reading

- *Second Chance Reading* includes seven series of high-interest, low-level books.
- All the teaching guides for *Second Chance Reading* follow the same consistent format to best support teachers as they implement research-based teaching practices.
- All the *Second Chance Reading* series offer audio CDs, which provide audio-assisted learning to help model fluency and build reading comprehension.

The purpose of this document is to show how *Second Chance Reading* is based on the research of effective reading instruction for struggling readers, and on principles of adolescent literacy instruction. This document highlights instructional areas with the following sections:

Research Findings

This section references recommendations from the *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* and principles of *Reading Next—A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*. Recent research studies and summaries are cited to support specific strategies and practices.

Research Implications

This section highlights specific instructional features of the student books and teaching guides to illustrate how *Second Chance Reading* addresses the research recommendations for the literacy instruction of struggling adolescent readers.

Key Research Findings in Support of Second Chance Reading®

Books and Motivating Struggling Readers

Research Findings

- ✓ Motivation and self-directed learning, which includes building motivation to read and learn and providing students with the instruction and support needed for independent learning tasks they will face after graduation. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 4*)
- ✓ High-interest, low-difficulty texts play a significant role in an adolescent literacy program and are critical for fostering reading skills of struggling readers and the engagement of all students. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 18*)
- ✓ Providing an abundance of high-interest texts in the classroom enables teachers to adapt their reading instruction to the preexisting motivations of students. (*Guthrie & Wigfield 2000, pp. 412–413*)
- ✓ Diverse texts, which are texts at a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 4*)
- ✓ Kids not only need to read a lot but they also need lots of books they can read right at their fingertips. They also need access to books that entice them, attract them to reading. Schools can foster wider reading by creating school and classroom collections that provide a rich and wide array of appropriate books and magazines and by providing time every day for children to actually sit and read. (*Allington 2001, pp. 68–69*)
- ✓ With elementary and middle school students, quasi-experimental and structural equation modeling studies have shown that teachers who provide meaningful choices and autonomy increase students' motivation to read and to expend effort to gain knowledge from text. (Reeve, Bolt & Cai, 1999). (*RAND Reading Study Group 2002, p. 42*)
- ✓ Note: 1,765 sixth-grade students in reading language arts classrooms in 23 diverse schools in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern United States were surveyed. We identified several overall findings about positive features of instruction. First, students valued independent reading and the teacher reading aloud as part of instructional time. Second, when asked what they liked most about time spent in the class, students focused more on the act of reading itself or personal reason for reading rather than on social aspects or activities related to the reading. Third, when students were asked what motivated them to read at school, they emphasized quality and diversity of reading materials rather than classroom setting or other people. (*Ivey & Broaddus 2001, pp. 350–377*)

Research Findings

- ✓ Linguistic quality of text is another critical factor in readers' ability to learn from what they read. Texts constructed to facilitate readers' attempts to learn have been called 'considerate' (*Armbruster 1984*). In contrast, texts that cause readers to expend large amounts of cognitive effort to offset their poor construction are characterized as 'inconsiderate.' Several factors contribute to the considerateness and quality of texts, including purpose, audience appropriateness, unity of focus, organizational structure, development and validity of ideas, stylistic expression, and correct usage.
(*Jetton & Alexander, P.A. 2001, July/August*)
- ✓ Instructional processes and context surround the engagement processes and reading outcomes. . . . They (instructional processes) include learning and knowledge goals, real-world interactions, autonomy support, interesting texts, strategy instruction, praise and rewards, evaluation, teacher involvement, and coherence of instructional processes.
(*Guthrie & Wigfield 2000, p. 409*)

Research Implications

Research indicates that in order for instruction to be effective readers must be motivated and engaged in reading. Struggling readers must be provided with interesting and appropriate texts for instruction, as well as daily time for reading. This motivation and engagement result in reading achievement.

Second Chance Reading consists of seven series of books that help build reading motivation. Struggling readers have access to 206 books with diverse choices that are determined by their own interests and purposes for reading.

Access to Diverse Books for Choice

Second Chance Reading provides high-interest, low-level books that are designed to appeal to middle grade students with a variety of fiction genres, informational texts, styles, and topics.

- *Sparklers*: Fictional chapter books that feature easy-to-read stories for reading success.
- *That's Wild!*: Nonfiction animal books that utilize a question-and-answer format.
- *The Real Deal™*: Informational texts that blend humor with information.
- *Supa Doopers*: Fast-paced chapter books filled with middle grade experiences.
- *Triple Play*: Fictional adventure miniseries with recurring characters (3 titles per miniseries).
- *Blue Planet Diaries*: Paired fiction and nonfiction books correlated to earth, life, and physical science standards.
- *Fact Meets Fiction*: Paired sets that introduce the theme with a fiction title and build upon the information with a nonfiction title.

Quality Texts

The *Second Chance Reading* books appeal to the struggling reader audience, and are quality texts for instruction that:

- contain reading supports with gradually increasing challenges.
- are leveled for matching the students with the texts.
- feature diverse topics appropriate for middle grade students.
- model clear organizational structures and features students are required to read in their textbooks.
- include fiction features such as plot, character, and setting.

Time for Reading

Second Chance Reading teaching guides provide support for teachers in planning and managing their classroom, to ensure that struggling readers have daily reading time with appropriate texts.

Scaffolded and Differentiated Instruction

Research Findings

- ✓ Scaffolded instruction, which involves teachers giving high support for students practicing new skills and then slowly decreasing that support to increase student ownership and self-sufficiency. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 14*)
- ✓ . . . a differentiated classroom provides different avenues to acquiring content, to processing and making sense of ideas, and to develop products so that each student can learn effectively. (*Tomlinson 2001, p. 1*)
- ✓ Curriculum that is challenging, integrative, and exploratory. (*National Middle School Association 2001*)

Research Implications

The consistent *Second Chance Reading* instructional model presented in the teaching guides supports teachers as they scaffold and differentiate instruction for struggling readers. *Second Chance Reading* may be integrated into classroom instruction where the curriculum is challenging, integrative, and exploratory.

The *Second Chance Reading* “Lesson Plan” provides a step-by-step format for every student book. This teaching sequence engages readers and provides options for addressing student needs.

Step 1: Selecting the Book

Books are selected to match students’ interests and levels.

Step 2: Building Background and Accessing Prior Knowledge

Discussion with questions and prompts help students build connections between their own background knowledge and the book concepts. This helps them set a meaningful purpose for the reading.

Step 3: Introducing the Book

Strategies for previewing the book help students gather information from the structures, features, and content. This motivates students to read.

Step 4: Reading the Book

Students have time to read independently with teacher support when needed.

Step 5: Building Skills

Activities for each title help students build vocabulary, improve comprehension, develop their critical thinking and writing skills. Activities for vocabulary development, reading comprehension, literary response and analysis, and writing and speaking strategies and application address student needs.

Step 6: Assessing and Planning

Written, observational, and performance assessment tools for ongoing formative assessment drive instruction.

Comprehension Instruction

Research Findings

- ✓ Direct, explicit comprehension instruction, which is instruction in the strategies and processes that proficient readers use to understand what they read, including summarizing, keeping track of one's own understanding, and a host of other practices. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 4*)
- ✓ Effective adolescent literacy interventions must address reading comprehension... Possible approaches include:
 - comprehension strategies
 - comprehension monitoring and metacognition instruction
 - teacher modeling
 - scaffolded instruction
 - apprenticeship models (*Reading Next 2004, pp. 22-23*)
- ✓ Instructional processes and context surround the engagement processes and reading outcomes They (instructional processes) include learning and knowledge goals, real-world interactions, autonomy support, interesting texts, strategy instruction, praise and rewards, evaluation, teacher involvement, and coherence of instructional processes. (*Guthrie & Wigfield 2000, p. 409*)
- ✓ The use of such tools as graphic organizers, prompted outlines, structured reviews, guided discussions and other instructional tactics that will modify and enhance the curriculum content in ways that promote understanding and mastery have been shown to greatly enhance student performance—for all students in academically diverse classes, not just students who are struggling. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 15*)
- ✓ The research on comprehension strategy teaching provides powerful evidence that most struggling readers (and many not so struggling readers) benefit enormously when we can construct lessons that help make the comprehension processes visible. (*Allington 2001, p. 98*)
- ✓ A set of specific comprehension strategies that have firm scientific basis for improving text comprehension include:
 - monitoring comprehension
 - using graphic and semantic organizers
 - answering questions
 - generating questions
 - recognizing story structure
 - summarizing (*Put Reading First 2000, pp. 49-53*)

Research Implications

The comprehension instructional support in *Second Chance Reading* provides opportunities for students to practice and apply comprehension strategies as they independently read leveled fiction and nonfiction texts.

- The teaching guide presents a reading sequence that engages students before, during, and after reading and releases responsibility for reading to the students to foster comprehension.
- “Building Background” and “Introducing the Book” prompt reading discussions that will help students build connections between their own background knowledge and the book concepts and set a meaningful purpose before they read.
- During the “Reading the Book” step, the teacher may coach and prompt the students as they monitor and build comprehension.
- During the “Reading the Book” step, students read independently to practice and apply comprehension strategies.
- After reading, the “Building Skills” activities focus on reading comprehension, literary response and analysis, and writing and speaking strategies.

Second Chance Reading books have been developed and leveled so that students can read successfully on their own. To support comprehension instruction, each book is paired with a “Reading Guide” to help students set their purpose for reading, and to focus on the most important events and concepts in the books.

The “Reading Guide” helps students focus on:

- identifying using informational text structures
- locating information related to purpose for reading
- making and confirming predictions
- activating prior knowledge
- comparing and contrasting
- evaluating new information
- answering questions
- summarizing

The “Reading Guide” may also be used to model and discuss comprehension strategies the students used when reading the book.

Vocabulary Instruction

Research Findings

- ✓ Both vocabulary and comprehension involve the meaning of the text, albeit at different levels. Vocabulary is generally tied closely to individual words whereas comprehension is more often thought of in much larger units. To get to the comprehension of larger units requires the requisite processing of the words. Precisely separating the two processes is difficult, if not impossible. (*NICHD 2000, Chapter 4, p. 15*)
- ✓ Vocabulary can be developed indirectly, when students engage daily in oral language, listen to adults read to them, and read extensively on their own and directly, when students are explicitly taught both individual words and word learning strategies. (*Put Reading First 2001, p. 45*)
- ✓ Vocabulary instruction is most effective when learners are given both definitional and contextual information, when learners actively process the new word meanings, and when they experience multiple encounters with the words. (*Graves & Watts-Taffe 2002, p. 143*)
- ✓ We believe that the research suggests four main principles to instruction:
 1. That students should be active in developing their understanding of words and ways to learn them.
 2. That students should personalize word learning.
 3. That students should be immersed in words.
 4. That students should build on multiple sources of information to learn words through repeated exposure. (*Blachowicz & Fisher 2000, p. 504*)

Research Implications

Second Chance Reading provides opportunities for teachers to deliver direct and indirect vocabulary instruction and for students to apply new vocabulary words in reading, writing, and speaking contexts.

- The *Second Chance Reading* books are carefully leveled to increase in vocabulary complexity within a series, and across all seven of the series.
- The “Lesson Plan” provides vocabulary instruction, practice, and application before, during, and after reading.
 - **Before:** “Introducing the Book” before reading questions help students build connections between their own vocabulary knowledge and the book concepts and help teachers focus on specialized vocabulary in the discussion.
 - **During:** Students read the vocabulary words in context while “Reading the Book.”
 - **After:** “Writing and Speaking Strategies and Applications” activities give students opportunity to apply the new vocabulary as they write or orally present their responses to the books.

Systematic vocabulary development activities promote word analysis skills, decoding skills, and accuracy in silent and oral reading. The direct instruction helps students understand and develop new vocabulary.

- **Vocabulary Lists** are read together and students learn to use the glossary to determine meanings of new words.
- **Word Study** questions and activities help students explore the meaning and structure of words.
- **Reproducible activities** focus on specific vocabulary words and strategies for determining meanings of words.

Fluency Instruction

Research Findings

- ✓ Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and quickly. Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Because fluent readers do not have to concentrate on decoding words, they can focus their attention on what the text means. (*Put Reading First 2001, p. 22*)
- ✓ Adequate progress in learning to read English beyond the initial level depends on having established a working understanding of how sounds are represented alphabetically, sufficient practice in reading to achieve fluency with different kinds of texts written for different purposes, instruction focused on concept and vocabulary growth, and control over procedures for monitoring comprehension and repairing misunderstandings. (*Snow, Burns & Griffin 1998, p. 223*)
- ✓ There are several ways that your students can practice orally rereading text, including student-adult reading, choral (or unison reading), tape-assisted reading, partner reading, and readers' theatre. (*Put Reading First 2001, pp. 27-28*)

Research Implications

Second Chance Reading offers audio-assisted learning with a variety of texts for struggling readers. The word-for-word audio support engages students and encourages them to read more on their own.

Students have opportunity for oral reading and rereading of passages during the "Reading the Book" step of the Lesson Plan.

Writing Instruction

Research Findings

- ✓ Intensive writing including instruction connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will have to perform well in high school and beyond. (*Reading Next 2004, p. 4*)
- ✓ This study of higher and more typically achieving schools bore out the theoretical expectations and identified the following distinguishing features of instruction in the higher performing schools: (a) skills and knowledge are taught in multiple types of lessons; (b) tests are deconstructed to inform curriculum and instruction; (c) within curriculum and instruction, connections are made across content and structure to ensure coherence; (d) strategies for thinking and doing are emphasized; (e) generative learning is encouraged; and (f) classrooms are organized to foster collaboration and shared cognition. (*Langer 2001, p. 877*)
- ✓ The experimental manipulation of knowledge of text structure has also been examined in a number of studies. Taylor and Beach (1984) found that seventh graders' understanding of expository text structure was enhanced as a result of opportunities to write summaries, in contrast to merely responding to questions. (*Tierney & Shanahan 1991, p. 258*)
- ✓ Based on an integrated communication arts approach, the procedures included speaking, listening, and reading for all students, with writing the crucial variable of difference between experimental groups. Based on a written posttest results indicated that the treatment group generated significantly higher quality ideas than the control group including few text based ideas and more class brainstorming ideas, and produced more coherent, integrated writing samples. (*Konopak, Martin & Martin 1990, p. 19*)

Research Implications

Second Chance Reading "Writing and Speaking Strategies and Applications" activities build skills in organizing information for writing. These activities help students write responses to literature, using the text and their own experiences to support their work.

- **Narrative:** Students write a story from their own experience.
- **Response to Literature:** Students write their opinion on various aspects of the story.
- **Researching Information:** Students write about an idea from the story, using reference tools to gather information and ideas.

The *Second Chance Reading* Teacher Guides follow a writing process instructional model to support students as they write a research report on a topic of their interest. Writing tools with teacher support guide students through the reading process and include:

- Choosing a topic and main ideas
- Finding and recording sources
- Taking notes
- Building an outline
- Writing a draft
- Editing checklist
- Assessing progress

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