

STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LITERACY LESSONS™ IN THE UNITED STATES

The following draft Standards and Recommendations for Literacy Lessons™ in the United States have been developed by a taskforce from the North American Trainers' Group (NATG). The development work began in September 2008 and has been reviewed by the North American Trainers' Group at subsequent NATG meetings.

The implementation and early use of Literacy Lessons™ remains under research control. New research will continue to impact and shape eventual Standards and Recommendations for Literacy Lessons™ in the United States.

Meeting the literacy needs of struggling readers and writers requires all teachers to have high levels of expertise in literacy teaching and learning. The purpose of Literacy Lessons is to prepare specialist teachers to provide effective one-to-one instruction to a wide range of elementary age students who need more intensive literacy teaching than is available in classrooms or small groups.

Introduction

Literacy Lessons™ is a new, exploratory, intervention initiative developed by Marie Clay, internationally known researcher in early literacy learning and the prevention of reading difficulties. Four descriptors characterize Literacy Lessons:

1. Individually designed and individually delivered instruction for students from special populations who are struggling to develop an early literacy processing system.
2. A recognized course for qualified teachers with ongoing professional development. (Training teachers initially and with continuing professional development.)
3. Ongoing research and evaluation. (Commitment to ongoing data collection, program evaluation, and research.)
4. The establishment of an infrastructure and standards to sustain the implementation and maintain quality control. (Commitment to ongoing evaluation and commitment to program integrity.)

In this document, we describe standards and make recommendations for initiatives using the name Literacy Lessons. These descriptions apply to the delivery of Literacy Lessons in English or Spanish. English implementation occurs through collaboration with Reading Recovery teacher leaders and University Training Centers. Spanish implementations occur through collaboration with Descubriendo la Lectura teacher leaders and University Training Centers.

I. Standards for the Selection and Teaching of Children in Literacy Lessons

Selection of Children

The primary goal of Literacy Lessons is to serve a broad range of students who are struggling in the beginning phases of learning to read and write. The instructional procedures in Literacy Lessons are particularly designed to help young readers and writers develop effective early literacy processing systems.

Standards for the selection of children are:

- Students in Literacy Lessons include a wide range of elementary students who are not in Reading Recovery/DLL but need more intensive literacy instruction than whole class or small group teaching in order to develop effective early processing systems for literacy.
- Literacy Lessons students may include elementary students who have been identified for any form of special education considered appropriate by educators in the school or district.
- Literacy Lessons students may include elementary students who are struggling to learn to read and write in English as a second language.

Standards for teaching children are:

- Students receive one-to-one instruction in Literacy Lessons until they can continue to learn by their own efforts with ongoing teaching and support.
- Individual instruction is consistent with the procedures described in *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005).
- Individual tutoring may continue as long as needed.
- The progress of children receiving Literacy Lessons service is monitored in every lesson through systematic observation and recording of reading and writing behaviors. This information is analyzed and used to inform teaching decisions.

II. Standards for the Selection and Preparation of Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists

Standards for the selection of Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists are:

- Educators who enter the Literacy Lessons professional development course are certified teachers who have experience and expertise in working with the population of their specialty.
- These specialists are seeking additional skill in helping students overcome literacy difficulties to develop effective early reading and writing systems.

Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists are prepared according to these standards:

- **University Training Center:** The preparation for Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists is offered by an accredited higher education institution that has a Reading Recovery University Training Center.

- ***Training Courses on Literacy Lessons:*** The initial year-long training consists of graduate level credit courses across one academic year by a registered Reading Recovery teacher leader in consultation with the University Training Center. The courses must meet the contact hour requirement of the credit granting institution.
- ***Transition Course on Working with Special Populations:*** After the initial year, a transition course may be recommended for the further preparation of Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists. The course is designed by the trainer at the University Training Center and provided by the teacher leader. The course and professional development activities must meet the contact hour requirement of the credit granting institution. Following successful completion of the training and transition courses, teachers are designated as Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists. *Recommendation: When this course is part of a UTC requirement it is recommended that the course be implemented across an academic year.*
- ***Ongoing Professional Development:*** After initial training, and possibly transition, teachers participate in ongoing Literacy Lessons professional development, provided by the teacher leader in consultation with the trainer at the University Training Center. Literacy Lessons professional development continues as long as teachers are designated as Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists.

Literacy Lessons Course Content and Expectations

Literacy Lessons teachers participate in Literacy Lessons training delivered by a Reading Recovery teacher leader or trainer (either as an intact group or as a cohort within a Reading Recovery class).

1. ***In Year 1 within the training period,*** participants will work with students who are having difficulty learning to read, in daily, one-to-one, lessons. Students may be selected from a regular first grade classroom or from special populations. Across the year, teachers provide two individual lessons daily to the selected students (approximately 4 students for the year). They learn to use the teaching procedures in *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005). The focus is on learning how to foster the development of effective reading and writing processing systems. A central component of the design is the observation of teaching behind a one-way glass. Teachers keep complete records on each child as a basis for instruction.
2. ***Transition to working with special populations. Where this is required by a University Training Center, transition may*** involve a shift to using *Literacy Lesson Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005) with the instruction of students from special populations (see above). Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists provide one-to-one lessons to at least one student from special populations. They learn to design and deliver literacy lessons for these individual students from special populations and participate in at least 4 professional development sessions that focus specifically on working effectively with special populations. These sessions include observation of teaching behind a one-way glass or in cluster groups.

3. ***Beyond the training period***, Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists continue to work with at least 1 student in individual lessons and participate in professional development as long as they are designated Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists. They continue to keep complete records on each student and use them as a basis for instruction and monitoring of student progress. Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists continue to report data on students.

III. Standards for Teacher Leaders Working with Literacy Lessons

Literacy Lessons Teacher Leader Qualification

Literacy Lessons courses are taught by experienced, qualified, and currently registered Reading Recovery teacher leaders.

Standards for teacher leaders who teach the Literacy Lessons courses include:

- participation in professional development focused on *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay,2005).
- demonstrated expertise and experience in using this text in the teaching of children.
- demonstrated expertise in the preparation and ongoing professional development of Reading Recovery teachers.

Standards for Teacher Leader Preparation and Ongoing Professional Support include:

- participation in specifically designed professional development to develop teacher leader expertise in supporting teachers who work with special populations of students experiencing literacy difficulties. Professional development should be undertaken prior to teacher leaders offering Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialist courses
- preparation to work in partnership with educators who have specialist qualifications in working with students from special populations.
- preparation to work collaboratively with administrators in school districts who have responsibility for service to special populations of students.

IV. Standards for University Trainers Working with Literacy Lessons include requirements that:

- The University Training Center should be a fully accredited institution of higher education with a currently registered Reading Recovery University Trainer.
- University trainers design and provide a preparation program for teacher leaders who will teach Literacy Lessons courses.
- University trainers provide ongoing professional support for teacher leaders who teach Literacy Lessons courses, and provide ongoing professional development for Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists. This support may include communication with and involvement of special population teachers, supervisors, and administrators.
- Reading Recovery university trainers work collaboratively to design courses for Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists, including core experiences and a set of

core references. University trainers may consult with researchers and specialists who have expertise in the education of special populations

- University trainers engage in professional development designed to expand their skills in supporting teacher leaders and teachers of special populations to use *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005).
- On a yearly basis, university trainers will share processes and results of Literacy Lessons training and implementation.

V. Standards for Data Collection and Reporting of Results of Literacy Lessons

Literacy Lessons is a research-based intervention. A key principle of operation is that data are collected on every student served. Standards for data collection and reporting of the results of Literacy Lessons include requirements that:

- Literacy Lessons students are those who receive individual lessons from a Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialist who is using the procedures outlined in *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2005).
- Entry and exit scores on measures of literacy achievement are recorded and reported for every Literacy Lessons student. To inform teaching, teachers will administer the measures contained in *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2001).
- Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists also administer and report scores on the Slossen Oral Reading Test. [Note: A comparable Spanish assessment will be sought.]
- Other measures may be added depending on the student's needs and/or district requirements.
- Data on individually taught Literacy Lessons students must be collected in a standardized way. It is highly recommended that data are collected electronically through the International Data Evaluation Center at The Ohio State University.
- These data are analyzed by University Reading Recovery Trainers.
- Data are used to determine the effectiveness of literacy lessons for students from special populations.
- Data are also used in a formative way to increase the effectiveness of Literacy Lessons.
- An annual report is prepared and distributed on the results of Literacy Lessons.

VI. Standards for Literacy Lessons Implementation

Any school or district seeking to implement Literacy Lessons follows a carefully designed implementation plan. Literacy Lessons is designed to operate in school settings as a partnership among classroom teachers, special education teachers, teachers of English language learners, and administrators who support all of those areas of educational service. Standards for the initial and continuing implementation of Literacy Lessons are:

- Literacy Lessons is designed to support special populations of students. It is implemented in schools that have Reading Recovery or are in the process of establishing Reading Recovery. Literacy Lessons may also be implemented in schools that exclusively support special populations of students, such as schools for the deaf. Reading Recovery may not necessarily already be in place within schools that exclusively meet the needs of special populations, such as schools for the deaf.
- Prior to announcing the availability of a Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialist course, the teacher leader should consult with the trainer at the affiliated University Training Center and develop an implementation plan.
- Teacher leaders and trainers engage in ongoing communication that includes: collaborative course design, submission of written course syllabi, reporting of the progress of the class, consultation about issues and problems that arise, collaboration with school district administrators, and provision for ongoing professional development of Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists.
- Maintain affiliation with a University Training Center offering the course for Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists.
- Contribute to the development and operation of a school team to monitor the progress of Literacy Lessons students.
- Collaborate with administrators and special population supervisors concerned with the implementation of Literacy Lessons in the school.
- Communicate with parents, classroom teachers, and other appropriate school personnel throughout the year.
- Administer the Observation Survey or Instrumento de Observacion and the Slossen as appropriate throughout the year.
- Submit data on Literacy Lessons students as required.
- Literacy Lessons Intervention Specialists and teacher leaders work closely with parents to secure appropriate permissions for entry and exit data reporting, to discuss progress, and to guide home support.

Recommendation for the implementation of Literacy Lessons are as follows:

- *Educators in the school should examine the results of Literacy Lessons closely each year by looking at entry and exit scores, numbers of students served, and other indicators of progress. They prepare a report on student progress and teacher and parent response each year.*