



2011 Texas Literacy Annual Conference:

Judy B. Cheatham, PhD

Reading Is Fundamental

August 8, 2011



Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)

Vision

Our vision is a literate America in which all children have access to books and discover the joy of reading.

Mission

Our mission is to motivate young children to read by working with children, their parents, and community members to make reading a fun and beneficial part of everyday life.





1966 - 2011





The Three Legs of Reading Is Fundamental





Books for Ownership Program Overview



What?

- Book distributions (380 mil books)
- Activities that encourage reading
- Family & community involvement

Where?

- 17,000 sites such as schools, libraries, Head Starts, clinics and community centers
- All 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia

Who?

- RIF targets organizations serving children with an average of 75% or greater free



What the Research Says...



7 Things You Need to Know to Read

- **The alphabet**
- **Sounds and symbols**
- **Concept of print**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Spelling patterns**
- **Lots of sight words**
- **Reflective practice**



What Do We Know about Children & Reading?

- **A child from a low-income family enters kindergarten with a listening vocabulary of 3,000 words, while a child from a high-income family enters with a listening vocabulary of 20,000 words. ***
- **88% of children who have difficulty reading at the end of 1st grade display similar difficulties at the end of 4th grade.**



What Do We Know about Children & Reading?

- **75% of students who are poor readers in 3rd grade remain poor readers in high school; after 3rd grade, cognitive demands increase yearly.**
- **36% of American 4th graders read below the “Basic” level on the National Assessment of Education Progress.**



What Do We Know about Children & Reading?

- Among 4th graders, 58% of African-American, 54% of Hispanic and 52% of American Indian children scored below the “Basic” level on the NAEP.
- 54% of all 4th graders eligible for free or reduced lunch scored below the “Basic” level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.



“It’s pretty hard to demonstrate early reading with children when there are no books in the home. One mom said, ‘It’s not that I don’t think books are important. It’s just that **I can’t buy books instead of diapers.**’ ”





BICS vs. CALP

- **Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (2 years to develop for ELLS)**
 - **Develop through social situations in informal school settings (cafeteria, playground, school yard) (Cummins, 1984; Echevarria, Voght Short, 2008)**



BICS vs. CALP

- **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (5-7 years for ELLS)**
 - **Content vocabulary**
 - *appears in specific areas of knowledge (math, science, social studies, literature)**
 - *not used frequently**
 - *thus more difficult for learners to internalize (Harmon, Wood, & Hedrick, 2006)**



BICS vs. CALP

- **Vocabulary must be taught**
 - **Explicitly**
 - **Directly**
 - **w/multiple opportunities to practice; Calderon (2007) says 12! (Coleman, 2010)**



Six Barriers to Parental Involvement

Many times,

- Parents do not believe they can help.
- Parents do not feel welcome at school.
- Schools do not provide advice to parents.
- Schools fail to alert parents about problems.
- Parents feel intimidated by the school or vice versa.
- Communication is not two-way.

(Wherry, 2000)



Along with the “Usual Suspects”

- **Lack of childcare**
- **Lack of transportation**
- **Lack of common language/culture**

(Tinkler, 2002)



Remember...

- **35-40 million adults have not finished high school (US census)**
- **Of the 35-40 million without a high school diploma, 80% read at 8th grade levels or below**
- **46% or 93 million adults have reading, math and/or English language deficiencies**

(National Assessment of Adult Literacy,



Why Is the Books For Ownership Concept Important?

- **Fourth-graders who reported having 25 books or more at home had higher scores on the NAEP reading test than children who reported they didn't have that many books**
- **Only 43% of fourth graders report that they read for fun on their own almost every day. Among eighth graders, only 19% report reading for fun on their own almost daily**



Why Is the Books For Ownership Concept Important?

- **Fourth-graders who reported reading for fun daily scored higher on the NAEP reading test than peers who reported reading for fun less frequently**
- **Two-thirds of American classrooms have fewer than 50 children's books, and almost 60% of childcare centers buy fewer than one book per child a year**



Access to Print Materials Improves Children's Reading: A Meta-Analysis of 108 Most Relevant Studies Shows Positive Impacts



An affiliate of the American Institutes for Research (AIR)



What impact, if any, does access to print materials have on children's educational outcomes?

- **Improves children's reading performance**
- **Instrumental in helping children learn the basics of reading**



What impact, if any, does access to print materials have on children's educational outcomes?

- Causes children to read more and for longer lengths of time**
- Produces improved attitudes toward reading and learning among children**



Six Components to Effective Pre-K – 3rd

Grade Programs, Hot off the Press

- **Aligned Curriculum, standards, assessment pre-K - third grade**

- ***Consistent instructional approaches and learning environments**



Six Components to Effective Pre-K – 3rd

- Grade Programs, Hot off the Press**
- **Availability of pre-K for total population all day**
- **Teachers with appropriate pre-K – 3 licensure**
- **Small class size**
- ***Partnership between school and family**

(Hernandez, 2011)



Double Jeopardy

- **Longitudinal study**
- **Sample of 3975 students (b. 1979-1989)**
- **Families surveyed every two years to determine family economic status**
- **Children's progress in reading tracked using Peabody Individual Achievement Test Reading Recognition subtest, to age 19**



Double Jeopardy

- **Does not indicate drop-outs**
- **Separated according to skill, THREE groups**
 - **Proficient, basic, below basic**
- **Separated according to income, THREE groups**
 - **Never poor, sometimes in poverty, more than half a life in poverty**



Double Jeopardy

Findings:

- **One in six - not reading proficiently at third grade do NOT graduate from high school on time, four times greater than for proficient readers.**
- **One in four – 23% below basic reading drop out or fail to finish high school on time, compared to one in ELEVEN (9%) basic readers and 4% proficient readers.**



Double Jeopardy

- **More than One in five – 22% children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school, compared to 6% of those who have never been poor.**
- **One in three – 32% children spending more than half their lives in poverty do not graduate from high school.**
- **Almost all – 98% of the BEST third grade readers who have NEVER lived in poverty graduated from high school on time.**



Economic Investment

- **Study of Integrated pre-K – 3rd approach in Chicago** →
- **Improved educational outcomes led to Long term societal returns:**
- **\$8.24 return of every \$1.00 invested in first four-six years of school, including pre-K.**

(Reynolds, Temple, White, and Ou, 2011)