



What Every SLMS Should Know about Research in Reading

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Two Schools of Thought on Reading: **Free Voluntary Reading**

- **Free Voluntary Reading: People who say they read more read better (Krashen, 2004). Free choice and access to books are important elements in reading engagement (Schraw et al., 1998). This includes the choice to pursue personal reading interests.**

Two Schools of Thought on Reading:

Direct Instruction

- **Direct Instruction:** Research has shown that many children who read at 3rd grade level in 3rd grade will not automatically become proficient comprehenders in later grades (Office of Educational Research and Improvement & Rand Reading Study Group, 1999). Therefore, teachers must teach comprehension explicitly. Research shows teacher need expertise to do this, but receive inadequate pre-service training (Ibid.)

Free Voluntary Reading:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Maximize access to books through: extended library hours; lending “collections” for classrooms; book fairs; advocacy for strong material budgets; supplementary sources of through grants and other sources.**
- **Advocate for free choice of genre, reading levels, and types of reading, including alternative media such as periodicals and non-print media, for summer reading lists, curriculum-based inquiry units, and research guides that support inquiry.**

Free Voluntary Reading:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Promote the use of literature circles in classrooms and as part of inquiry learning; adapt literature circles to information circles for inquiry.**
- **Free Voluntary Reading is pleasant. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991; Nell, 1988). Avoid extrinsic rewards for reading!**

Direct Reading Instruction:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Integrate reading for comprehension strategies with inquiry learning and other teaching situations.**
- **Collaborate with classroom teachers to integrate reading strategies with classroom instruction. Students need time to practice the strategies and to learn when to apply them.**

Direct Reading Instruction:

Implications for Practitioners

- **The primary goal of reading for comprehension is to raise students awareness of their comprehension breakdown and to supply the tools they need to monitor their comprehension and apply the strategies.**
- **Reading skills are thinking skills. They help students activate prior knowledge, apply what they know to new situations, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize (create). They are taught in the context of intellectual challenges that require critical thinking.**

The Reading-Spelling Connection:

What the research says...

- Direct instruction in spelling has limited effects (Rice, 1897).
- Dropping formal spelling instruction has no effect on accuracy (Corman, 1902).
- Good writers delay editing concerns until the final draft; premature editing is a predictor of the frequency of writing blocks (Rose, 1985).
- Premature concern with form and editing relates to writing blocks for Chinese, as well as English as a foreign language students (Lee & Krashen, 2003).

The Reading-Spelling Connection:

What the research says...

- **There was no difference between 4th and 5th graders who had spelling instruction and those who did not (Hammill, Larsen & McNutt, 1977).**
- **There was no difference in accuracy between high school and college students who said they knew the rules and used them and those who said they knew the rules and did not use them, and those who said they did not know the rules. Many of the students who studied the rules could not recall them (Cook & O'Shea, 1912).**

The Reading-Spelling Connection:

What the research says...

- **The most effective way to build spelling confidence is reading. This is supported by studies showing that each time readers read a passage containing words they cannot spell, they make a small amount of progress in acquiring the correct spelling. Some studies show positive correlations between spelling competence and the amount of reading done.**

The Reading-Spelling Connection:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Advise writers to delay focusing on correct spelling until their ideas are firmly in place, while, at the same time, building up spelling competence through massive reading.**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

What the research says...

- **Literacy instruction needs to explicitly present the relationship between reading and writing (Goodman & Goodman 1983; Shanahan 1988).**
- **Children need to view themselves as readers and writers to build knowledge about the forms and functions of the language (Goodman & Goodman 1983; Mayo 2000; Miller 1982).**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

What the research says...

- **Reading and writing should occur naturally to construct meaning in everyday situations (Miller 1982; Wilson 1981).**
- **Reading and writing are interdependent processes that are essential to each other and mutually beneficial (Holt and Vacca 1984).**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

What the research says...

- **As writing improves through daily communicative use, reading is enhanced (Goodman & Goodman, 1983).**
- **The relationship between reading and writing is based on communication. Both should develop as a natural extension of the child's need to communicate (Wilson, 1981).**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

What the research says...

- **A reader needs to make sense of what the writer is communicating through the text and the writer need to make sure that his/her message is clear and understood by the reader. Children should make the connection that other children will be reading their writing, so that children will need to have a better sense of the writer and write better with the sense of the reader. Children need to develop their communicative skills by having the opportunities to read and write (Aulls, 1985; Holt & Vacca 1984; Smith 1983).**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

Implications for Practitioner

- **Implement the reading-writing connection by integrating instruction (Morrow, Pressley, Smith & Smith, 1997), preferably in collaboration with classroom teachers.**
- **Inquiry projects involve writing, as well as reading, in the various stages of the inquiry as well as in the final learning outcomes.**

The Reading-Writing Connection:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Peer review and self-assessment are included as part of the process of collecting information and presenting the learning outcome.**
- **Sticky notes, the website WallWisher, and other methods that facilitate manipulation of text and collaborative learning are incorporated in the inquiry.**
- **Apply the stages of the writing process to the inquiry process.**

Implications for Practitioners:

Writing for the Reader Activity

(Smith, 1997 ; Ramonda 1997)

- Students work in pairs; one is the Reader, the other the Writer.
- Writer composes the first sentence of a paragraph. Reader reads the sentence silently and poses a question about Writer's sentence. This question, posed aloud to Writer, may ask for additional information about the topic or clarification of what was stated by Writer.
- Writer answers Reader's question, adding a sentence to the Writer's sentence.

Implications for Practitioners:

Writing for the Reader Activity

Continued (Smith and Ramonda 1997)

- Reader reads new sentence and asks an appropriate question pertaining to it.
- The activity continues as Writer composes and Reader interacts with the text for several more sentences before exchanging roles and repeating the activity.
- Students discuss their complementary roles and their responsibilities to each other as readers and writers. They then try their hands at composing, both Reader who asks questions and Writer who provides answers.

English Language Learners (ELLs) and Reading: **What the research says...**

- **The mother tongue of ELLs is important for students' overall personal and educational development (Baker, 2000; Cummins, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).**
- **More reading results in better TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) performance (Constantino, Lee, Cho & Krashen, 1997); Gradman & Hanania, 1991).**

English Language Learners (ELLs) and Reading:

What the research says...

- **Children's knowledge and skills transfer across languages. The transfer can be two-way: when the mother tongue is promoted in school (e.g. in a bilingual education program), the concepts, language, and literacy skills that children are learning in the majority language can transfer to the home language. In short, both languages nurture each other when the educational environment permits children access to both languages (Cummins, 2000).**

English Language Learners (ELLs) and Reading: **What the research says...**

- **Include reading materials in your library collection in the language(s) of ELL students.**
- **Include reading comprehension strategies in teaching ELL students to use information.**
- **Work with ELL teachers to develop inquiry units for intermediate and advanced ELL students.**
- **Provide assured experiences, including library-specific vocabulary, for beginning ELL students to help them feel comfortable in the library.**

Gender and Reading:

What the research says...

- **Boys' reading interests include sports-related books, informational books, adventure stories, fantasy, historical fiction, and science fiction. They like literature with elements of humor, mystery, danger, and lessons or themes that could be applied to their own lives (Weih, 2008).**
- **Boys are reading less fluently because of "a lack of engagement" (Cresswell, 2003).**

Gender and Reading:

What the research says...

- Statistically, 56 percent of the boys read only to get information, compared with 33 percent of the girls (UNESCO and OECD).
- Nearly half of the girls said they read for at least thirty minutes a day, compared with less than one-third of the boys (Ibid).

Gender and Reading:

Implications for Practitioners

- **Identify boys' interests by surveying them and collecting circulation statistics.**
- **Develop the non-fiction section of the collection with a focus on boys' interests.**
- **Include titles for boys in reading lists, as well as resource lists for inquiry units.**
- **Offer a reading club for boys.**

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