



Reading 1<sup>st</sup> is dedicated to helping states and local school districts establish high-quality, comprehensive reading instruction for all children in kindergarten through third grade. The legislation requires high quality professional development that prepares K-3 teachers to teach the essential components of reading instruction. The program:

- Identifies five essential elements of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension).
- Requires reading programs to be based on scientifically based reading research.
- Requires **classroom based** screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring and outcome assessments for reading.
- Provides funding for professional development at the state, district, and school levels

The purpose of Reading 1<sup>st</sup> as part of the No Child Left Behind Act is to "ensure that all children in America learn to read well by the end of third grade" (US Dept of Ed, 2002b, p.1).

East Carter obtained the Reading 1<sup>st</sup> grant for the 2004-05 school year. It was renewed for 2005-06. We will reapply this spring for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final year of the grant. With the grant money we:

- Purchased all components of a scientifically based core reading program (Scott-Foresman) and purchased needed supplies to support the core program. This core was evaluated and identified as meeting the requirements of SBRR. It provides systematic and explicit instruction in the 5 Big Ideas of Reading.
- Provided professional development for all K-3, Title I, and special education teachers designed to help the teachers teach the core reading series, complete scientifically based assessment, and change instruction according to student needs indicated by assessment results.
- Hired a reading coach.

As part of the guidelines, Kindergarten students receive 90 minutes of uninterrupted core reading instruction each day. First through third grade students receive 120 minutes of uninterrupted core reading instruction each day. Each classroom teacher has at least one hour of push-in help daily. People

pushing in are the Title I reading teachers, the speech and language pathologists, a special education teacher, and 6 para-professionals. These individuals assist the classroom teachers with small group instruction. They are available because no student can be pulled out during the core instruction time.

Assessment drives instruction. Students are assessed weekly using core materials. Additionally, every student in grades K-3 is given the DIBELS Benchmark test three times each year (September, January, May). This is an individually administered test which covers the 5 Big Ideas at the appropriate level. Students who achieve at or above average for their grade level are considered to be at Benchmark. Reading research indicates those students are getting what they need to be successful readers from the core instruction. At least 80% of students should achieve Benchmark with good core instruction.

Some students score below Benchmark and are considered to be at some risk for reading failure. These students receive an extra 30 minutes per day of reading instruction in their classrooms using material provided in the core. Material in the core is leveled for 3 levels of instruction. That extra instruction is carved out of the 120 minutes provided in first through third grade and is provided in small groups. These students are progressed monitored every two weeks to see if the extra instruction is working. If it is not, the teacher adjusts the instruction.

Some students score significantly below Benchmark and are considered to be at high risk for reading failure. These students receive the extra 30 minutes of instruction in their classrooms and also receive an additional 30 minutes of instruction in pull-out intervention groups of 3 to 5 students. The Scott-Foresman Early Reading Intervention kit is used with kindergarten and some first grade students. Voyager Passport is used with students in first through third grade. (This program is also used by Mrs. Trotter.) The students in these groups are progress monitored every one to two weeks. People providing this intervention are the reading coach, Title I teachers, special education teacher, and trained para-professionals.

DIBELS is used for Benchmark Testing and for Progress Monitoring. At the kindergarten level the DIBELS tests Initial Sound Fluency, Letter Naming Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Word Use Fluency. First grade tests those areas then in January begins testing Oral Reading Fluency and Re-tell Fluency. Second grade and third grade focus on Oral Reading Fluency and Re-tell Fluency. Certain components have been identified by research to indicate if a student is progressing satisfactorily. Those components are progress monitored at least every two weeks while the student is receiving supplemental instruction or intervention.

In order to provide appropriate scientifically based instruction for each student, teachers have received professional development in:

- Scientifically based reading research and the 5 Big Ideas of Reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension)
- Aligning SBRR to Grade Level Expectations
- Practical instructional strategies
- Active and brain based learning
- How to use the core reading series
- Classroom management
- Workstations
- Differentiated instruction
- Flexible grouping
- DIBELS
- Palm pilots
- Smartboards
- Coordinating Reading 1<sup>st</sup> instruction with inquiry based learning
- Supplemental and intervention programs for students at some risk or at high risk of reading failure

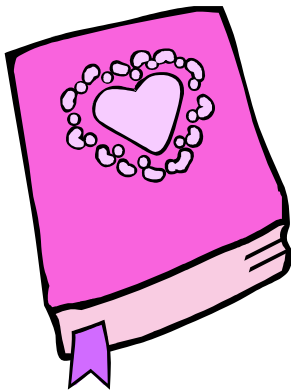
Some of this professional development was provided in pre-service days on site. Some has been provided during the school day. Some was provided by the RPDC at Poplar Bluff or SEMO. Much of it has been provided during weekly after-school collaboration time. Some has been provided through grade level meetings, coaching, and modeling. All of the professional development has provided follow-up of some kind.

An integral part of Reading 1<sup>st</sup> is the Reading Coach. The coach:

- Provides SBRR professional development opportunities that are tailored to the needs of the Reading 1<sup>st</sup> staff.
- Demonstrates effective strategies for implementing the five essential elements of reading instruction.
- Explains why certain strategies, assessments, materials, and organizational structures are effective.
- Demonstrates expertise in the full range of assessments required for Reading 1<sup>st</sup> (screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome)
- Provides single-topic mini-presentations on needed strategies.
- Plans and delivers large group workshops.
- Serves as a resource for new materials and ideas.
- Consults with teachers on a one-to-one basis or facilitate teams of teachers in identifying areas of need in learning strategies, assessments, classroom organizational and management practices and program requirements.

- Seeks ways to act as a bridge between the state department, the administration and the teachers in designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating the school's reading program.
- Observes teachers in the classroom and gives feedback.
- Organizes and schedules push-in people and pull-out groups.
- Organizes and assists with assessment (Benchmark, Diagnostic, Progress Monitoring, MAP preparation)
- Helps teachers evaluate data to improve instruction for the class and for individual students.

Another integral part of scientifically based reading instruction is teamwork. Teachers collaborate at grade level and among grade levels so that all students will have access to the same curriculum. Collaboration and cooperation are essential to the success of the project. A steering committee meets at least once each quarter to assist the coach and the teachers as they make decisions.



At the heart of Reading 1st good, systematic, explicit classroom instruction provided by a well-trained and well-supported classroom teacher. Assessment is used to direct instruction for all students. Teachers are relentless. If students do not learn they are taught again and again. If students are proficient with the core instruction, they are provided more. Time on task is maximized and student learning is maximized as students are engaged with learning tasks.