

ELL:

The Comprehension/ Fluency Connection

**National Reading Recovery
Conference**

Barbara Brannon

barbarabrannonb@aol.com

February 6, 2006

Developmental Reading Behaviors Over Time

Emergent

- Uses mostly information from pictures
- May attend to and use some features of print
- May know some words and how print is used
- Responds to text with personal experiences

Early

- Relies less on pictures
- Increased control of early reading strategies
- Knows several frequently used words
- Reads familiar text with fluency
- Exhibits some strategies: monitoring, cross-checking, self-correction

Transitional

- Full control of early strategies
- Uses multiple sources to gain meaning
- Large core of frequently used words
- Relies little on pictures
- Reads longer, more complex texts

Self-Extending

- Uses all sources of information flexibly
- Reads with phrasing and fluency
- Reads multiple genres
- Reads much longer, more complex texts

Advanced

- Acquires important tools for learning through reading
- Higher-level strategies still under development
- Sustains reading

Adapted from:

- *Matching Books to Readers: Using Leveled Books in Guided Reading K–3* by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Supporting ELL Needs at TESOL Language Acquisition Levels

Characteristics of the ELL	Literacy Needs
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicates nonverbally• Observes during instruction• Relies on pictures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repetitive sentence structures• 1–4 sentences per page• Up to 6 words per sentence• Direct photo support
Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manipulates objects to communicate• Uses basic words and phrases• Relies on pictures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some repetitive sentences• 1–4 sentences per page• Usually 6 words per sentence• High photo support
Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occasionally joins in conversations• Uses phrases and sentences• Relies on high-frequency words, known patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple sentence structures• 3–4 sentences per page• Up to 8 words per sentence• Moderate photo support
Level 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engages in discussions• Uses complete sentences• Begins to use multiple strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mostly simple sentence structures• 5–6 sentences per page• Up to 8 words per sentence• Moderate photo support

Nonfiction Text Features

Fonts and Special Effects	Text Organizers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Titles and headings• Boldfaced and color print• Italics• Bullets• Captions• Labels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Index• Preface• Table of contents• Glossary• Appendix
Graphics	Adapted from: Vacca, Richard T. and Joanne L. Vacca. <i>Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum.</i> New York: Longman, 1999.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diagrams• Cutaways• Cross-sections• Overlays• Distribution maps• Word bubbles• Charts, tables, graphs• Framed text• Illustrations and photographs	

Tips for Answering Text-Dependent Questions

Vocabulary	Reread and look for clues to help you define the unfamiliar word. Can you find a synonym, a definition, text clues, or picture clues?
<i>Find It!</i> Level 1 Comprehension	The answers are right in the text. Reread to locate facts and details to answer the questions.
<i>Look Closer!</i> Level 2 Comprehension	The answers are in the text, but you may need to look in more than one place to find them.
<i>Prove It!</i> Level 3 Comprehension	You'll have to be a detective. You won't find the exact answers to these questions, but you will find clues and evidence to support your inferences and conclusions.
<i>Take It Apart!</i> Level 4 Comprehension	As you reread, ask yourself, "How did the author organize the information? Why did she/he write the book?"

Text Structure Indicators

Cause and Effect/ Problem and Solution	Sequence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• because• since• therefore• consequently• as a result• if . . . then	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• on (date)• not long after• now• as• before• after• when• then• finally
Description	Comparison and Contrast
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to begin with• most important• also• in fact• for instance• for example	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• however• but• on the other hand• instead• either . . . or• although• while

NAEP's Oral Reading Fluency Scale

- Level **1** Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur, but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax.
- Level **2** Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage.
- Level **3** Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some smaller groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present.
- Level **4** Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.
Listening to Children Read Aloud, 15. Washington, DC: 1995.

Reader's Theater

Sample Teaching Plan

Day One

- Give each student a copy of the script.
- Introduce the title, author, setting, and characters.
- Provide any needed background information on the topic.
- Display, pronounce, and define difficult vocabulary words.
- Ask students to make predictions about the text.
- As students follow along, read the entire script aloud, modeling fluent expression.
- Discuss the text and confirm or revise predictions. Allow students to connect text ideas to their prior knowledge, to other texts they have heard or read, and to their own experiences.
- Ask students for other words to add to the vocabulary list.
- Reread tricky parts and have students follow along and then echo.

Day Two

- Review vocabulary words.
- Provide a brief mini-lesson on one aspect of fluency.
- Have the class read the entire script chorally with you.
- Assign parts. Make sure students understand that the number of lines a character has is less important than the expression he or she brings to the lines.
- Explain and model behavior expectations for rehearsal.
- Have characters practice independently as you circulate around the room helping with pronunciation, expression, and reading rate.
- Have characters rehearse their parts with partners and get feedback.
- Have each character read his or her part for you. Give tips for fine-tuning.

Day Three

- Go over the criteria on the Reader's Theater Assessment Tool to remind students of the ideals they are working toward.
- Have a full read-through with “side-coaching,” where you interject specific requests to the character (not the student) such as, “Frog, please read that line once again as if you're frightened,” or “This is the climax . . . All soldiers get ready to talk a bit faster.”
- Invite readers to give one another positive feedback and suggestions using character names.
- Decide on a staging area and draw a diagram with circles for stools, Xs for readers, and arrows to show movement. Practice entrances and exits.
- Decide on any needed performance items, such as nametags or simple props, and allow time for students to gather and prepare them.

Reader's Theater Sample Teaching Plan

continued

Day Four

- Remind students of behavior and performance expectations.
 - Conduct a full dress rehearsal.
 - Debrief as needed.
-

Day Five

- Perform the play for classmates, other classes, parents, staff members, administrators, or other guests. Videotape if possible.
 - Celebrate!
-

Follow-Up Activities

- Meet with students in individual conferences and help them complete the Reader's Theater Assessment Tool.
- Have students write about their experience in a reflection journal.
- Watch the video and have students set personal or group goals for their next performance.
- Extend students' thinking by having them suggest alternate titles for the script, write new endings, or add additional characters or scenes.
- Analyze the text utilizing graphic organizers such as story maps, Venn diagrams, character trait lists, cause-and-effect charts, or timelines.
- Select words to analyze for word families, prefixes and suffixes, or synonyms and antonyms.
- Conduct further research on the script topic.
- Discuss an issue addressed in the script.
- Invite students to illustrate their scripts and compile them in folders or binders.
- Invite students to take their scripts home to read to their families.
- Conduct running records of students' independent reading to guide your decision for future script selection.

Source: Katherine Scaper, 2005

Make Reader's Theater Accessible for English-Language Learners

- Adapt books into “call-and-response” scripts. For example, in *Green Eggs and Ham*, you can be Sam and the students can chorally read the other character's part.
- Select books in which words and phrases are repeated often.
- Assign an English-language learner and a peer model to the same part.
- Spend time practicing chorally.
- Retype the script using an enlarged font and double-spacing. Make sure a character's speech doesn't overlap onto the next page.
- Exaggerate facial expressions, gestures, and movements to enhance meaning.
- Utilize pictures and props to reinforce vocabulary.
- Coordinate scripts with current content-area topics so students will have adequate background knowledge.
- Invite students to retell the story in their own words.
- Pay special attention to multiple-meaning words or figures of speech.

To integrate writing with Reader's Theater . . .

- Have students create invitations, flyers, or advertising posters for their upcoming performances; design tickets; write articles for the school or community newspaper; or write their own scripts.