

Section 3.

Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura Sites

A. Preparation to Establish a Site

A Reading Recovery site is defined as one or more school systems employing and supporting one or more teacher leaders to train teachers for Reading Recovery implementation (Descubriendo la Lectura sites must employ a Descubriendo la Lectura–trained teacher leader). Establishing and implementing a Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura site requires careful study and strong commitment from the sponsoring agency (school district, university, or consortium). Prior to initiation of a local training site for teachers, the following recommendations and requirements should be carefully examined and discussed with representatives of a university training center (see Section 7).

- 3.1. Study Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura carefully and arrange for awareness sessions for key personnel, including, if feasible, visits to an existing site.
- 3.2. Develop a long-range implementation plan that is consistent with Reading Recovery standards and guidelines.
 - 3.2.1. Develop a long-term budget that includes projections for the following: salaries for the teacher leader and teacher positions, a training facility, materials, training and tuition costs, support for teacher leader and teacher professional development requirements, travel for networking, adequate secretarial service easily accessible to the teacher leader, and site visits from the university training center.
 - 3.2.2. Make decisions about staffing and the utilization of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teachers' time for the remainder of their day.
 - 3.2.3. Work towards the goal of full coverage at the building level, which means sufficient staffing and teaching time to service the most at-risk children in the first-grade cohort, which might range from 15% to over 20% in most schools and a higher percentage in some schools where risk factors for failure are greater. In order to demonstrate what Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura can do, it is strongly advised to provide full coverage at each individual school entering the program rather than distribute Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teachers thinly to many schools.

- 3.3. Designate as site coordinator an administrator who is well-informed and willing to learn about Reading Recovery (or Descubriendo la Lectura when appropriate).
- 3.4. Obtain long-term commitment to full implementation at the system and school levels.
- 3.5. Assure commitment at the district or school level to arrange travel for children for behind-the-glass sessions.
- 3.6. Allocate funds for the position and training of one or more teacher leaders. Release these individuals for full-time teacher leader training for one academic year at a university training center recognized by NATG. (See materials from each university training center for requirements and fees.)
- 3.7. Alternatively, employ a trained teacher leader registered with RRCNA as an active, qualified Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura teacher leader.
- 3.8. Submit a site application to the university training center with which the site will affiliate.
- 3.9. Negotiate through the regional university training center to establish graduate credit for courses (to be taught by a registered teacher leader) for teacher training.
- 3.10. Provide an appropriate training facility for training classes, including construction of room with one-way glass, a suitable sound system, and meeting and office space. (Specifications for the training facility may be obtained from the regional university training center or from RRCNA.)
- 3.11. If the site is interested in implementing Descubriendo la Lectura, approval must be obtained from the affiliated university training center, and appropriate arrangements must be made.

B. Standards and Guidelines for Establishment of a Site

1. Teacher Selection

Careful selection of appropriate teachers is critical to the effectiveness and success of Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura. Use of an interview and selection committee including the site coordinator and teacher leaders is strongly recommended to assure selection of the strongest candidates.

The adoption of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura represents an investment in the development of teacher expertise to supply high-quality one-to-one tutoring, which will be dependent upon the quality and commitment of the teachers recruited and selected for the program.

Standards and Guidelines for teacher selection are specified in Section 4, Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura Teachers.

2. Training Classes

Training classes, based on the principles of collaborative discussion of in-progress lessons, have been shown to be a critical element of Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura. The intent of the standards is to assure that these learning conditions are in place.

Standards

- 3.12. Training classes must consist of at least 8 and no more than 12 teachers.
- 3.13. The training class must earn graduate academic credit through a university or college with the teacher leader serving as instructor.
- 3.14. The class must meet the contact hour requirements of the credit-granting institution.
- 3.15. At least 80% of class sessions (or a minimum of 18 sessions, whichever is greater) over the academic year must each include two behind-the-glass lessons.

3. Selection of Children

Selection of children for Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura is based upon the following rationale provided by Marie Clay:

Reading Recovery is designed for children who are the lowest achievers in the class/age group. What is used is an inclusive definition. Principals have sometimes argued to exclude this or that category of children or to save places for children who might seem to “benefit the most” but that is not using the full power of the program. It has been one of the surprises of Reading Recovery that all kinds of children with all kinds of difficulties can be included, can learn, and can reach average-band performance for their class in both reading and writing achievement. Exceptions are not made for children of lower intelligence, for second-language children, for children with low language skills, for children with poor motor coordination, for children who seem immature, for children who score poorly on readiness measures, or for children who have...been categorized by someone else as learning disabled.¹ (p. 60)

¹ From “Reading Recovery Surprises” by M. M. Clay, 1991. In D. DeFord, C. A. Lyons, & G. S. Pinnell (Eds.), *Bridges to Literacy* (pp. 55–74). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Standards

- 3.16. In all decisions, the lowest-achieving children (based upon Observation Survey or Instrumento de Observación tasks) must be selected for service first.
- 3.17. Economy of time in selecting and serving children is critical to program efficiency. At the beginning of the year, administer Observation Survey or Instrumento de Observación and begin service to children within 2 weeks. During the year, selection of children should occur within 2 days of an available teaching slot.
- 3.18. Students selected for Descubriendo la Lectura must be in a bilingual education program receiving Spanish reading instruction throughout first grade.

Guidelines

- 3.19. To make accelerated progress, Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children need to be in heterogeneously grouped classes with exposure to peer models, appropriate curriculum, and opportunity to move to average grade-level performance.
- 3.20. The development of a school team for Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura is strongly urged. The team can help monitor program progress, communicate information about the program, and assist with difficult selection decisions.
- 3.21. It is strongly recommended that programs be designed for bilingual students in order to strengthen language and literacy in both languages.

C. Standards and Guidelines for Operation of a Site

In order to sustain an innovation, basic understandings about the purposes, rationales, and processes of the innovation must be shared. In addition to shared understandings, ownership must be felt by the stakeholders who collaborate to provide the structures for successful implementation within the system. All stakeholders must be perceived to have a responsibility for the success of each child served.

The roles of teacher leader and site coordinator are critical in maintaining Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura program integrity and effectiveness. Continued participation in the Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura network and support from university training centers are the means through which teacher leaders maintain their understanding of research and theoretical developments in the field as well as their analytical and teaching skills. Site

coordinators attend meetings organized by the university training center and are urged to join RRCNA in order to receive its publications.

Administrators are cautioned to refrain from stretching the roles of the Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teacher leaders and teachers beyond their training expertise and beyond their ability to continue to perform their primary role successfully. When this happens, program results may suffer.

Standards

- 3.22. Maintain a training facility with a one-way glass and sound system for behind-the-glass lessons.
- 3.23. Maintain affiliation with a registered university training center.
- 3.24. Submit data on an annual basis to the IDEC using approved format, procedures, and materials.
- 3.25. Assure that a site report is developed annually and a copy is submitted to the university training center.
- 3.26. Continue to choose the lowest-achieving children for service first in all selection decisions.
- 3.27. Support the teacher leader in monitoring and supporting the progress of trained Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teachers.
- 3.28. Assure consistent, daily, 30-minute, individual lessons for all Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children on all days that school is in session.
- 3.29. Assure utilization of all available teaching time by avoiding delays in assessment, selection, and the teaching of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children.
- 3.30. Provide continuing contact services for trained teachers.
- 3.31. Provide resources annually for teacher leader participation in professional development opportunities through the affiliated university training center and for site visits and consultation from the university training center.
- 3.32. Provide resources annually for teacher leader attendance at the Teacher Leader Institute and one RRCNA-approved Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura conference.
- 3.33. Assure that Descubriendo la Lectura teachers and teacher leaders hold bilingual certification or are nearing completion of requirements for certification.

Guidelines

- 3.34. Assure that first-grade classes are heterogeneously grouped. To make accelerated progress, Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children need exposure to peer models, appropriate curriculum, and opportunity to move to average grade level performance.
- 3.35. Limit the number of teachers supported and monitored by the teacher leader to 42, or considerably fewer than 42, dependent upon such considerations as distance, the number of teachers per school, and the number of districts.
- 3.36. Consult the teacher leader on planning and budgetary issues. Teacher leader training develops understanding of the rationales for Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura program elements and standards as well as an awareness of factors influencing implementation plans and decisions.
- 3.37. Continue to train appropriately selected teachers toward the goal of full implementation.
- 3.38. Collect and maintain additional data at the school, district, and site levels.
- 3.39. Obtain written agreements specifying ongoing fiscal, operational, and professional development responsibilities with all other districts for whom the site will train teachers.
- 3.40. Provide means for supporting and interfacing with other programs in the school or district.
- 3.41. Examine the need for a second training and observation facility to accommodate an expanding number of training activities in districts with multiple teacher leaders.