



Reading Recovery® Council  
of North America

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **READING RECOVERY FOUNDER, MARIE CLAY, DIES**

COLUMBUS, OH -- The Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) sadly announces the death of Marie M. Clay, the founder of Reading Recovery and a world-renowned early literacy expert. Dr. Clay, 81, died Friday morning at Mercy Hospice in Auckland, New Zealand, after a brief illness.

“We are deeply saddened at the loss of Marie Clay, whose dedication to children and literacy research has improved the lives of struggling students,” said RRCNA President David Moriarty. “Even as we mourn her passing, we celebrate the richness of her life and the unparalleled contributions she has made to the lives of millions of children and teaching professionals worldwide.”

Reading Recovery is a highly effective short-term intervention of one-to-one lessons for struggling readers and writers, which is now implemented in five countries and three languages. Since its introduction in the United States in 1984, Reading Recovery has helped more than 1.6 million struggling first graders catch up with their peers and meet grade-level expectations.

“Marie Clay’s extensive research over the past 50 years has given educators the tools to better assess and better meet the needs of students having difficulty learning to read and write,” Moriarty said. “Her keen insights and understanding of the learning process have contributed greatly to both Reading Recovery and to the early literacy community worldwide.”

The sustainability of Reading Recovery is assured through trademarks established by Dr. Clay which define the quality of Reading Recovery and protect the investments made in the accelerated education of young, struggling students. The International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization (IRRTO) and North American Trainers Group (NATG) provide leadership to ensure the ongoing quality and integrity of Reading Recovery.

“Marie Clay not only had vision and foresight with regard to teaching and learning, she put in place structures and processes that would ensure the integrity and future of Reading Recovery around the world,” said NATG President Connie Briggs. “She worked to ensure Reading Recovery would continue to provide opportunities for all children to learn to read and write. It will take many, many people around the world to carry on the work that she started.”

Dr. Clay is the author of numerous books and articles developed from her continual research into early learning processes. Recognizing the impact of expanding the range of children who can be helped, her most recent book incorporates the one-to-one focus of Reading Recovery with new theory and research. *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part One and Part Two*, published late in 2005, now serves as both the “guidebook” for Reading Recovery teaching, and as a textbook for other early literacy professionals.

“Marie Clay’s international colleagues feel most fortunate to have benefited from her astute intellect, her wise counsel, and her gracious friendship,” said Mary Anne Doyle, IRRTO Executive Committee Chair. “Her profound contributions to our academic community and her remarkable influence on child development and on literacy will continue to inform our understanding. We embrace and honor her enduring legacy as we mourn our loss.”

The Reading Recovery Council of North America is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the vision that children will be proficient readers and writers by the end of first grade.