



Early Childhood Literacy Intervention Curriculum Development

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading skills must be learned early and well in a child's education, as literacy provides access to important school curriculum. Five-year-old Kindergarteners are expected to learn to read. First graders are expected to be fluent readers.

❖ Many children who struggle with reading in first grade, fall behind and rarely catch up (Juel, 1988; Stanovich, 1986).

❖ The National Early Literacy Panel (2008) reported that more than one-third of America's fourth graders read at levels so low they cannot complete their schoolwork successfully.

Two federally sponsored reviews of the literature, *Preventing Reading Difficulties* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) and *The National Reading Panel Report* (NRP, 2000), have documented the effectiveness of explicit and systematic early literacy interventions and have recommended providing more intensive early interventions to help all children read fluently by the end of third grade.

REFERENCES

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- Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Stanovich, K. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 21, 360-406.

PURPOSE

The purpose of my project was to examine the early literacy intervention curriculum and associated practicum experience in the ECE teacher education program, with the intent to integrate Early Steps reading strategies into the training.

BACKGROUND

1. FCS Early Childhood program has a successful collaboration with the University of Utah Reading Clinic (UURC). Since 2003, Next Steps intervention is offered to undergraduate early childhood education students. Next Steps is for second to sixth graders "stuck" between primer and end-of-second-grade level.
2. For the last four summers, the UURC and FCS launched "Getting Ready For First Grade," an intervention program for exiting at-risk kindergarteners, using the Early Steps model for students reading below a primer level. Early childhood educators (pre-service and practicing educators as well as graduate students) participated in this U based intervention.
 - a) Developing knowledge and skills that are essential for effective reading intervention.
 - b) Learning how to effectively execute guided reading.
 - c) Developing learning strategies for systematic word study, fluency and comprehension.



PROJECT EXPERIENCES

My project focused on training in early literacy intervention and incorporating this information into the ECE teacher education curriculum.

A. Intervention Training

1. I trained in Next Steps Intervention Program, *SP ED 6631, Assessment & Intervention*, Spring 2010.
 - This provided me with the opportunity to learn and practice firsthand the skills that the ECE students were gaining in their required Next Steps practicum.
 - The two 45-minute weekly individual tutoring sessions were monitored by trained reading specialists from the Reading Center, and followed by additional training on intervention techniques and strategies.
2. I trained in Early Steps program, *FCS 6950, Getting Ready for First Grade*, Summer 2010.
 - I received daily training, and tutored children from Mountain View Elementary, Edison Elementary and St. Ann's Elementary schools.

B. Tutoring

1. Next Steps practicum, *SP ED 6631*, Spring 2010.
 - I was responsible for tutoring a fifth grade student who was reading on a second grade level.
2. Early Steps school-based tutoring, Fall 2010-Spring 2011, Edison Elementary School, Salt Lake School District.
 - My work at Edison involved tutoring two children four-five days each week, and attending eight three-hour training sessions.
 - The purpose of my participation was to observe how Early Steps training functions in a public school setting, and to better understand ways to integrate the strategies into the classroom teaching.

C. Foundational Coursework

1. *SP ED 6631, Assessment & Intervention*, Spring 2010.
2. *FCS 6220, Early Childhood Language & Literacy Learning*, Fall 2010.
 - a) Conducted a pre-assessment of the students to evaluate their knowledge and confidence in teaching young children literacy and reading skills.
 - b) Helped prepare aspects of the course syllabus that related to Early Steps program integration.
 - c) Attended class regularly.
 - d) Presented lectures on literacy strategies used in Early Steps.
3. *FCS 6291, Action Research Seminar*, Spring 2011. *Cohort Student-Teachers K-3*
 - a) Helped prepare aspects of the course syllabus that related to integration of Early Steps.
 - b) Attended the seminar regularly.
 - c) Evaluated the implementation of Early Steps strategies in the students' teaching in K-3.
 - d) Worked with students in their public school placements with their literacy instruction.
 - e) Conducted a post-assessment to evaluate the students' knowledge and confidence in teaching young children literacy.

RESULTS

As a result of my project:

- 1) I have outlined multiple strategies to train Early Childhood students in the Early Steps intervention model by integrating the information at various levels in their training program.
- 2) I have helped develop an Early Steps practicum option for ECE students.



FUTURE PLANS

- 1) I will work with the UURC support staff for the FCS Summer practicum, *Getting Ready for First Grade*.
- 2) I will be working as coordinator of the Early Steps and Next Steps practicum for university students, in collaboration with Dr. Kathleen Brown and the UURC.