

Reading Mastery (SRA/McGraw-Hill)

Why Is This Strategy Useful?

Reading Mastery is an effective direct-instruction program designed to provide explicit, systematic instruction in English language reading. The program begins by teaching phonemic awareness and sound-letter correspondence, and moves into word and passage reading, vocabulary development, comprehension, and building oral reading fluency. Later lessons continue to emphasize accurate and fluent decoding while teaching students the skills necessary to read and comprehend and to learn from expository text. The program can be used with English language learners (ELLs), as research found it to have potentially positive effects on the reading achievement of this group of students.

Description of Strategy

Reading Mastery uses 30- to 45-minute lessons designed to facilitate teacher-student interactions and active student participation. Lessons are designed to be fast paced and interactive. Students are grouped by similar reading level, as determined by program-placement tests. The program includes placement assessments and a continuous monitoring system. A typical lesson includes seven to nine short activities that encompass multiple strands of content, such as phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, sounding out words, word recognition, vocabulary, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. The overarching teaching routine repeated throughout the curriculum is composed of the following steps: modeling new content, providing guided practice, and implementing individual practice and application. Lesson scripts act as a guide for teachers. Signals and group responses are used to keep students involved and on task, and to control lesson pacing.

Research Evidence

At least one randomized controlled study investigated the effects of supplemental reading instruction using Reading Mastery on ELLs. This 2-year study included 256 kindergarten through third-grade students. The intervention group received their usual reading instruction, supplemented by Reading Mastery. Students in the control group were put into an appropriate level of SRA (Science Research Associates) Corrective Reading. Both programs included components that facilitate the development of beginning reading skills, but the programs differed in instructional methodology. The intervention had statistically significant effects on reading achievement. Findings showed that using Reading Mastery had substantively important effects for oral reading fluency, letter-word identification, word attack, and reading vocabulary.

Sample Studies Supporting This Strategy

Gunn, B., Biglan, A., Smolkowski, K., & Ary, D. (2000). The efficacy of supplemental instruction in decoding skills for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in early elementary school. *The Journal of Special Education, 34*, 90–103.

A study evaluated the effects of supplemental reading instruction for 256 students in kindergarten through Grade 3 (158 Hispanic). Children who received the supplemental reading instruction performed significantly better on measures of word attack, word identification, oral reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension after 15 to 16 months of instruction.

The intervention group received their usual reading instruction supplemented by Reading Mastery. Students in the controlled group used SRA Corrective Reading. Both programs include components that facilitate the development of beginning reading skills, but the programs differ in instructional methodology. This was a two-year study that included a one-year follow-up. The study found that the intervention had statistically significant effects on reading achievement. The program had substantively important effects for four of the five measures immediately after implementation of the program (oral reading fluency, letter/word identification, word attack, and reading vocabulary but not passage comprehension). After one year, three of the five outcome measures showed substantively important effects (word attack, reading vocabulary, and passage comprehension but not oral reading fluency or letter/word identification).

Additional Resources

Gunn, B., Smolkowski, K., Biglan, A., & Black, C. (2002). Supplemental instruction in decoding skills for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in early elementary school: A follow-up. *The Journal of Special Education* 36, 69–79.

Reading Mastery. <http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/sra/readingmastery.htm>