

Outline for Al Granowsky's presentation
Achieving Literacy in the Primary Grades

Formal Presentation

A.) What Brain Research tells us about how children learn

Four key findings:

1. Children are unique individuals
2. Emotions affect learning
3. A context for learning is needed
4. Multiple pathways for learning

B) From "Put Reading First-The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read"-

1. Phonemic Awareness
2. Phonics Instruction
3. Fluency Instruction
4. 4. Vocabulary Instruction
5. Text Comprehension Instruction

C) Benefits of using nonfiction in the primary grades

D) Richard Allington's-"What I've Learned about Effective Instruction"-the 6 T's

- 1.Time
- 2.Texts
- 3.Teaching
- 4.Talk
- 5.Tasks
- 6.Testing

Informal Discussion

WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US ABOUT HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Four Key Findings:

I. Children are Unique Individuals

Research confirms what teachers observe daily—the *uniqueness of what individual children know and how they learn* due to differences in learning styles, prior knowledge, and emotional responses.

The challenge for the teacher is to get to know the children as individuals, including each child's level of reading skills and areas of interest.

A one size fits all program will set up a number of students to failure, but an attempt to assess and meet all the differences among children in the primary classroom can overwhelm even the most talented teacher.

The key issue here is the need for differentiated instruction

II. Emotions Affect Learning

Studies of how the brain functions have determined that *emotions drive learning and support memory*. That means children's emotional responses will strongly influence what is actually learned and remembered.

Above all, teachers need to recognize that threat is detrimental to learning.

III. A Context for Learning is Needed

The brain constructs meaning through establishing patterns, relevance, emotions and connections. Isolated bits of information that do not fit into a context are more difficult to remember.

Consequently, *prior knowledge is the foundation* upon which children learn new information. Barraging children with new information will not prove as effective as helping children add new information to what they already know.

IV. Multiple Pathways for Learning

Information comes to us through our senses. That information may be visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or tactile (VAKT)

A~~Rate\$

Please arrange the following strategies $fmul_{kM8t}(8t'$
top) to greatest (at bottom) impact 'WII t ~t.tt>
their capacity to , '-..f. " ~

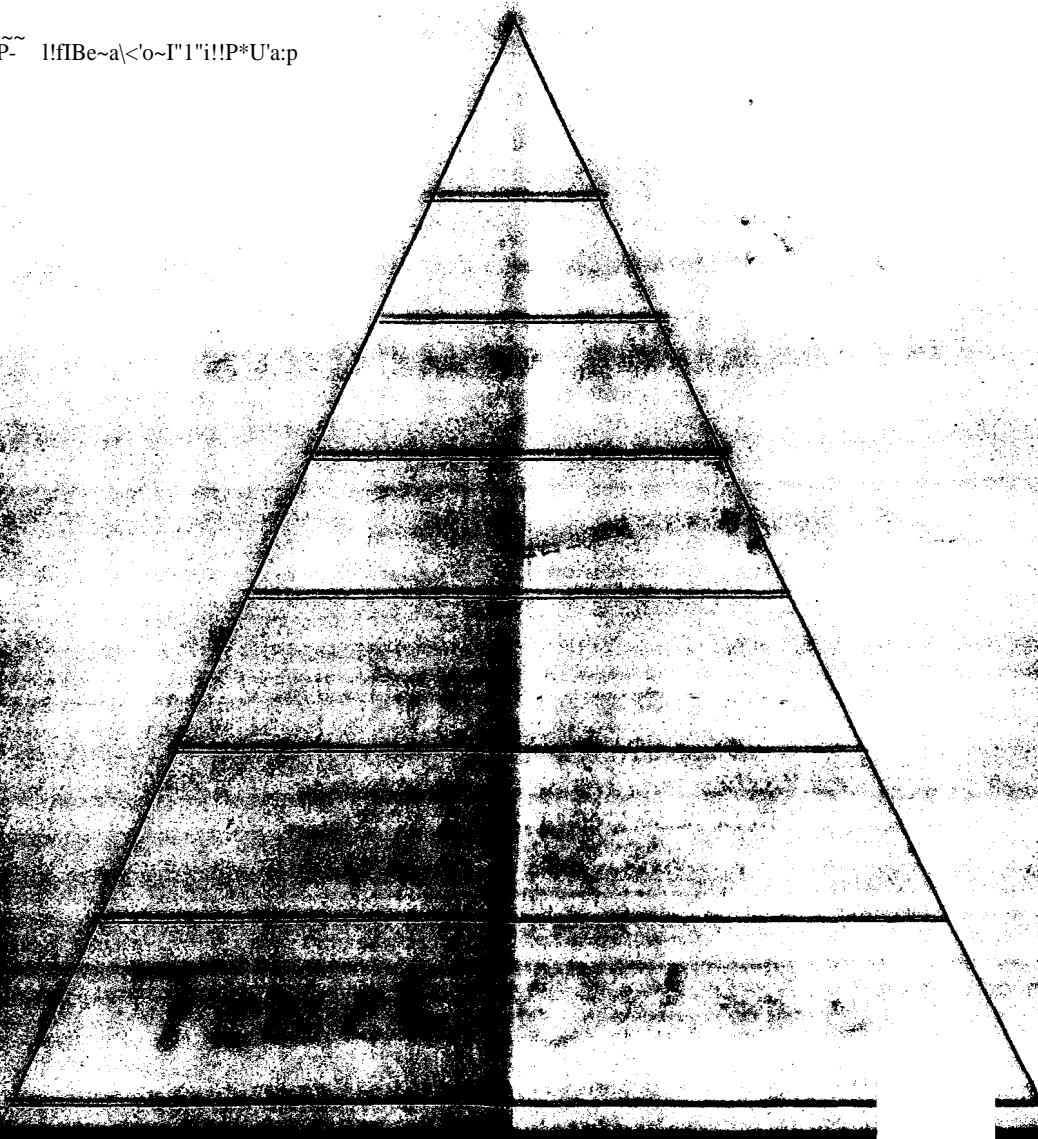
□ lecture



Q' ~vtmlftl

a , ~titi~

!~

!!fBe~a<o~I"l"!!P*U'a:p





Summing up

Phonics Instruction

- helps children learn the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.

Phonics instruction is important because

- it leads to an understanding of the alphabetic principle—the systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds.

Programs of phonics instruction are effective when they are

- **systematic—the** of instruction includes a carefully selected set of letter-sound relationships that are organized into a logical sequence.
- **explicit—the** programs provide teachers with precise directions for the teaching of these relationships.

Effective phonics programs provide

- ample opportunities for children to apply what they are learning about letters and sounds to the reading of words, sentences, and stories.

Systematic and explicit phonics instruction

- significantly improves children's word recognition, spelling, and reading comprehension.
- is most effective when it begins in kindergarten or first grade.

Summing up

Reading fluency is

- the ability to read a text accurately and quickly.

Reading fluency is important because

- it frees students to understand what they read.

Reading fluency can be developed

- by modeling fluent reading
- by having students engage in repeated oral reading.

Monitoring student progress in reading fluency

- is useful in evaluating instruction and setting instructional goals
- can be motivating to students.

if



Summing up

Vocabulary refers to

- . the words we must know to communicate effectively.
- . **Oral** vocabulary refers to words that we use in speaking or recognize in listening.
- . **Reading** vocabulary refers to words we recognize or use in print

*Vocabulary is important
because*

- . beginning readers use their oral vocabulary to make sense of the words they see in print
- . readers must know what most of the words mean before they can understand what they are reading.

Vocabulary can be developed

- . **indirectly**, when students engage daily in oral language, listen to adults read to them, and read extensively on their own.
- . **directly**, when students are explicitly taught both individual words and word learning strategies.

∴ I
∴ J ∴

Summing up

Text comprehension is
important because

- comprehension is the reason
for reading.

Text comprehension is

- . purposeful.
- . active.

Text comprehension
can be *developed*

- by teaching comprehension
strategies.

Text comprehension
strategies can be *taught*

- . through explicit instruction.
- . through cooperative learning.
- by helping readers use strategies
flexibly and in combination.



Benefits of Using Content Area Readers in the Primary Grades

.Literacy Development

Like narrative texts, properly leveled content area readers can support literacy development. They enable children to-

- Experience print conventions
- Practice word attack skills
- Increase vocabulary
- Develop fluency
- Learn comprehension strategies
- Improve writing skills
- Develop enthusiasm for reading

.Familiarity with unique features of informational texts

- table of contents
- captions and labels
- glossary and index
- boldface type
- diagrams
- headings
- bulleted lists

.Learn national standards-based content in science, math, social studies and health

.Avoid the "Fourth-Grade" slump

Get

Young readers may be more *apt to* reach for content area readers about "real life" rather than narrative tales

BY ALVIN GRANOWSKY, Ed.D.

At long last, the word is spreading that content area readers/informational books can be used in beginning reading programs to support both literacy development and the learning of national standards-based content. When I've made recent visits to primary classrooms, I've observed a far greater number of informational books used in the beginning reading program - and that's great!

Benefits from using content area readers/informational books with young readers:

1. Certain children, often boys, are far more excited by content such as reptiles, mammals and faraway people and places found in informational books rather than by narrative tales. I've found that kids reach out for

Alvin Granowsky, an *author of texts and readers used in schools throughout the nation*, is a former Director of Reading and Language Arts for the public schools of Dallas, TX and Greensboro, NC.

"real-life" books such as these, their eyes wide with excitement over the photos and the information to be gained.

2. Informational books can help youngsters learn basic vocabulary and concepts that will serve as a foundation for subsequent growth in content areas.
3. As research indicates, children need and benefit from instruction in the special features of informational books/content area readers. This is a terrific way to teach your students about the table of contents, index, glossary, boldface headings and captions.
4. Using informational books in a guided reading program for the primary grades may help students overcome the "fourth grade slump" later on. This slump may reflect the shift in instructional focus from storybooks to textbooks. The shift can leave some kids with a lack of comfort and skill in dealing with informational text features along with insufficient background knowledge upon which to build.

AtaIJ
dents
come
their
for yo
vidual
skill, I
infom
vocab
order.
WI
gram
teach
instn
neem
may I
new]!
avail.
enabl
readh
tent.
conte
Tb
awan
attern
ate iI
progr
self! I
uniq!
Getli
priIrn
infor
not F
dents
cona
areas
matb
Pr
carel
gram
UsiII!
houn
and I
fn
gram
tead
at e<i