



READING RECOVERY® IN MICHIGAN

An Oakland University Executive Summary 2015-2016

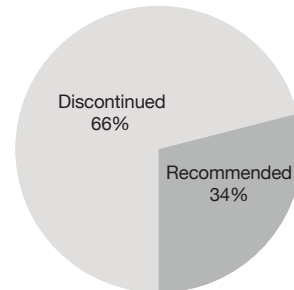
INTRODUCTION

Reading Recovery® (RR) is a program of professional development for teachers: university faculty train and professionally develop teacher leaders who, in turn, develop teachers to work with first grade children having extreme difficulty learning to read and write. Since its establishment in the United States, RR has served nearly 2 million children. Oakland University is one of only 18 universities in the United States to serve as a RR university training center. Since its establishment in Michigan in 1991, RR has trained over 1,436 teachers who have served almost 109,670 Michigan first graders.

HISTORY OF READING RECOVERY

Internationally renowned developmental psychologist and distinguished literacy researcher, Dr. Marie M. Clay, developed a set of research-based teaching procedures found to reverse literacy failure in a short period of time. Reading Recovery, implemented first in New Zealand, came to the United States in 1984 when the first class of teachers was trained at The Ohio State University. Now implemented worldwide, RR has expanded not only in the U.S. and New Zealand, but also in Australia, Bermuda, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, the United Kingdom and U.S. Department of Defense Schools. The not-for-profit collaborative effort among schools and universities trains teachers to work with the lowest-performing first graders. Children are identified for service based on their scores on the six tasks of *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*¹ (Clay, 2013) with the lowest performing children selected for service first (Lose & Konstantellou, 2005). Teachers trained in RR use the assessment information and sensitive observation to design individual literacy lessons that are responsive to each child's skills and abilities. Children meet with their RR teacher for 30-minute lessons each day for an average of 12-20 weeks. The goal is to accelerate children's progress to within-average levels of reading and writing in a short period of time so that they can catch up to their peers and benefit from good classroom instruction (Schwartz, 2005). Researchers attribute this accelerative progress to the

Figure 1: Intervention Status of Reading Recovery Students with Complete Interventions: Michigan, 2015-2016



responsive instructional activities provided in the one-to-one setting by teachers who have participated in RR professional development. Reading Recovery also serves as a pre-referral option to identify children who need longer-term specialist support (Jones, et al., 2005). Schools that implement RR assign teaching staff flexibly to maximize children's access to the intervention and to permit teachers to apply their RR knowledge in their other instructional roles (Lose & Best, 2011).

READING RECOVERY IN MICHIGAN, 2015-2016

During the 2015-2016 school year, 274 RR teachers (36 of whom were in-training) in 164 schools in 57 school districts taught 2,218 students in RR. When they were not teaching RR, these teachers also taught 9,345 additional students – an average of 42.1 students each day – in their other instructional roles as classroom, special education, Title I reading, and ESL teachers. Teachers trained in RR received professional development from 14 RR teacher leaders who themselves received professional development in group settings from the RR faculty at Oakland University (OU). These teacher leaders also received individualized professional support delivered by the OU RR faculty in their schools and at their regional RR sites throughout Michigan. Reading Recovery students represented a full range of diversity (see Table 1). While most schools used state and local funds and Title I Part A to partially fund RR, a few schools used IDEA-EIS, IDEA-RTI or IDEA-Special Education funds as additional sources to partially fund the intervention.

Table 1: Reading Recovery Demographics: Michigan, 2015-2016

Students	
55%	Male
64%	Free And Reduced Lunch
15%	Some Disability
52%	White, Not Hispanic
32%	Black, Not Hispanic
7%	Hispanic, Any race
2%	Multiple Races, Not Hispanic
3%	American Indian/Alaskan Native, Not Hispanic
2%	Asian, Not Hispanic
1%	Other Races, Not Hispanic
<1%	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic
Languages	
(Other than English) Spoken in the Home	
47%	Spanish
16%	Arabic
15%	Some other language
4%	Chinese
3%	Russian
3%	Urdu
2%	Hmong, Miao
2%	Vietnamese
1%	French
1%	Romanian
6%	Combined: Bengali, Cantonese, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Laotian, Portuguese, Tagalog, Thai

RESULTS

2,218 students were enrolled in RR in Michigan in 2015-2016. A full RR intervention lasts up to 20 weeks. Thirty-eight percent of students received interventions that lasted between 10-14 weeks, 29% between 15-19 weeks, and 22% of the interventions lasted 20 weeks total. Not all of the students who were enrolled received a full intervention; their interventions were incomplete due to a slot opening up for their lessons late in the year (21%, N=457), because they moved (4%, N=89), and for other reasons (2%, N=46).

Of the 1,624 students who received a complete intervention (about 30-35 hours of instruction total), 66% (N=1,066) reached average performance levels in reading and writing and their interventions were discontinued (see Figure

1). The remainder of the complete intervention children, 34% (N=558), made progress but not sufficient enough to reach the rigorous criteria for the "discontinued" designation. These students were recommended for follow-up support in their classrooms and in small group instructional settings. Of those students who received a complete RR intervention, 2% (N=29), were referred for LD reading.

The change in classroom reading group placement from fall to year-end for students who received complete interventions and those whose lessons were discontinued is another indication of students' progress in literacy as illustrated in Figure 2. At the beginning of the year, 43% of these students were well below average and 42% were below average. However, at the end of the school year, 63% were average, 22% were above average, and 4% were well above average. Having received RR, these once lowest performing learners have now moved to within average performance levels, thus resembling the normal distribution of students in grade one.

¹In 2011, the National Center for Response to Intervention awarded high ratings for the survey tool central to Reading Recovery's evaluation and instruction (D'Agostino, 2012). *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* received highest possible ratings for scientific rigor and is posted on the Screening Tools Chart (rti4success.org/screeningTools). The Observation Survey is used not only in Reading Recovery, but also widely used by classroom and specialist teachers, and researchers.

EFFECT OF READING RECOVERY ON READING ACHIEVEMENT

Figure 3 demonstrates the effect of RR instruction on the reading achievement of the lowest performing literacy learners in the fall of first grade and compares their progress to the National Random Sample of their peers and three additional categories of RR eligible students.

National Random Sample Children – The red line at the top shows the National Random Sample's progress on text reading at three points in time. These students start the year at a higher text reading level and make progress throughout the year.

Reading Recovery (RR) Children served in the fall semester – The blue line shows the progress of RR children who were selected during the fall semester for RR service. Initially the lowest-performing children, they catch up to the Random Sample by mid-year when their RR lessons end and continue to maintain their progress.

Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children that did not have other literacy support – The green line shows the progress of TNI students (RR eligible children) that did not receive other literacy support. These children start out the year above the RR children

and the other two groups of TNI students, but fall behind them at mid-year through year's end. Had they received RR, these children would have made accelerative progress and reduced the gap between themselves and the National Random Sample by year's end.

Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children who received other literacy support from a Reading Recovery (RR) teacher – The purple line shows the progress of the RR eligible children who did not receive RR, but did receive other literacy support from a RR teacher. These children were low at the beginning of the school year and the literacy support from a RR teacher was not enough to reduce the achievement gap. Had they received the one-to-one RR intervention, it is likely they would have achieved accelerative progress and reached within-average performance levels by year's end.

Tested Not-Instructed (TNI) Children who received other literacy support from a non-Reading Recovery (RR) teacher – The turquoise line shows the progress of the RR eligible children who did not receive RR, but did receive other literacy support from a non-RR teacher. These children were low at the beginning of the school year and the literacy support from a non-RR teacher puts them behind the TNI children who received other literacy support from a RR teacher. Had they received RR, these children would have achieved accelerative progress and reached within-average performance levels by year's end.

Juel's (1988) research showed that children who are low performing in literacy in first grade are very likely to remain low performing in fourth grade. The findings illustrated in Figure 3 demonstrate that the lowest performing children require the daily one-to-one instruction provided by RR. Provided with

contingent, responsive teaching by specially trained and professionally developed teachers, even the lowest-performing children can make accelerative progress, benefit from good classroom instruction, and continue learning with their peers (McEneaney, Lose, & Schwartz, 2006).

Figure 3: Comparison of Text Reading Level for Reading Recovery and Random Sample Students to Tested Not Instructed Students who did and did not Receive Supplemental Literacy Instruction: Oakland University - Michigan, 2015-2016

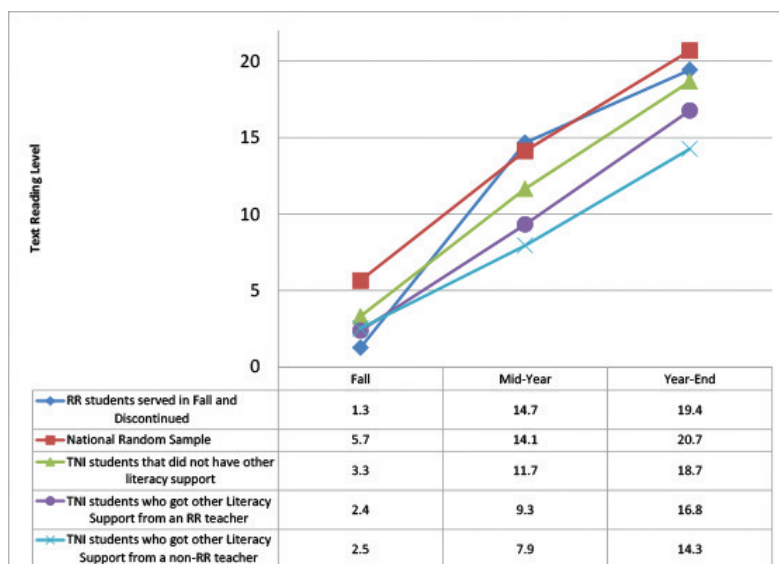
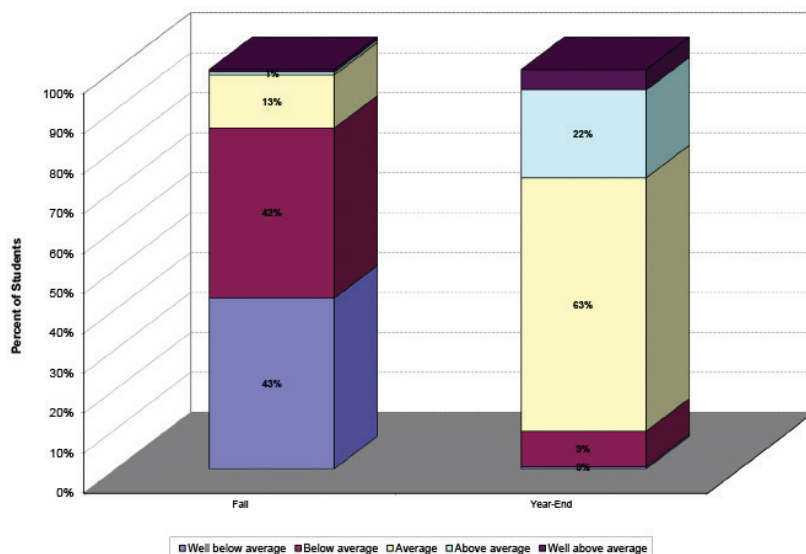


Figure 2: Classroom Reading Group Placement of Reading Recovery Students with Complete Interventions and Students Whose Lessons Were Discontinued: Oakland University - Michigan, 2015-2016



EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR READING RECOVERY

The United States Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) publishes intervention reports that assess research on beginning reading curricula and instructional strategies for students from kindergarten through third grade. The most recent WWC report of RR, released in October 2014, is based on the results of the first in a three-part series of research reports of the US Department of Education's 5-year \$54 million dollar *Investing in Innovation (i3) Grant to Scale-up Reading Recovery* by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE). The study met the WWC's group design standards "without reservation;" the highest design rating that the WWC assesses. Additional WWC reports of RR effectiveness were released in 2007 and later in 2013 with evidence of positive effects on student outcomes in general reading achievement, alphabetics, fluency, and comprehension.

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) released its 4-year evaluation of one of the most ambitious and well-documented expansions of a U.S. instructional curriculum (May, et al., 2016). The rigorous independent

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

The IDEA attempts to ensure that schools achieve the following (Lose, 2007; 2008):

- Provide early identification and intervention for all children struggling with literacy learning.
- Develop ways to appropriately identify and intervene on behalf of children with LD.
- Provide effective, intensive, evidence-based early intervening services.
- Monitor each child's progress using data-based documentation.
- Accelerate children's reading progress to meet annual progress criteria.
- Create a multi-tiered problem-solving team to support comprehensive literacy efforts.
- Provide the highest quality of professional development for teachers of low achievers.

evaluation of the Investing in Innovation (i3) scale-up of Reading Recovery, was a collaboration between CPRE and the Center for Research on Education and Social Policy (CRESP) at the University of Delaware.

This multi-site randomized control trial (RCT) involved nearly 7,000 first-grade students in more than 1,200 schools. The study, which found medium to large effects on student achievement in reading, contributes to a growing body of research on the conditions for, and impacts of, scaling up instructional programs. As part of the scale-up, 3,747 teachers trained in Reading Recovery with i3 grant funds provided one-to-one Reading Recovery lessons to 62,000 students and taught an additional 325,000 students in other instructional settings. In Michigan, over 250 teachers were trained in Reading Recovery through Oakland University under the i3 grant.

The CPRE/CRESP evaluation revealed that students who participated in Reading Recovery significantly outperformed students in the control group on measures of overall reading, reading comprehension, and decoding. These effects were similarly large for English language learners and students attending rural schools, which were the student subgroups of priority interest for the i3 scale-up grant program. The study included an in-depth analysis of program implementation. Key findings focused on the contextual factors of the school and teachers that support the program's success and the components of instructional strength in Reading Recovery. The RCT revealed medium to large impacts across all outcome measures. Access the report at <http://www.cpre.org/reading-recovery-evaluation-four-year-i3-scale>.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

A federal initiative that is derived from the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) offers schools facing increased enrollments of students with learning disabilities (LD) two options for addressing this growing population (Lose et al., 2007; Allington, 2009). The first option is that local education agencies can use as much as 15% of their special education funds to pay for early intervening services (EIS) and to support professional development and literacy instruction (Lose, 2005). The second option offered by the IDEA is Response to Intervention (RTI) that can be used to provide high quality instruction based on children's needs without the requirement of labeling students at risk for school failure as LD (Johnston, 2010). The goal is to limit referrals based on inadequate instruction or limited English proficiency and to reduce the number of children identified for

LD services (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). To achieve this goal, the lowest performing children must be identified early so that appropriately intensive interventions and tiers or layers of support can be provided within a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction at the first sign of a child's difficulty.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND TEACHER-STUDENT RATIO

Some administrators have argued that small group instruction delivered by teachers trained in RR is just as effective as the instruction delivered daily and one-to-one by these same teachers. To address this question Schwartz, Schmitt, & Lose (2012) used a randomized control trial methodology to evaluate the effect of variations in teacher-student ratio on intervention effectiveness delivered by teachers trained in RR. Even with the expertise of these teachers, students in the 1:1 condition scored significantly higher on the text reading measure than students in the 1:2, 1:3, and 1:5 group conditions. The researchers concluded that a sound approach to RTI would be comprehensive with provision for one-to-one early preventive instruction for the lowest performing learners, effective small group instruction for less struggling older learners, strong classrooms for all, and longer-term intervention for the very few children who continue to need intensive support in later grades.

READING RECOVERY: AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

In her seminal article, *Learning to be Learning Disabled*, published almost 30 years ago, Marie Clay (1987) gave validity to support the idea that many children labeled LD are in fact instructionally challenged through a series of unfortunate experiences either before, or very early in, their formal schooling. However, provided an appropriate early intervention to support their accelerative learning and response to instruction, the number of children identified as LD can be reduced to only 1-2 percent.

For over 30 years in the United States, RR has operated as an RTI approach. Reading Recovery trained and professionally developed teachers deliver one-to-one daily lessons, tailored precisely to the child, in support of the literacy learning of the most at-risk children (Clay, 2005a; 2005b). While many children respond quite well to whole group and small group instruction, evidence has shown that the lowest performing learners provided with the RR intervention are able to make accelerative progress and continue learning with their peers in the classroom without further intervention or placement in special education for literacy difficulties – a considerable cost savings to districts.

TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATORS AND INTERVENTIONISTS

Many Michigan schools that have fully implemented RR have requested that other members of the instructional staff have access to the RR training without the requirement of teaching four students daily. Two training programs, *Literacy Lessons (LL)* for special educators and teachers of English language learners and *Literacy Support (LS)* for classroom teachers and reading interventionists, are provided to these teachers as they train alongside teachers in RR². During their training year, these LL and LS teachers are introduced to the complex literacy processing model that informs RR while teaching two students daily, a minimum of four students in one-to-one lessons. Following their training year, LL and LS teachers apply their new expertise with children in small group and classroom settings while continuing to teach at least one child, one-to-one, from their class rosters or intervention caseloads (Konstantellou & Lose, 2009).

²Beginning in 2006, teachers of special education and English language learners, working in Michigan schools that have implemented Reading Recovery, participated in training for intervention specialists under a special training model, Literacy Lessons.™ In 2009, another training model, Literacy Support, was added to the university training center's options for classroom teachers and reading specialists. Both of these 8-graduate credit training programs in literacy processing permit teachers to train alongside Reading Recovery teachers, enabling school districts to optimize teacher expertise in response to the diversity of struggling literacy learners in their schools. Since 2006, 62 special education and ELL teachers have participated in Literacy Lessons training and 62 classroom and reading specialist teachers have participated in Literacy Support training.

READING RECOVERY REGIONAL TRAINING SITES* AFFILIATED WITH THE READING RECOVERY CENTER OF MICHIGAN AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

- Bloomfield Hills Schools
- Detroit Public Schools Community District
- Dowagiac Union Schools
- Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District
- Genesee Intermediate School District
- Grand Rapids Area
- Jackson County Intermediate School District
- Kalamazoo Public Schools
- Oakland Regional
- Port Huron Schools
- South Lyon Community Schools
- Troy School District (new in 2017)
- Walled Lake Consolidated Schools

*School districts or consortia of school districts comprise each of the state's 13 Reading Recovery Regional Training Sites.

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Reading Recovery has a strong track record of preventing literacy failure. Results support the investment of resources on this prevention effort. Yet, Michigan is still far from providing Reading Recovery to all the children who need it. Many of the participating districts experience the impact of low coverage. Thus, 9/10 students who need Reading Recovery do not have access to the intervention. Ideally, 20 percent of the state's first graders should have access. Policy makers and all who are concerned about closing the achievement gap to enable children to succeed in school could achieve greater equity by providing the intervention to the over 21,212 first graders that could benefit from Reading Recovery.