Instructor’s Guide for Reading Acquisition

Topic Area: Instruction

Module: Reading Acquisition

Case Study: Look Who’s Talking! Kindergarteners With Low Language Experiences

Summary: At the end of the first quarter, Linda, a kindergarten teacher, reflects on her students’ academic progress. For the most part, she is pleased. The children have really come a long way since the first day of school. But there are five students who just don’t seem to be making any progress. Linda is very concerned; she knows how important it is for young children to develop strong early literacy skills. After Pat, the speech-language pathologist, talks with Linda about the significance of oral language skills, Linda is inspired to help these students succeed using interactive reading and other positive language practices.

Characters and Roles:
- Linda, kindergarten teacher
- Pat, speech-language pathologist

Tools:
- Vocabulary

Artifacts:
- Audio Recording of Conversation Between Pat and Linda
- Oral Language Progress Checklist
- MONDO Oral Language Assessment
- Hart and Risley Article
- Snow Article
- Jackson Article
- Instructional Framework Planning Sheet
- Audio Excerpt of an Interactive Read Aloud
- Interactive Reading Planning Guide

Glossary Terms:
- Formative Assessments
- Literacy Components
- Early Language Development
- Letter and Sound Identification
- Concepts About Print
- Literacy Block
- Read Aloud
- Small Group Instruction
- Oral Language
- Extended Discourse
- Rare Words
- Decontextualized Talk
- World Knowledge
- Explanatory Talk
- Instructional Frameworks

Web Sites:
- www.nationalreadingpanel.org/
- www.ed.gov.offices/OESE/readingfirst
- http://www.ksha.org
- www.reading.org
- www.ipl.org
- www.readingonline.org
- www.ncte.org
- www.ncte.org/wlu
- www.eduplace.com

Discussion Points:
- What is the value of using formative and summative assessments?
- How can teachers administer individual assessments and not take time from direct instruction?
- What can teachers do to help students with low language problems?
- What resources would you use if you wanted to learn more about how to help students with low language problems?
- How could you get volunteers to assist students in your classroom who have low language problems?
- How could you integrate quality children’s literature in your literacy block?

Activities:
- Initiate a policy in your school where the teachers visit the homes of their students before the school year begins.
- Propose to a service organization in town that they donate books to give to newborns in a local hospital. Include a pamphlet about the importance of reading to children.
- Organize and host a panel discussion with leaders in the community about what can be done to increase literacy.
- Roleplay a conference between a kindergarten teacher and the parent of a child with low language problems who wants to help his/her child.
- Plan and implement a “Family Reading Night.”
- Brainstorm ideas for providing more time for students to engage in individual or small group literacy activities.
Reflective Question: Scene 4, Question 2 – Why is it important to re-administer assessments after three weeks of intervention? *Teachers should be constantly teaching, assessing, reflecting, evaluating the effectiveness of instruction, modifying instruction, and starting the cycle again.* After an intervention has been initiated, teachers must assess if the intervention was effective or not. If it was not effective, another intervention should be tried and evaluated after a reasonable period of time. Good teachers use formative assessments to guide instruction so they can maximize potential learning time and improve student learning.

Connections:
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Reading Comprehension