

Repeated Reading Conference Proposal

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Abstract

Repeated Reading is a reading intervention strategy designed to increase fluency and comprehension in both general education as well as with learning disabled students (What Works Clearinghouse, 2014). The strategy is used within both a whole-group and small-group settings and has been found to have long lasting effects on student with disabilities.

Statement of Problem

Reading fluency is the bridge that connects word recognition to comprehension. This ability to accurately and automatically read with appropriate expression is an important aspect to understanding the purpose of printed text. Fluency is not just about speed and expression, but it must involve comprehension. Without comprehension, students are simply calling out words without understanding the content. Fluent readers make connections with the text as they interpret the meaning of the passage being read. This connection, comprehension, and interpretation of the passage is aided by the reader's expression. With the use of appropriate voice, volume, and tone, expressive readers are able to interpret meaning through the use of proper phrasing (Kuhn, 2004).

As education strives to close the gap between poor and good readers with laws such as "No Child Left Behind", the lack in growth of good readers continues. This lack in growth is shown with 54% of ninth and tenth grade students reading at a level 3 mark on the FCAT (http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5668/urlt/0066933-2014fcatt20_media.pdf). In 2014, Exceptional Education students showed the poorest performance in all grade levels (http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5668/urlt/0066933-2014fcatt20_media.pdf). These essential skills began in early education starting with letter recognition and progressing toward

letter sound. When a reader is deficient in fluency, more time is spent on decoding words and less focus is placed on the topic.

Purpose/ Research Question

The purpose of this study is to explore whether the use of repeated reading will significantly improve the fluency rate of students with disabilities. The outcomes of this research will answer: Will the use of Repeated Reading significantly improve the reading fluency rate of my high school students' with disabilities?

Literature Review

RR is an evidenced based strategy designed to increase reading fluency and comprehension through the development of automatic word processing and contextualized linguistic effect (Winter, 2007). As the reader continues to read, contextualized linguistics take place as the reader begins to understand the context and the expression meant in the passage that is being read. This understanding of context and expression allows the reader to engage and interact with the text as they begin to formulate questions on what may come next or predict the ending (Kuhn, 2004).

In Devault and Joseph's review (2004), studies concluded that the effectiveness of Repeated Reading is based on repeated word recognition. Another theory known as Ehri's Stages of Reading Development as They Relate to Fluency indicates the systematic stages a non-reader goes through before they are able to recognize words with ease (Pikulski et.al, 2005). In 2006, Van Bysterveldt, Gillon, and Moran performed a six week study on phonemic awareness and letter recognition on students with Down syndrome. Great improvement was noted on letter sound knowledge, print awareness, and identifying the initial phoneme.

Furthermore, in 2010, Ari conducted research in a college level reading course designed to provide practice and strategies for high-stakes testing. Repeated Reading and Wide Reading indicates a gain in reading fluency along with comprehension. Kostewicz and Kubina (2010), concluded that after comparing two strategies, a gain in fluency by fifty or more words per minute. Repeated Reading can easily be implemented within any instructional framework and could provide an opportunity for literacy achievement among this population.

Research Methodology

The action research took place in a high school in Miami-Dade County Public School. Eight high school age students with intellectual disabilities (InD) who struggled with reading fluency and comprehension participated in the study. The special education teacher worked with the paraprofessional to implement the repeated reading intervention and was responsible for collecting data before, during, and after the implementation of the strategy. The special education teacher was responsible for choosing the appropriate reading passage and addressing the necessary preview needed for the difficult vocabulary the students encountered. Other participants include 35 InD high school age students will participate as the control group. This group will participated in the reading assignment using sight words through rote learning.

The necessary resources for the action research plan included, but were not limited to, Miami-Dade county high school Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS), Sunshine State Access Points, and parental and administrative consent to conduct research.

Findings

The findings of this action research were consistent with the research found before initiating the intervention. The research supported the need to teaching active reading strategies

to students with intellectual disabilities. The intervention focused on re-reading the same passage repeatedly for a variety of purposes.

Based on the data collected it appears that the Repeated Reading approach does indeed improve the fluency rate of students with intellectual disabilities. The data collected determined that there were significant fluency gains for students with intellectual disabilities. The identified sight words, sentence frames, and passages with pre-highlighted words for cloze reading passages provided students with opportunities for success, which also increased motivation. Furthermore, the increase of the fluency rate also impacted average reading comprehension level for the sample group.

These finding revealed that students with intellectual disabilities and low fluency rates and limited knowledge of sight words, are able to improve their (Words per Minute) WPM read by the use of an effective active reading strategy. The student's motivation and readiness to learn increased along with their fluency rates.

Implications

The implications of this study have shown the success of RR interventions with InD students. The use of RR interventions can help create a population of fluent InD readers. Future research may consider investigating the effectiveness of this intervention with a larger population in order to determine if this is a best practices for this particular population. The use of the outcomes may become beneficial in creating new curriculum programs specifically designed to increase the fluency and comprehension levels for students with intellectual disabilities.

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