

Preface

Reading *First and Beyond* is written to assist teachers, teacher educators, administrators, literacy coaches, reading researchers, and parents to understand and implement Reading First legislation. It also demonstrates how educators and parents can extend the learning process beyond these basics in literacy instruction. This book can also be used as a textbook in undergraduate and graduate programs, and as a text with school-based learning teams and preservice or inservice study groups.

This book summarizes the key areas of Reading First and newly emerging research-based evidence concerning additional curriculum components that have been demonstrated to significantly advance students' literacy development. The key elements discussed in the book are

- Oral language
- Prekindergarten and kindergarten literacy: Phonemes and phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- Independent reading
- Writing
- Metacognition
- Parent support

The book can assist reading programs in K–8 classrooms in many ways and serves several purposes. First, it can assist teachers who would like to know more about how to implement research-based practices that address the components of Reading First legislation in a more complete manner.

Second, it is written for teachers who have already implemented new methods but would like to enhance their repertoire of instructional strategies.

Third, it has been written as a professional development tool and resource for literacy coaches, principals, teachers, and parents who want to independently learn about Reading First components and understand how they can be, and have been, implemented in classrooms across America.

Fourth, districts that want to train teachers in methods that meet the guidelines of Reading First can use this book with confidence to develop inservice training sessions.

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Fifth, this book can be used for building-level book study groups so that an entire building can be using the same literacy terms and instructional research approaches.

Sixth, this book can be used by principals to structure professional development discussions and content for monthly faculty meetings and on-site professional development programs.

Last, this book can be used for the training of literacy coaches so they can present to teachers instructional literacy strategies that are research-based.

This book is intended to contribute to the field of literacy and education by providing a guide for educators and parents to understand Reading First legislation in as comprehensive a fashion as possible. It provides explicit models as to how research-based instructional practices can be included in school programs on a daily basis. It also provides lesson plans to meet the needs of learners who struggle, learners who are learning English, and learners who excel. This book also provides methods by which teacher-directed instruction, paired instruction, independent reading, and small group instruction can be structured to include the components of Reading First.

Each chapter includes an initial *vignette of a child's thoughts* that illustrates a child successfully using the reading domains to be discussed in that chapter. This is followed by several special features to help the readers increase their knowledge in each of the key domains of literacy instruction cited above. These features are as follows:

- *What Teachers Need to Know* makes explicit a working definition of the element discussed in the chapter, provides important background knowledge of the Reading First component the chapter covers, and aids in increasing the level of understanding of that domain of literacy instruction before current research findings are introduced.
- *Research That Teachers Can Use* explains research relevant to that chapter's reading domain in terms that are easy to read and apply.
- *New Classroom-Proven, Research-Based Practices* provides three to four key lessons that address the domain described in that chapter and can be used by teachers to help all children reach higher levels of success in that content domain.
- *Tests to Assess Learning* describes concrete methods that educators can use to evaluate what students have learned.
- *Addressing Learners With Special Needs* contains concrete methods that educators can use to help learners who struggle, learners who are learning English, and learners who excel.

In summary, this book is being written to respond to the need to help guide teachers, administrators, preservice educators, and parents through the Reading First legislation and to provide a practical resource to aid instruction. Helping educators, administrators, and parents bridge the gap between key research-based evidence and reading instruction in daily classroom practices is the primary goal of this book.