



RESEARCH

Developed by the Minnesota Center for Reading Research at the University of Minnesota, Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) is a framework for literacy achievement in grades K-5 within multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RtI) contexts. PRESS interventions address five essential components of reading, using research-based practices for student success.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

The PRESS phonemic awareness sequence includes six interventions progressing from sound isolation, to sound blending and segmenting, and finally, to sound manipulation. The sequence of interventions are based on the recommendation that phonemic awareness instruction begin with easier phonemic awareness tasks, such as isolating sounds, then proceed to more difficult phonemic awareness tasks, such as manipulating sounds, and that each task is done with modeling and practice.¹ PRESS phonemic awareness interventions utilize instructional approaches that have been shown to contribute to reading growth for students at risk for reading difficulties. In the interventions that target phoneme isolation, students match picture cards with phonemes in a process that is modeled and guided by the teacher. Select interventions also use Elkonin boxes to support students' ability to accurately say the individual sounds in words.²

PHONICS

The PRESS phonics sequence includes six interventions that begin with explicit instruction in identifying letter sounds and progress to more complex phonics patterns ranging from consonant patterns (digraphs and blends) to vowel patterns (silent e, vowel teams, and variant vowels).³ PRESS phonics interventions incorporate a variety of activities that are well supported by research. Early phonics interventions involve matching letter sounds to pictures⁴ in order to develop letter sound correspondence, a critical beginning reading skill. Later interventions include use of Elkonin sound boxes⁵ and identification of vowel patterns in words in order to read words in isolation as well as within decodable text.⁶

FLUENCY

The PRESS fluency sequence includes four interventions. Fluency 1-*Supported Cloze* in dyads or triads involves supporting students in fluent reading by engaging in echo reading, cloze reading, and listening-while-reading which are well established as effective ways to improve oral reading.⁷ The PRESS Fluency 2 and 3 interventions engage students in repeated readings. In meta-analysis research on repeated reading,⁸ it was determined that in order to improve a student's ability to fluently read and understand a passage, instruction should include the following: read a passage aloud three or four times, get a cue to focus on speed and comprehension, and receive corrective feedback on word errors. All of these procedures are represented in PRESS interventions. The PRESS Fluency 4 intervention, *Partner Reading with Paragraph Shrinking*, includes the fluency and comprehension components of *Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)*.⁹ Studies investigating PALS have found generally positive outcomes on reading fluency and reading comprehension.¹⁰ In the PRESS intervention *Partner Reading with Paragraph Shrinking*, teachers pair students together to complete activities that focus on reading practice, retelling, and summarizing. Students learn word correction procedures that are used during each activity.

VOCABULARY

The PRESS vocabulary intervention is built on components of effective vocabulary instruction: 1) providing rich and varied language experiences, 2) teaching individual words, 3) teaching word-learning strategies, and 4) fostering word consciousness.¹¹ In the intervention, students learn important words selected from a children's literature book and discuss and apply the new vocabulary outside the context of the story.¹² Research demonstrates that incorporating these components into the read-aloud is an effective setting for increasing primary grade students' vocabularies.¹³ Moreover, researchers have also found that students who participated in vocabulary instruction that involved generating synonyms, antonyms, and related words as well as using semantic webs did better on subsequent vocabulary and comprehension measures than students who participated in vocabulary instruction that involved writing the vocabulary word and using it in a sentence. These approaches are used in the PRESS vocabulary intervention.

COMPREHENSION

The PRESS comprehension intervention is a discussion-based approach modeled after *reciprocal teaching*.¹⁴ It includes explicit instruction in four metacognitive strategies that help students monitor their thinking: prediction, summarization, clarification, and questioning. Researchers have found that small-group interventions in which students are taught comprehension strategies in addition to metacognitive strategies to monitor their own thinking resulted in increased metacognitive knowledge and self-monitoring.¹⁵ Studies that measured general reading comprehension also found that reciprocal teaching interventions resulted in increased reading comprehension scores on standardized tests.

¹ Lane, et al., 2007; Mitchell & Fox, 2001; Nelson, Benner, et al., 2005; Nelson, Stage, et al., 2005

² Hagans & Good, 2013; Mitchell & Fox, 2001; Walton, et al., 2001

³ Blachman et al., 2004; Coyne et al., 2004; Foorman, et al., 2003; NICHD, 2000

⁴ Walton et al., 2001; Walton & Walton, 2002

⁵ Adams, 2001; Fuchs et al., 2001; Johnston & Watson, 2004;

⁶ Blachman et al., 2004; Frechtling, et al., 2006; Fuchs et al., 2001

⁷ Kuhn & Stahl, 2000; Rasinski, 2003; Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2004

⁸ Therrien, 2004

⁹ Fuchs, et al., 1997

¹⁰ Calhoon, 2005; Fuchs et al., 2001; Sáenz, et al., 2005; Sporer & Brunstein, 2009

¹¹ Graves, 2016

¹² Beck & McKeown, 2007; Biemiller & Boote, 2006

¹³ Beck & McKeown, 2007

¹⁴ Palinscar & Brown, 1984

¹⁵ Baker, 2008

REFERENCES

- Adams, M. J. (2001). Alphabetic anxiety and explicit, systematic phonics instruction: cognitive science perspective. In S. B. Newman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 66–80). New York: Guilford.
- Baker, L. (2008). Metacognition in Vocabulary Instruction: What we've learned since NRP. In C. C. Block, L. M. Morrow, S. R. Parris (Eds.) *Comprehension instruction: research-based best practices* (pp. 65–80). New York: Guilford Press.
- Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2007). Increasing young children's oral vocabulary repertoires through rich and focused instruction. *Elementary School Journal*, 107, 251–271.
- Biemiller, A. & Boote, C. (2006). An effective method for building meaning vocabulary in primary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98, 44–62.
- Blachman, B. A., Schatschneider, C., Fletcher, J. M., Francis, D. J., Clonan, S. M., Shaywitz, B. A., & Shaywitz, S. E. (2004). Effects of Intensive Reading Remediation for Second and Third Graders and a 1-Year Follow-Up. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(3), 444.
- Calhoun, M. B. (2005). Effects of a peer-mediated phonological skill and reading comprehension program on reading acquisition for middle school students with reading disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38, 424–433.
- Coyne, M. D., Kame'enui, E. J., Simmons, D. C., & Harn, B. A. (2004). Beginning reading intervention as inoculation or insulin: First-grade reading performance of strong responders to kindergarten intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 37(2), 90–104.
- Duke, N. K. (2001). Building comprehension through explicit teaching of comprehension strategies. Presentation to the second annual MRA/CIERA Conference.
- Foorman, B. R., Francis, D. J., Fletcher, J. M., Schatschneider, C. and Mehta, P. 1998. The role of instruction in learning to read: Preventing reading failure in at-risk children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90: 37–55.
- Frechtling, J. A., Zhang, X., & Silverstein, G. (2006). The Voyager Universal Literacy System: Results from a study of kindergarten students in inner-city schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 11(1), 75–95.
- Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Mathes, P. G., & Simmons, D. C. (1997). Peer-assisted learning strategies: Making classrooms more responsive to diversity. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 174–206.
- Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Thompson, A., Otaiba, S. A., Yen, L., Yang, N. J., ... & O'Connor, R. E. (2001). Is reading important in reading-readiness programs? A randomized field trial with teachers as program implementers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(2), 251.
- Graves, M.F. (2016). *The vocabulary book*. (2nd ed.) New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hagans, K., & Good, R. (2013). Decreasing reading differences in children from disadvantaged backgrounds: The effects of an early literacy intervention. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 17(1), 103–117.
- Johnston, R. S., & Watson, J. E. (2004). Accelerating the development of reading, spelling and phonemic awareness skills in initial readers. *Reading and Writing*, 17(4), 327–357.
- Kuhn, M.R., & Stahl, S.A. (2003). Fluency: A review of developmental and remedial practices. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95, 3–21.
- Lane, K. L., Fletcher, T., Carter, E. W., Dejud, C., & DeLorenzo, J. (2007). Paraprofessional-led phonological awareness training with youngsters at risk for reading and behavioral concerns. *Remedial and Special Education*, 28(5), 266–276.
- Mitchell, M. J., & Fox, B. J. (2001). The effects of computer software for developing phonological awareness in low-progress readers. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 40(4), 315–332.
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Nelson, J. R., Benner, G. J., & Gonzales, J. (2005). An investigation of the effects of a prereading intervention on the early literacy skills of children at risk of emotional disturbance and reading problems. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 13(1), 3–12.
- Nelson, J. R., Stage, S. A., Epstein, M. H., & Pierce, C. D. (2005). Effects of a prereading intervention on the literacy and social skills of children. *Exceptional Children*, 72(1), 29–45.
- Palinscar, A. S., & Brown, A. L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities. *Cognition and Instruction*, 2, 117–175.
- Rasinski, T.V. (2003). *The fluent reader*. New York: Teaching Resources.
- Sáenz, L. M., Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2005). Peer-assisted learning strategies for Englishlanguage learners with learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 71(3), 231–247.
- Sporer & Brunstein (2009). Fostering the reading comprehension of secondary school students through peer-assisted learning: Effects on strategy knowledge, strategy use, and task performance. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 34, 289–297.
- Therrien, W. J. (2004). Fluency and comprehension gains as a result of repeated reading: A meta-analysis. *Remedial and special education*, 25(4), 252–261.
- Vaughn, S. & Linan-Thompson, S. (2004). Research-based methods of reading instruction. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Walton, P. D., Bowden, M. E., Kurtz, S. L., & Angus, M. (2001). Evaluation of a rime-based reading program with Shuswap and Heiltsuk First Nations prereaders. *Reading and Writing*, 14(3), 229–264.
- Walton, P. D., & Walton, L. M. (2002). Beginning reading by teaching in rime analogy: Effects on phonological skills, letter-sound knowledge, working memory, and word-reading strategies. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 6(1), 79–115.