CLIP: Reading Recovery-like Intervention strategies for the Classroom Teacher

Several programs offered at the elementary school level are of interest to those educators who teach at high school or college levels and who are, in particular, graduates of CSUF's masters program in reading instruction. Reading Recovery certainly is and CLIP, a fairly new tutorial reading program, is as well. Upon hearing of CLIP, I wondered why it was created; from my exposure during the CSUF masters program, I was under the impression that Reading Recovery was a successful and respected approach. Debbie Calkins, a first grade teacher in the Irvine Unified School District and a 1998 CSUF masters graduate in reading instruction, has been sharing with me her current experience in training to become a CLIP tutor. She has provided some insight into this latest Reading Recovery-like phenomenon and why the Irvine district is investing much time and money into adopting this program district-wide.

CLIP stands for the Collaborative Literacy Intervention Project. It was developed by the Tempe School District #3 in conjunction with the Arizona State Department of Education and Arizona State University during the 1989-90 school year. In 1985, this Tempe district had implemented the Reading Recovery program which utilizes trained specialists and had New Zealand consultants in Reading Recovery actually come to Arizona to conduct the training on a bi-yearly basis. However, in addition, the district wanted to educate their classroom staff in intervention methods for their grade one students and, as a result, CLIP was designed and developed. Before her involvement with CLIP, Debbie shared that she felt quite overwhelmed by all that was being put upon the classroom teacher. She was told once involved with CLIP that this project was designed for the classroom teachers, because it was felt that they are the ones who know their students the best. Conveniently, the CLIP program is partially conducted outside of school hours which allows the classroom teacher to utilize his or her knowledge of the student's needs without taking away from or interfering with class time.

The project involves a sequential plan that covers the time frame of one semester (see accompanying diagram). The students begin formal lessons as quickly as possible, however, initially much time is allocated to student selection, testing, and observation. In a class of twenty students, one quartile or five students who are performing at the lowest levels are selected for testing. Two of these five students are ultimately selected for the CLIP instruction, but not until the instructor has evaluated numerous factors in addition to the testing results. The age of the students and the cooperative attitude in the home are a few of these factors. The parents are a significant component in the potential success of the students in the CLIP approach. However, Debbie shared that if parental support is not available, cross-age tutors are trained to fill this role. Also each instructor confers with district CLIP trainers to review the records as well as the other factors of assessment before he or she makes the final selection.

Debbie has completed the first stages of the training and is working with two of her students each weekday in one-on-one 30-minute sessions--one student during school hours and one after school. Debbie receives a stipend for her after school session, but other districts may manage the financial compensation differently. After teaching first graders for many years, Debbie has been impressed with the rapid progress that her students are experiencing. Like Reading Recovery, keeping a "running record" is an integral part of the process. The Irvine Unified School District had encouraged their first grade teachers to keep running records on their students for years prior to the district's adoption of the CLIP format.

In Debbie's CLIP training program, there are fifteen teachers who mostly teach kindergarten and first grade but a few teach second grade. They meet once a week for three hours directly after school at a district facility. As we have heard of the Reading Recovery program, the CLIP training process is intense, specific, and involves a great deal of work. At my request, Debbie asked her CLIP trainer Kathleen Cooke...
why the Irvine district was favoring CLIP over Reading Recovery. She said that there were several reasons, but the main one was that Reading Recovery involves a "specialist" to tutor four students per day and that the Irvine district wanted the "training in the hands of the classroom teacher where transfer to the classroom benefits more students." Debbie said that "the interesting thing about the carry-over between CLIP and the classroom is that the tutor gets to see how the student functions one-on-one and then gets to see how the student transfers what he/she is learning in CLIP to the classroom. If the student is breaking down and not carrying the new learnings over to the classroom activities, that is very useful information for the CLIP tutor. On the other hand, if the student is not bringing to the CLIP sessions information that has been covered repeatedly in class, that is also very useful information for the CLIP tutor. On the other hand, if the student is not

bringing to the CLIP sessions information that has been covered repeatedly in class, that is also very useful information." Also, she said that without the numbers of students tutored and the specialist release time of Reading Recovery, CLIP tends to be less expensive to implement than Reading Recovery. Regardless of the level one is teaching, it seems significant that as educators we are aware of those programs that are experiencing success in the area of reading instruction and keep track of those new ones which seem to be catching on. It is possible that instructors of older children and adults may be able to apply some of the strategies of elementary tutorial programs which are working such as Reading Recovery and CLIP. Running records for example could be adaptable to older students in some form. Thank you Debbie for all your imput.

Recommended Reading
By Carla Thomson

Inspiration Hour
The Courage to Teach
by Parker J. Palmer

It's that time of year. We're stretched and stressed to the breaking point. Need a little motivation and inspiration? How's this?

"I am a teacher at heart, and there are moments in the classroom when I can hardly hold the joy. When my students and I discover uncharted territory to explore, when the pathway out of a thicket opens up before us, when our experience is illumined by the lightning -- life of the mind -- then teaching is the finest work I know. But at other moments, the classroom is so lifeless or painful or confused -- and I am so powerless to do anything about it -- that my claim to be a teacher seems a transparent sham. Then the enemy is everywhere: in those students from some alien planet, in that subject I thought I knew, and in the personal pathology that keeps me earning my living this way. What a fool I was to imagine that I had mastered this occult art -- harder to divine than tea leaves and impossible for mortals to do even passably well!"

Can you relate? Fortunately, Dr. Palmer doesn't just understand, he explores possibilities and offers hope.

Amazon.com's review: "Stepping back from the current education debates on curriculum and methods of assessment, highly respected educator and author, Parker Palmer examines the inner life of the dedicated teacher. This inspiring exploration shows what it means to teach, what it takes to truly connect with students, and the importance of self-realization. Teachers choose their vocation for reasons of the heart, because they care deeply about their students and about their subject. But the demands of teaching cause too many educators to lose heart. Is it possible to take heart in teaching once more so that we can continue to do what good teachers always do - give heart to our students?"
Parker Palmer, author, teacher, and activist, works independently on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. His work has been featured by The New York Times, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Change Magazine, CBS-TV News, and The Voice of America. In 1993 he won the national award of the Council of Independent Colleges for "Outstanding Contributions to Higher Education." In 1997, "The Leadership Project" -- a survey of 11,000 educators by four major associations -- named Dr. Palmer as one of the nation’s thirty most influential leaders in higher education.

His book is for teachers "who refuse to harden their hearts because they love learners, learning, and the teaching life."

Annual Winter Banquet

The REG Annual Winter Banquet is scheduled for February 22, 1999 at the CSUF Marriot. We are pleased to have Dr. Norma Inabinette as the keynote speaker. Dr. Inabinette’s topic will be "A Reader’s Bill of Rights." Be sure to reserve this date. A registration form will accompany the next newsletter.

FACULTY FOOTNOTES
BY KATHI BARTLE ANGUS

Dynamic growth in the graduate program has prompted an increase in the number of graduate courses offered. Beginning next year almost every course will be offered on both the Fullerton and Mission Viejo campuses, including clinic. A new clinic will be established at a South County location. As you can imagine these additions have most graduate faculty members becoming adept commuters and time managers.

The recent Orange County Reading Association conference featured Dr. Norma Inabinette as the keynote speaker. Her topic was "A Reader’s Bill of Rights." If you missed this conference, don’t worry. Check out the speaker for REG’s Winter Dinner.

The College Reading and Learning Association’s 31st Annual Conference was held in Salt Lake City in November. Undergraduate faculty members Jan Bagwell, Kathi Bartle Angus, Toni Chambers, JoAnn Carter-Wells, JoAnne Greenbaum, Donna Padgett and Carla Thomson all attended this eventful conference. Presentations were made by JoAnn Carter-Wells and Carla Thomson (with David Vanderhoof on “A Course Partnership Across the Continent: Using Technology to Blend and Support Curriculum”) and JoAnne Greenbaum and Kathi Bartle-Angus (“Enhancing Critical Thinking through Writing Activities”). Kathi Bartle Angus was elected to the position of President-Elect of the California Chapter of CRLA at the chapter meeting. All agreed that Salt Lake City was a wonderful location for the conference. Watching the city prepare for the 2002 Olympics was exciting and none will soon forget this conference of firsts.

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Recommended Reading: Carla Thomson

The Reading Connection: Janice Blanton

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, by being a regular column writer or just an occasional article donator, please contact JoAnne Greenbaum at jgreenbaum@fullerton.edu. We need all of you to help make REG great!