Empowering Parents to Read With Their Children: A Master’s Project
By Sarah Eichen

As partial fulfillment for my Master’s degree in Reading with Cal State Fullerton, I did a project by creating an instructional handbook and DVD that gives parents pre-reading, during the reading, and post-reading strategies on how to read with their child. This came about after reflecting on my own experiences as a teacher and as a reader. As an elementary school teacher, it has been my privilege to teach children how to read. I have been able to help cultivate important, meaningful interactions with text that they will continue throughout their entire lives. I have often thought back to when I was a child learning to read. I don’t remember learning to read through the use of explicit phonics instruction or any specific instruction from my teachers for that matter, (although I know they did give me valuable instruction). When I look back at my early reading experiences, I think of myself curled up next to my mom as she read to me. I remember reading the text along with her and being excited when I could help her read the words. She encouraged my reading with family trips to the library and with recommendations of books she knew I would like. I know that it is through her support that I became such an avid reader.

Thinking again of my own experiences teaching children to read, I know that I alone do not hold the key to their success. They need their parent’s support just as much as I did when I was a little girl. I only see my students for six hours a day and my attention is divided between twenty of them. While I do give explicit reading instruction, I cannot possibly give them all of the support that they need. That is why family literacy is so important.

When my students’ parents are involved with their reading, it is likely that they will improve. Parent involvement with their child’s reading is a key factor in determining their reading success (Teale, 1981;
Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006; Ortiz & Ordonez-Jasis, 2006). Family literacy plays a crucial role in a child’s reading achievement. When a family member engages in some type of reading or writing activity with a child, they are sending the message that reading is important and they are modeling how to read.

After speaking with the parents of some of my students, I learned that not all families know how to readily provide meaningful family literacy experiences. Some may provide meaningful experiences, but may still benefit from further instruction in family literacy. My instructional handbook and DVD will empower parents to read with their children by giving them reading instruction and literacy support ideas that they could use at home.

**Promoting Language and Literacy in Preschoolers**  
By Crystal Ros

Parents, policy makers, and educators alike are increasingly looking at the preschool years as pivotal to later reading success. Children’s reading abilities show an alarming stability over time. Researchers are now arriving at the startling conclusion that the children who start kindergarten behind are likely to stay behind. Families have an important role to play in promoting literacy at home. Yet, a high quality preschool can make a positive and lasting impact on young children’s lives, above and beyond what the home can provide.

Today, scholars conclude that literacy is an ongoing process that begins at birth. However, for hundreds of years it was commonly accepted that children under age seven should not be taught to read because of the fear that it would permanently harm them or because they felt that young children were not “ready.” Now researchers conclude that healthy children are born ready to learn. Yet, children must be taught how to read and write because they will not spontaneously figure it out when they reach a magical age. How quickly children learn depends on whether a child’s natural inclinations to learn are met with a supportive environment. Stimulation from the environment actually changes the very formation of our brains. Nevertheless, early care providers should not try to duplicate the formal reading instruction being given in grade schools.

Reading is a very complex task and there is no one right way to teach a child to read. However, research has identified some skills that are able to predict later reading success. They are: oral language development and comprehension, phonological awareness, knowledge of the letters of the alphabet, and concepts of print. Effective strategies to promote early language and literacy include: extended discussions with rare words, literacy-enriched play settings, print-rich environments, phonological awareness activities, dialogic reading, beginning writing activities, and parent and home programs that promote literacy and language. Finally, print motivation is essential because the lack or loss of motivation to read can prevent a child from becoming a skilled reader.

**College Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies Workshop**  
By Deborah Lombardi

My project was created in response to the many academic literacy deficiencies that entering college students face. The workshops are structured for a six-week time interval and can be utilized as a stand alone format as well as integrated into a developmental reading course. This was designed to provide support for college students with their academic courses.

The information provided in these modules is to be discussed, modeled, and practiced. The intent is to have participating students practice the strategies during the week with their academic courses and reflect and discuss their accomplishments and disappointments with the group each week during the weekly workshop time. This workshop can be implemented in a lab-type environment, as a supplemental instruc-
There will be some prep involved with instructing these modules. Instructors should choose interesting reading material for the participants and include these articles in the student packet. The students are provided with a packet of information in regards to the comprehension and vocabulary strategies to be covered during the workshops. Each module will contain instructions to demonstrate the strategies to the students and opportunities for students to practice while at the workshop and independently.

The project consists of an extensive review of educational research to support the need for these workshops, as well as a complete instructor and student handbook. Other learning strategies such as note taking, test-taking, time management and additional comprehension and vocabulary strategies can be implemented into these workshops.

**Family Literacy: Building a Connection between Home and School Literacy Practices**  
By Kimberly K. Mundala

According to the International Reading Association (2002) family involvement is essential for children to receive effective schooling. “Family involvement in a child’s education is a more important factor in student success than family income or education” (p. 1). The purpose of my project was to develop a home-school curriculum that builds a connection between home and school literacy activities, increase awareness of what is required of the students in kindergarten, provide easy to use materials that reinforce what happens in the classroom, and honor literacy activities that already occur in the home. I provided six family literacy workshops.

The six family literacy workshops addressed nine curricular components needed in kindergarten to enhance reading success: language development with emphasis on vocabulary and concepts; understandings about the functions of print; print awareness and concepts of print; literacy as a source of enjoyment; knowledge of narrative structure; storybook reading; knowledge of the alphabet; phonemic awareness; and opportunities to write (Strickland, 2002, p.75-76). All of these components are essential curricular components needed in an effective emergent literacy classroom (Roe, Smith, and Burns, 2005; Rog, 200; California State Board of Education, 1999; National Research Council, 1999). McCarthy (2000) has found that “[d]eveloping literacy networks among family and community members to interact with and discuss literacy materials may be central to nurturing home-school connections” (p. 151). In kindergarten, involving families helps students to adjust to school and build a solid foundation for future success. “High levels of family involvement in kindergarten promote children’s positive feelings about literacy which in turn leads to better literacy performance throughout elementary school” (Harvard Family Research Project, 2007, p.4).

Each family literacy workshop was approximately one hour with the first 30 – 35 minutes for the PowerPoint presentation and the last 25 – 30 minutes allotted for the families to make literacy activities that could be used at home. At each workshop, families received a ziplock bag that included: a handout that correlated to the PowerPoint presentation, make it and take it materials, and a monthly homework calendar to record daily reading and to indicate which activities from the workshop were utilized at home. Overall the six family literacy workshops were successful and beneficial for the families and teachers. Parents found the workshops to be useful and educational and teachers found the product to be an excellent resource to add to their language arts program.
Strategic Strategies for Content Area Literacy
By Kim Hanley

Appropriate Grade Levels: 4th – 10th

Research:
“There are approximately 8.7 million fourth through twelfth graders in America who are unable to read and comprehend the material in their textbooks” (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2003, p.1). Moreover, many students do not have the cognitive skills for deep learning of content through reading. Undeniably, moving from subject to subject throughout the day causes students to be overwhelmed by the multiple comprehension demands of various content areas. Students are attempting to understand the structures of unfamiliar texts, often with limited subject matter knowledge (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2003). As a result, teachers have the responsibility for developing literacy skills essential for comprehension in each subject area. Despite research documenting its effectiveness, instruction in content literacy is not practiced in many classrooms (Neufeld, 2005). However, performances nationwide on reading assessments confirm students who read well in the primary grades often confront difficulties with reading in grades four through twelve (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2003). In addition, students at the secondary level come to school with a variety of literacy deficits, more than students in earlier grades (International Reading Association [IRA], 2006). In order for secondary students to be good readers, they must be attentive, analytical, purposeful, flexible, self-aware, and world-aware (Manzo, Manzo, & Thomas, 2005).

Project:
Literacy activities are meant to be taught along with content – not in place of content. Infusing literacy instruction with content instruction, content – area teachers support adolescents in gaining necessary literacy proficiencies while deepening content learning (Draper, 2002). Strategic Strategies for Content Area Literacy: Pre-Unit Instructional Strategies, Before Reading Instructional Strategies, During Reading Instructional Strategies, Post Reading Instructional Strategies

References:

Hancock Fund
The individuals who contributed to the Hancock Fund are the following:

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While REG will continue to gratefully accept contributions to the Hancock Fund that are added on to dues renewals (see insert), alumni and community now have an opportunity for on-line giving to the fund via CSUF website. This new form of access provides several advantages. It raises the visibility of REG’s contributions to the larger CSUF community and provides a way for non-REG members to contribute to the fund. Second, it provides the ease of on-line giving that many of us have become accustomed to, including the ability to set-up small automatic monthly donations and easy credit card
To donate to the Hancock Fund online:

Access the CSUF website at www.fullerton.edu
1. Click on the Support CSUF tab in the upper right hand corner
2. Select the Make a Gift tab
3. Select Give Online
4. Beneath the If “other” please list box type in Hancock Fund. Or select Click here for a full list of fund designations and use the pull down menu to select Hancock Fund. Then click on Give to this fund now.

Complete the online form and submit. A record of your contribution will be sent to REG so that we may recognize your generosity.

June Hetzel: REG’s Outstanding Alumna for 2009

When Ash Bishop nominated June Hetzel as Outstanding Alumna of the Year for the Graduate Reading Program at California State University, Fullerton, he informed us that his reasons were many. Dr. June Hetzel, earned her graduate degree from Cal State Fullerton and went on to gain her Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University. She then joined the Biola University faculty as an assistant professor. In 2000 she became Chair of the Department of Education. In 2007 the Department became the School of Education and, after a national search, June was appointed Dean of Biola’s newest school.

June specializes in literacy, curriculum development and home schooling research. She has authored 18 teacher resource books and has conducted literacy workshops across the county. She has been involved in summer programs in North Africa, working with Arabic and French-speaking grades 1-9 students.

She currently is a Language Arts Senior Content Editor for Purposeful Publications’ textbooks in Colorado Springs as well as a freelance editor for Corwin SAGE Publications.

Dr. Ula Manzo presented June with the Outstanding Alumna Award for 2008 at REG’s March Breakfast. She was delighted to to be recognized by former professors, students, and colleagues attending the breakfast. June shared that her success as a Reading educator and as Dean of Education at Biola University could be attributed to the excellent education she received in the CSUF Reading Program and at Claremont Graduate University coupled with caring and thoughtful faculty mentoring at both institutions.

REG Grant Applications Due

The Reading Educators Guild grant was established in 2004 to provide financial support to an REG member. The $300 grant is intended to be an adjunct to a typical classroom or professional materials budget. All applications must be submitted by May 1, 2009, to be considered for this funding round. See the REG website (readingeducatorsguild.org) for application form and submission information.
REG Winter Breakfast

From Left: Leslie Zorola, Linda Cardwell, Jan Bagwell

June Hetzel & Deborah McIntire

From Left: Karla Bequer, Barbara Mee, Angela Parker

REG founders Dixie Shaw & Pat Irot,

Susan Newcomb’s- Great Shoes!
Scholarship recipients, Amalia Gutierrez & Laura Monahan

Right Gena Lovett, Jordan Fabish
Below: Rosario Ordonez-Jasis

Marjan Keramati & Melissa Fox

Robin Barry’s train whistle

Gena Lovett JoAnne Greenbaum, Ula Manzo

Ruth May Siegrist

Matt Harris
RECEPTION
REG will again be co-hosting, with the Reading Department, a reception immediately following the College of Education graduation ceremonies May 23. Join us on the second floor patio of the EC Building.

Please contact Kathi Bartle-Angus if you can help us honor our graduates at this festive event.
kangus@fullerton.edu

Items of Interest for REG Newsletter???
We would welcome your submissions to the newsletter. Please send your article via email to lovett.gc@cox.net. Please type “REG” on the subject line of your email.
Thanks, we’d love to hear from you!
Gena Lovett, Editor