

Working Toward a More Literate World: Reading Intervention Commentary

eTale 2022



This issue of *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* summarises recent and ongoing work to establish evidence-based practices in early reading instruction and intervention, and to improve access to and quality of literacy programmes in low- and middle-income countries. In this article, I present my own thoughts on the importance and implications of the reviewed articles.

Author: Maureen W. Lovett

Source: Lovett, M. W. (2017). Working toward a more literate world: Reading intervention commentary. In A. Gove, A. Mora, & P. McCardle (Eds.), *Progress toward a literate world: Early reading interventions in low-income countries*, *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 155, 131–141.

This issue of *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* summarises recent and ongoing work to establish evidence-based practices in early reading instruction and intervention, and to improve access to and quality of literacy programmes in low- and middle-income countries. In this article, I present my own thoughts on the importance and implications of the reviewed articles.

- Projects of varying sizes and goals conducted at multiple sites in several countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America are described in this review.
- There is a commitment to documenting the efficacy and effectiveness of these programmes using the methodological standards of intervention science and education research whenever possible; that is, controlled evaluations, cluster random assignment, objective measurement, and longitudinal designs.
- Data from these projects have informed plans for future programming in countries worldwide, and results from large scale-ups have provided insight into the most important factors necessary for scale-up and sustainability.
- Access to early education has improved substantially in many countries; however, access and quality are two quite different factors.



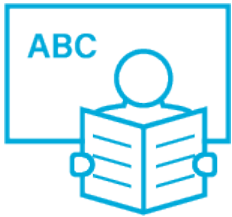
The study

Review of the articles of this issue of *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* and some thoughts on their importance and implications are presented in this study.



Factors important to implementation success

- Extent of implementation and intervention (including intensity and frequency of the intervention and the fidelity of its implementation)
- Duration (longer is better)
- The extent to which the environment is enabling and facilitative.



Possibilities in lowest resourced countries

- Reading is a system that relies on written language skills and requires (and draws upon) speech and oral language development.
- Inability to understand the language of instruction is a major barrier in schools; thus, teaching to read in the mother tongue first may be important.
- It is important to integrate oral language, phonics, and authentic writing in multilingual and multicultural environments to attain better results.
- Teacher and student attendance is important; absenteeism and tardiness are considerable detractors from instructional time.
- Availability of reading materials is important when trying to learn to read.
- Learning to read fluently requires thousands of hours of practice and the development of a complex, consolidated system of linguistic skills.
- The importance of parental (especially maternal) literacy attainment to children's early reading progress has been long recognised. This helps parents to navigate and access health and educational services for their

children and alters how they interact with their young children.

- Even the most promising evidence-based instructional programme will fail to deliver positive outcomes if not implemented with skill and intensity by teachers who understand the program, its goals, and how to teach with fidelity.
- Even when partnerships are successful and scale-up commitments strong, there often remain huge needs around teacher training and support. Such training takes time; thus, it is recommended to carefully calibrate time expectations for scale-up.
- Technology offers more possibilities for support to the teachers, and also to students who do not have access to school.