STFLS Surprises:
Using Start to Finish
Literacy Starters with
Diverse Learners

Today's Questions

• Who were Literacy Starters designed for?
• How do the three text types address the needs of diverse groups of learners
• How can Literacy Starters be used in diverse classrooms?

BLF Came First

• Goal: Support educators using BuildAbility and other tools to author stories for the students they teach.
  Existing stories were all alike (no variety in text structures)
  Too many kids stuck at emergent reading levels
  Not enough texts that were both age and ability-level appropriate with respect to language and literacy needs
The Text Types

- Began working from a perspective that the three text types were levels - students would move from emergent to transitional then conventional.
- With work we came to understand that the text types were not progressively more difficult - they simply addressed different skills, processes, and understandings.
- Currently operating from view that most students will read two or more text types at any given time.

Silent Reading Comprehension

Language Comprehension

- Knowledge of Text Structures
- Knowledge of the World

Print Processing Beyond Word Id

- Print-to-Meaning Links
- Inner-Speech
- Integration

Eye-movements

Word Identification

- Automatic
- Mediated

The Three Text Types

Enrichment

Increasing Language Difficulty
The Three Text Types

Increasing Language Difficulty

Increasing Word Reading Independence

Who Do We Mean By ‘Diverse Learners’?

- Students with significant learning disabilities
- Students on the autism spectrum
- Students with mild-moderate cognitive delays
- Students who are English Language Learners

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How do Enrichment texts support diverse learners?

- Introduce a variety of text structures.
  - Narrative (first person, imaginative)
  - Expository
- Build knowledge of the world by teaching a wide range of concepts and vocabulary.
- Designed to motivate repeated readings.
- Assume basic English language competence.

Sample Enrichment Text

Wonders of Africa

Let’s start our trip in Egypt and see the pyramids. We can drive along the Nile River. The Nile is the longest river in the world.
How do Transitional texts support diverse learners?

- Each book has a restricted range of text structures.
- Uses repetition with variety to teach simple concepts and vocabulary.
- Assume limited English language proficiency.
- Provide highly supported opportunities for beginning readers to read parts of the text.

Repetition w/ Variety (Predictability)

Pattern + Picture Support

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How do Conventional texts support diverse learners?

- Minimal demands for English language competence.
- Use a very restricted range of text structures across all conventional texts.
- Provide opportunity for beginning readers to read an entire text.
- Support the development of reading fluency including rate, accuracy, and prosody.

Sample Conventional Text

Off to Africa

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Literacy Starters

Content

- The topics address common areas of the standard curriculum with an emphasis on social studies and science curriculum in the middle grades.
- High quality photographs illustrate the stories.
- High quality readings in the software support the development of prosody and encourage repeated readings of the texts.
Software Features to Support Diverse Learners

SIOP: Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol

SAMPLES:
- Building Background (Concepts linked to background; Key vocab emphasized)
- Supplementary Materials (Pictures, multi-media, demonstrations)
- Content Adaptation (highlighted text, adapted text)

*Echevarria et al, Making Content Comprehensible

Digitized Text

Digitized speech = natural-sounding speech
Supports students who need to hear the phrasing and intonation patterns
Highlighting

Read to me  Read with me  Read by myself

Phrase  Word-by-Word  None

Then phrase

Phrase Highlighting

Supports print tracking

Mrs. Martin lives in a town in the Arizona desert. Eric and Jacob live in the house next door. Their town didn't have a recycling project, so Mrs. Martin started one to recycle cans. She kept the project going for many years, but now she was moving away.

Word-by-Word Highlighting

But some Africans wear clothes that other people have made. Which clothes would you choose?

Transitional Stories Only Followed by phrase highlighting to support fluency

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Animation

Support specific vocabulary
Support concepts
Increase engagement (to encourage multiple text readings)

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Sound Effects

Support specific vocabulary
Support concepts
Increase engagement (to encourage multiple readings)

‘cannon’
Devastation during a volcano
Cars racing / motorcycle revving up

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Story Scaffolds

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Vocab Support
Enrichment: concrete / easy to picture

book  
house  
bag  
recycle

Vocab Support
Transitional: less concrete
easy to symbolize

help  
made  
again  
more

Vocab Support
Conventional: very high frequency
Written (no picture / symbol)

up  
can  
people  
about

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Drill ‘n Kill?? Nooo!

Images on Teacher CD

How Would YOU Use Those Images?
Always Activities

Using Literacy Starters

Integrate Literacy Starters in the school day as part of content area and English/Language Arts instruction.

Provide alternative access to curriculum content

Support the development of reading skills while addressing important content

Support learning new comprehension and analysis strategies and skills.

Build a reading program around Literacy Starters

Address comprehension with Before-During-After instruction.

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**Word Wall - Smart Board**

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**Snowballs in the Desert**

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**Recycling: Predict It**

Westwind Intermediate School

X They are probably going to make snow
X They’re going to bring snow to the desert
X Finally is going to snow

After:
F: I think snowball is when people help other people.
I person, then it spread it out

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Observations

P14: student’s started reciting “that’s cool” when given a pause
P15: using “snowball” when filling in the blank without cue
P19: when questioned if any one wanted to change their predictions
   “they’re going to make snow not bring it in”
   “it means people help other people”

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SLP Reflection

I was fortunate to observe a demonstration lesson taught by Caroline Musselwhite for a group of our LD resource students. Caroline presented “Snowballs in the Desert”. Initially, I was concerned whether the students would be able to understand the use of a metaphor. These particular students are in 5th through 8th grade and have reading levels which are significantly below their grade level. They are very concrete in their reasoning skills and often miss inferences and higher level processing ideas. One student in particular is struggling significantly in the area of reading. During this lesson he demonstrated the ability to form an initial hypothesis and then revise his thoughts after listening to a portion of the story. This was an incredible thing to see for staff and a huge success for the student. We look forward to using these techniques and materials with our students on a daily basis.

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Read It Again... Listen for Settings

BEFORE:

Harry Potter
1. uncle’s house - Privet Lane
2. forest – where spiders came out
3. school - (Griffindor - Hogwarts*)
4. circle of rocks – Triwizard Tournament

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AFTER: Back to the Book

1. Litchfield Park (extra info) 
2. Grocery store 
3. Arizona desert 
4. Next door 
5. Newspaper store (office) 
6. Boys & Girls Club 
7. To help people that don't eat (food bank) 
8. High school 
9. At the corn place (by lake) 
10. Street (picture) 

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What Did We Miss?

1. Eric's house 
2. Recycling center 
3. Habitat for Humanity 
4. 8 houses 
5. restaurants 

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Teacher Reflection

As I reflect back to the lesson Caroline taught in my resource room last week, I felt an extreme amount of understanding amongst the students. The students IEP's concentrate on characters, setting, and plot. Caroline concentrated that lesson on settings. Our students were able to do a more difficult task with no problem using simpler text. It was an activity that could be used in so many ways with these books. The stories are so interactive, individually or in a group. They touch on many goals we set for our Special Education students, because they are real life stories and characters at their reading level.

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**6 Legs and Counting**

**BEFORE:** Activate Background Knowledge

**BUGS WE LOVE ... OR HATE!!!**

- Black widow - hate
- Poison spider - hate
- Ladybug - hate
- Ant - hate
- Ant / bee / fly - like
- Beetle - like

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**Characters: 6 Legs**

- Fly
- Ant
- Butterfly
- Spider
- Bee
- Centipede
- X Lizard
- Scorpion
- X Caterpillar

**Bugs We Missed**

- Ladybug
- Mosquito

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**Settlers**

**BEFORE:**

**Model Descriptors: EXPLAIN**

- Sidney
- Hard-working
- Kind
- Smart
- Funny
- Cool
- Patient

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**AFTER: Give Reasons!**

Robert

Hard-working (Did all the chores his mother asked)
Impatient (kept asking his Mom)
Young* (14)
Smart (because he knew how to do all the chores)
Strong (because he did all the chores)
Brave (cause he started bleeding and finished)

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**Civil War: Off to War**

**BEFORE:**

Wars & Reasons for Going

GOING TO WAR
Vietnam
World War II -to get an education
World War I
Iraq
Afghanistan
Civil War- slavery

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**Listen for Reasons**

*Why Did the People in This Story Go to War?*

/For $$/ for the family
/To please the father
/To be near his dad
Young
/To help people (nurse)
/To free slaves

To feed the soldiers (job)
Cook (job)

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OT/AT Reflection

I work with a difficult population at a variety of levels and these sets are able to reach all them. I am excited to see my students animated, participatory and exceeding expectations for understanding literature.

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Sample Lessons!

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

**Overall Goal:** Discuss or identify rules that are the same and different in a family and a class.

**Not in This House**

**RECOMMEND A BOOK**

**Overall Goal:** Tell whether you liked the book, based on the story and pictures, and whether you would tell a friend about it.

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Sample Lessons!

**MY HOUSE RULES**

**Overall Goal:** Discuss the rules described in the book Not in This House, and tell whether you have that rule at your house.

**IDENTIFY FEELINGS**

**Overall Goal:** Identify how the boy in the book was feeling, based on the story, pictures, and the reader’s own background knowledge.

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1 Size Does NOT Fit All!