

READING RECOVERY (FOUR TWO R): A TOOL TO IMPROVE READING OF GRADE 3 PUPILS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to create a tool to help grade three students who were having difficulty reading, particularly in phonics. It is based on a Literacy Processing Theory by Clay (1985) that was retrieved in 2018 by Philip Sirinides, Abigail Gray, and Henry May. The researcher created "FOUR Two R" to give grade three students a thorough guide to help them improve their reading skills, especially those who are falling behind in reading in phonics. This tool's four stages—each of which includes recorded video, an interactive presentation, and reading materials that can be used in classrooms or even at home—are meant to help kids learn and master the phonics necessary for reading. These materials are posted online and are available for download. The exercises offered are specifically designed to help kids learn the essential skills for mastering phonics-based reading. Specifically, the FOUR Two R tool was created for remedial reading of Grade 3 students who were left behind to develop age-appropriate literacy skills, specifically phonics. This is to prevent reading and school failure since children who do not develop age-appropriate literacy skills by the end of third grade are at a high risk of failing.

Keyword: *recovery reading (two r), familiarizing, on reading, uncover, relate*

1. INTRODUCTION

One crucial skill to be acquired for school-aged children is reading. As Cimmiyotti (2013) stated, the ability to read is an essential skill for students to master because the information is presented in text throughout the world. Furthermore, reading is crucial in the process of learning, especially in basic education (Ampofo, 2019). Teachers teach reading, which is one of the essential skills in a student's academic life. However, its path to success can be challenging. As Utevsky and friends (2022) cited, "Reading is a complex cognitive process in which the reader, through interaction with the text, constructs meaning", hence can be a rewarding experience. Additionally, because reading involves decoding skills, teachers must use effective reading instructions and must consider for a moment the best practice of explicit phonics instruction. Systematic phonics instruction is a valuable and essential part of a successful classroom reading program (National Institute for Literacy, 2006). Moreover, effective reading instruction encompasses a range of teaching practices that provide varying levels of support at different points of need – these practices include modeled reading, shared reading, guided reading and independent reading (State Government of Victoria, 2019). Considering the instructional time, effective reading time allocation is crucial for improving early-grade reading (Rehman, 2021).

The researcher may have learned from experience or through a literature review that effective reading instruction has an impact on students reading performance in areas of phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension. As the Learning Point Associate (2004) summarized, several decades of scientific research show that effective reading instruction addresses five critical areas: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension that may have as it may have later effects on academic performance. According to Snow and Matthews (2016), children who don't develop age-appropriate literacy skills by the end of third grade are at high risk of school failure. Considering the methods applied for enhancing the reading skills of pupils in primary grades, the researcher in this study aimed to develop a tool to improve the reading skills of grade three pupils.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the literature related to the study. This is to position properly this study amidst many studies conducted in this field.

2.1 The Primary Grades

According to Alberta Education website (2022), the primary grades are Early Childhood Services, including Kindergarten, through Grade Three. Education has a number of resources to support the teaching and learning for these children in recognition that these early grades lay the foundation for future school success. Early childhood is a significant period in human development. Independence, initiative, decision making, creativity, the ability to learn, the ability to relate to others and feelings of self-worth all have their beginnings in early childhood. What young children learn at this stage will have a major impact on their successful learning experiences in school, on their personal development and on their future participation in society (Alberta Education, 2022). The term primary grades describe the Kindergarten to Grade 3 years in elementary school; it is not a separate or additional curriculum. During this phase of schooling, children experience rapid growth and development. They arrive in school from diverse backgrounds and with a variety of experiences and make the significant transition from the home to the school environment. During this period, the task of formalizing students' learning experiences begins as the foundation is laid for later learning. Students' early experiences in school help form their identities as learners. A key purpose of the primary grades is to help students develop a solid base of literacy, numeracy and social skills that will provide a foundation for later success. The outcomes in the provincial programs of study are intended to engage students in rich learning experiences in which they develop understandings that both relate to and make connections across specific subject areas (Alberta Education, 2022).

2.2 Phonics in Primary Grades

Phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling. The primary focus of phonics instruction is to help beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes) to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns and to help them learn how to apply this knowledge in their reading. Phonics instruction may be provided systematically or incidentally. The hallmark of a systematic phonics approach or program is that a sequential set of phonics elements is delineated and these elements are taught along a dimension of explicitness depending on the type of phonics method employed. Conversely, with incidental phonics instruction, the teacher does not follow a planned sequence of phonics elements to guide instruction but highlights particular elements opportunistically when they appear in text (Reading Rockets, 2013). The several different types of phonics instructional approaches that vary according to the unit of analysis or how letter-sound combinations are represented to the student. For example, in synthetic phonics approaches, students are taught to link an individual letter or letter combination with its appropriate sound and then blend the sounds to form words. In analytic phonics, students are first taught whole word units followed by systematic instruction linking the specific letters in the word with their respective sounds (Reading Rockets, 2013).

Phonics instruction can also vary with respect to the explicitness by which the phonic elements are taught and practiced in the reading of text. For example, many synthetic phonics approaches use direct instruction in teaching phonics components and provide opportunities for applying these skills in decodable text formats characterized by a controlled vocabulary. On the other hand, embedded phonics approaches are typically less explicit and use decodable text for practice less frequently, although the phonics concepts to be learned can still be presented systematically (Reading Rockets, 2013). Analogy phonics is teaching students unfamiliar words by analogy to known words (e.g., recognizing that the rime segment of an unfamiliar word is identical to that of a familiar word, and then blending the known rime with the new word onset, such as reading brick by recognizing that "-ick" is contained in the known word kick, or reading stump by analogy to jump) (Reading Rockets, 2013). Analytic phonics is teaching students to analyze letter-sound relations in previously learned words to avoid pronouncing sounds in isolation (Reading Rockets, 2013). Embedded phonics is teaching students phonics skills by embedding phonics instruction in text reading, a more implicit approach that relies to some extent on incidental learning (Reading Rockets, 2013). Phonics through spelling is teaching students to segment words into phonemes and to select letters for those phonemes and synthetic phonics is teaching students explicitly to convert letters into sounds (phonemes) and then blend the sounds to form recognizable words (Reading Rockets, 2013).

Reading Rockets (2013) stated that it is important to recognize that the goals of phonics instruction are to provide children with key knowledge and skills and to ensure that they know how to apply that knowledge in their reading and writing. In other words, phonics teaching is a means to an end. It was added that to be able to make use of letter-sound information, children need phonemic awareness. That is, they need to be able to blend sounds together to decode words, and they need to break spoken words into their constituent sounds to write words. Additionally, the author of Reading Rockets website (2013) stated that programs that focus too much on the teaching of letter-sound relations and not enough on putting them to use are unlikely to be very effective. In

implementing systematic phonics instruction, educators must keep the end in mind and ensure that children understand the purpose of learning letter sounds and that they are able to apply these skills accurately and fluently in their daily reading and writing activities.

2.3 The Importance of Reading in Early Childhood

According to Schoolhouse Day Care website (2020), Reading is important as it helps to develop a young child's brain. Vital connections in the brain are made very early in life and when stimulated, these form the basis of all future learning and intellectual ability and help them to become better listeners, readers, and communicators as well as instilling a lifelong love of learning. Northfield Hospital and Clinics (2019) stated that Reading regularly with children stimulates optimal patterns of brain development which helps build strong pathways in the brain and in turn builds language, literacy, and social-emotional skills that can have life-long health benefits. Verbal interactions (reading, talking, and etc.) between parents and young kids may promote higher language and IQ scores all the way up to age 14 (Marcin, 2020). Reading fosters a love of learning which leads to higher grades. Reading with your children early on and help them to learn at their own pace in a fun setting, can foster a love of reading (Schoolhouse Day Care, 2020). Reading aloud fosters a love of books in children and help them get hooked on books as they associate reading with pleasure (Awah, 2020). When children learn to read at an early age, they have greater general knowledge, a wider range of vocabulary, they are more fluent readers, and they have improved attention spans and better concentration as well as stronger oral and literacy skills, proficiency in reading also allows young children to understand more, to learn more, and to become competent researchers (Schoolhouse Day Care, 2020).

Reading has many psychological benefits for young children. Schoolhouse Day Care (2020) stated that early reading ignites creativity, sparks curiosity, and stimulates the imagination in young children. Often, this leads to role-play as children grow which helps to develop other skills such as empathy, problem-solving, and morality. While these are significant benefits to young children, the biggest psychological benefit is how reading helps to grow self-confidence and independence from such an early age. Reading and storytelling with babies and children promotes brain development and imagination, develops language and emotions and strengthens relationship. Reading can exercise children's comprehension and analytical abilities which fires up their imagination and stimulates the memory centers of the mind (Kishore, 2020). Reading also helps boost a young child's self-confidence. Schoolhouse Day Care (2020) stated that there is psychological pressure when learning to read in school. Children have social awareness too, from a young age. This can have serious implications for their self-image as they grow and this is why reading is important. Reading with your children early on and help them to learn at their own pace in a fun setting which help them to become competent and confident at it before having to do it in front of others. The knowledge and words children experienced when reading give them confidence and wisdom according to the website of Spreeder (2015).

Reading will help young children become better writers and communicators. Reading develops young children so many other skills. The sooner a child learns to read, the more opportunities they have to encounter the written word. More exposure then leads to better spelling, grammar, writing, and oral communication (Schoolhouse Day Care, 2020). Reading improves vocabulary and language skills. Children learn new words as they read. They absorb information on how to structure sentences and how to use words and other language features effectively in their writing and speaking (Cam Everlands Primary School, 2022). Early childhood ability in reading is important not just for nothing, such thing is vital for it help with child's ability to understand words, it encourages them to begin and develop their imagination – to see things and imagine things all by themselves – and to develop their speech, improves concentration and introduces children to new concepts and the world around them. According to Griffin (1998), children who become successful readers tend to exhibit age appropriate sensory, perceptual, cognitive, and social skills as they progress through the preschool years. In addition, according to Merrimack College (2019), one possibility that early reading ability offers a distinct advantage is that it continues throughout the educational career, resulting in better grades, greater interest in school, and higher levels of overall achievement even among individuals of above-average intelligence.

2.4 Challenges in Reading

Good readers are phonemically aware, understand the alphabetic principle, apply these skills in a rapid and fluent manner, possess strong vocabularies and syntactical and grammatical skills, and relate reading to their own experiences. Difficulties in any of these areas can impede reading development (Reid, 2000). According to Plessis (2021), these are the symptoms that a child is having reading problems: Reverses letters like b and d, or p and q, or reads words like no for on, rat for tar, won for now, saw for was. Puts letters in the wrong order, reading felt as left, act as cat, reserve as reverse, expect as except. Misreads little words, such as a for and, the for a, from for for, then for there, were for with. Loses orientation on a line or page while reading, missing lines,

or reading previously-read lines again. Reads aloud hesitantly, word by word, monotonously. Tries to sound the letters of the word, but is then unable to say the correct word. For example, sounds the letters 'c-a-t' but then says cold. Mispronounces words, or puts stress on the wrong syllables. Foreshortens words, for example, 'portion' for proportion. Omits prefixes, omits suffixes, or adds suffixes. Reads with poor comprehension. Remembers little of what was read. Cannot match the appropriate letter when given the sound. Often ignores punctuation, omitting full stops or commas.

Furthermore, Foorman, Dombek, and Smith (2016) explained that primary and intermediate grades struggling readers were ignored because there were educators who believed maturity played a significant role and these students will mature, and the reading deficits will diminish. To help struggling literacy learners, teachers must stay abreast of how to identify and assist these students. Rasinski et al. (2017) and Serry and Oberklaid (2015) explained that many struggling readers do not have supports or resources available outside of the classroom and because of this these; learners were at-risk for lower self-esteem, continued achievement failure, disengagement from school, and behavioral issues.

2.5 Strategies to Improve Reading of Primary Grades Students

The primary grades mark a time of tremendous growth in literacy skills, making reading activities a crucial part of the school day. Students typically learn to read in kindergarten and continue developing fluency and comprehension in first grade and beyond. Reading activities that address all reading skills help young students develop a well-rounded approach to literacy (Frost, 2021). Reading as a group or with another person improves fluency and can help young readers expand vocabulary. A group or partner approach can give a struggling reader confidence to tackle a book since she has support from others. When a child struggles with decoding words or reading fluently, try echo reading. You or a strong reader in the class reads one line. The class then repeats the line, mimicking your inflection. If the students are familiar with the text, reading together as a group is an option. Another idea is to pair students and have them read together or takes turns. When you pair a strong reader with a weak reader, the stronger reader models reading skills (Frost, 2021). Reading together also opens doors. It can bring a children own thoughts and ideas to the group and the group can give new thoughts and ideas that may not have come to mind if the reading experience had been a solo activity (Bradley, 2021).

Retelling is a strategy to improve comprehension of the material. It is a strategy that is used to determine how well a student has comprehended a specific story. After reading a story, have the young students summarize what it was about (Frost, 2021). Retelling can be used as an effective tool in improving comprehension as well as assessing it (Jennings et. al, 2014). During a retelling, teachers gain insight as to how students are putting together the information offered in a text. When students' understanding of a text is observed and analyzed during retelling, teachers discover what information students remember and deem as important. According to Jennings et. al, (2014), to begin a retelling, inform the student he or she will retell a story after it is read. Then, have the student read the text. After reading, ask the student to tell about the story as if he or she was telling it to someone who had never read it. Once the student has finished retelling the information he or she remembers from the story, you may ask the student to elaborate on certain parts. Jennings, Caldwell, & Lerner (2014) state, "this prompting is important for low-achieving readers, because they often know more about a story than they will tell in a free recall". Graphic organizers help young children understand what they read and connect it to their knowledge. A K-W-L chart is an example of a graphic organizer you can use with reading. The "K" column represents what the child already knows about the book's topic. This gets her brain engaged and ready to read. The "W" stands for what the child wants to know. She might have questions that she doesn't know about the topic. The "L" column happens after reading to show what she learned from reading the story. To help with comprehension, chart predictions about what will happen next. You can also create graphic organizers to show elements of the story, such as the character, setting, conflict and main ideas or events (Frost, 2021). Graphic organizers can enhance reading comprehension by helping students to categorize information and to show the relationships among important concepts (Shanahan, 2022). Graphic organizers help improve reading comprehension in the classroom. These tools are effective because they provide a visual representation of the text. They give students a clear process for breaking down and understanding what they've read. Ultimately, this can make it easier for students to follow the storyline or gather the key information from their reading (Rebecca Davies, 2022).

Poems and songs give kids a chance to practice fluency and learn new vocabulary words. Many primary classrooms often incorporate music into the day. Instead of just singing songs, print off the lyrics for the kids. If you don't already have a classroom playlist, find a popular song with lyrics that include sight words for your students. With the lyrics in front of them, play the song as students sing and read along. Poems have a similar flow and often incorporate rhyming words that allow you to discuss word families. Poems and songs work well for repeated readings since kids often enjoy listening to and reading them several times (Frost, 2021). Fluency,

poetry and song instruction can make a big difference in teaching reading. The practice and performance of poetry were viewed as key to students' growth in reading and when students follow the lyrics as they sing, they are, in essence, reading since singing increases reading time. (Ferry, 2015). In addition, repeated readings are used to help students develop fluency and comprehension. This method was designed to help students who have little to no experience with reading fluently to gain confidence, speed and process words automatically (Cox, 2015). Other benefits of repeated readings include helping all readers with fact recall, serves as a study strategy, aids in students' identification of what's important in their reading, such as main ideas and vocabulary, increases comprehension and results in more advanced questioning and insight, leads to faster reading and increased word recognition accuracy, and assists struggling readers as they transition from word-by-word reading to more meaningful phrasing (AEA, 2015). Moreover, in the study of Saeidi and Ahmadi (2016), that watching audio-visuals promotes improved comprehension skills to students.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design used in this study was a pure research design. According to Fomunyam (2020), this type of research is motivated by a desire to expand knowledge and acquire knowledge with no other motive but to learn. The primary aim of this research approach is to gather information to improve one's understanding.

3.2 Research Procedure

From the conception of the study, an extensive search and collection of relevant studies and literature about challenges in reading, the process of reading development, and ways to improve reading were done. From the collected literature, extensive reading and understanding were done to formulate the basic concepts needed for the study. The researcher arrived at the study "Reading Recovery" by Clay (1985) which helped formulate a general idea for the tool. From that study, the researcher identified seven (7) prescribed Reading Recovery Lessons according to Sirinides, P., Gray, A., & May, H. (2018), namely: roaming around the known, rereading familiar books, taking running records of yesterday's new book, working with words and letters, writing a story, cut-up stories and reading a new book. To ensure compliance, personal consultations were done with teachers who have experienced remedial reading and teaching reading to validate Clay's claim about how to teach reading and to identify further reading problems with third-grade students. As such, the researcher identified phonics as one of those reading issues faced by the third grade based on the consultation. Reading Recovery Council of North America (2002) stated, "Change is an integral part of the Reading Recovery design especially with phonics." The researcher identified four (4) necessary teaching steps: roaming around the known, rereading familiar books, working with words and letters, and writing a story to focus on phonics. Other related concepts essential to the study are also provided. Moreover, basic concepts and related studies were then collected and presented in the review of related studies. Afterward, the researcher underwent validation of the tools and activities developed through intensive checking by a subject teacher with ten (10) years in service and a Master Teacher in English. Finally, the researcher created four (4) step that helps meet the key concepts identified. Activities are then searched and formulated to support the application of the tool.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As stated in chapter 1, the main goal of this research is to create a tool to help grade three pupils improve their reading skills, particularly those who are left behind or who are unable to make the proper sounds in reading called as phonics, which is defined by Wang (2017) as the sounds made by individual letters or letter groups and how to combine separate sounds to form a single word. Too many youngsters fail to learn to read in today's classrooms. Reading failure has had a significant long-term impact on children's developing self-confidence and willingness to learn, as well as their later school achievement, as many instructors and parents can attest (Armbruster B & Osborn J., 2001). Since according to Snow and Matthews (2016) that children who do not develop age-appropriate literacy skills by the end of third grade are at a high risk of school failure, the FOUR Two R tool developed by the researcher below was designed for remedial reading of Grade three pupils who were left behind in order to develop age-appropriate literacy skills, specifically in phonics to avoid school failure.

4.1 F-amiliarizing the Unfamiliar (Roaming around the known)

The teacher must consider his/her students' alphabet knowledge, letter blends, diphthongs before proceeding to phonics instruction. Therefore, activities promoting alphabetic knowledge as well as phonemic awareness is a must to include. Reeb, (2011) stated that alphabet knowledge and phonemic awareness is a vital support to phonics instruction. Moreover, Murray B., (2021) stated that getting familiar with phonemes helps children make breakthroughs in learning to decode. (PowerPoint presentation is made by the researcher, the content are from Randel Cooper, 2015)



Figure 1: Phoneme Interactive

Then, the teacher will proceed to another activity that will promote familiarity as preparation for later instruction. A video must be repeatedly played 4 times while the student is also reading for student to achieve familiarity of the content. Alber (2019) stated that educational video promotes student acquisition of the content it also builds background knowledge on the topic and solidify and deepen students learning. (Videos are made by the researcher (Moreno, 2022), the content are from Teachers Pay Teachers, 2022)



Figure 2: Story about Dad and Tad Video



Figure 3: Story about Get the Vet Video



Figure 4: Story about Rob has a Bot Video



Figure 5: Story about Kit Video



Figure 6: Story about the Bug Video

4.2 O-n reading the Familiar (Re-reading the familiar text)

The teacher will use printed text that is familiar with the student, the same content the story in the video in the familiarizing stage. According to Grasby (2016), rereading familiar books in fluency and provides practice in bringing reading behaviors together and allows the reader to discover new things about the print during rereading. While the student is reading, the teacher must consider jotting down word/s that is difficult with the student and complement when the student has read it correctly. In here, solidifying students reading knowledge and phrasing is executed. As this "prompt" according to Clay (1985) builds the students reading behavior that the he/she has already demonstrated.

4.3 U-ncover the Words from the Story (Working with words and letters)

This stage provides association of letters into words, sounds into letters for the child to produce based from the text read. According to Clay (1985), "The child must learn to attend to the details in print, respecting the rules of direction, the order or sequences of letters, and the order of words. As such, the teacher will let the child locate and underline word/s. One word at a time, the student will let find the corresponding letters with the word and

arrange it according to the word arrangement. Then, he/she will sound out every letter in that word. The same process with the other underlined words. Below provide the links where the teacher can download the text for the student to locate words and underline.

4.4 R-elate Words to your Experience (Writing stories)

From the word/s that the students underlined, the teacher will let the student create word/s from it and later will read the word made for the child to practice articulation and learn that what they write precedes word and letter sounds. Fountas, and friends (1999) stated that this practice demonstrates that sounds heard in words are visually represented in print.

5. CONCLUSION

Reading is a skill that greatly impacts the learning ability of children. When it is gained incorrectly, it is not easy to correct without proper guidance. Reading, especially in phonics instruction, begins in third grade, and every classroom teacher's effort in teaching reading is essential. It has been observed that though teachers have exerted efforts in teaching phonics, there are still students that cannot catch up. Additionally, teachers have difficulties teaching reading, and students also encounter challenges when learning phonics. However, with the help of recent studies, alternative methods can be created to help address these challenges. Through this research, seven key elements that are essential to a child's ability to learn reading are uncovered: roaming around the known, rereading familiar books, taking running records of yesterday's new book, working with words and letters, reconstructing the cut-up stories, writing a story, and reading a new book (Clay M., 1985). The researcher identified four key elements that are essential to a child's ability to learn phonics in reading are uncovered: roaming around the known, rereading the familiar text, working with words and letters, and writing a story. It is also worth noting that each element is correlated with one affecting the other if not acquired properly.

That said, "FOUR Two R" was developed with the goal of providing a comprehensive guide for grade three pupils to improve their reading skills, particularly those who are left behind in reading in phonics. Children who do not develop age-appropriate literacy skills by the end of third grade are at a high risk of school failure. The FOUR Two R tool developed by the researcher was made for remedial reading of Grade three pupils who were left behind to develop age-appropriate literacy skills, specifically in phonics, to avoid reading and school failure. This tool is designed to assist children in learning and mastering phonics reading ability through 4 steps. Each stage contains recorded videos, interactive presentations, and reading materials that can be carried out inside the classrooms or at home. These materials are uploaded online and can be downloaded for use. The activities provided are tailored to allow children to acquire the key elements in mastering skills in reading with phonics. Reading Recovery Familiarizing the unfamiliar, On the reading the familiar, Uncover the words from the story, Relate words to experience (FOUR Two R) is a standard that can be followed or referred to make instructions toward learning skills in reading easier. The outline of the steps provided in the tool is continuous with the stage, and thus, when used, it is easy to track the children's progress and address possible challenges. Moreover, each step of the tool is connected to each other and is tailored to address a key element in learning phonics in reading. Lastly, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The researchers suggest FOUR Two R as a teaching tool to teachers in Grade 3 classes struggling with reading, specifically in phonics and learning reading, to provide students with an easy step-by-step way of how they can read. As teachers' initial instructions towards reading are done in schools, FOUR Two R should be introduced to student/s diagnosed with phonics reading skill struggle where he/she can be thoroughly guided and monitored.
2. Further, the study recommends improving and optimizing the tool before using it on a broader scope. Teachers should conduct further research before using FOUR Two R on a broader scope, specifically to other reading skills struggles of Grade 3 students.

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