

Florida Center for Reading Research

Corrective Reading

What is Corrective Reading?

Corrective Reading consists of two major strands, Decoding and Comprehension, which can be used separately as a supplemental intervention program or combined as a comprehensive intervention program for students in grades 3-12 who are reading below grade level. Researchers designed *Corrective Reading* specifically to change the behavior of the struggling reader. It may be used with students who are deficient in decoding, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary skills. The goal of the Decoding strand is to teach the alphabetic principle and phonemic awareness skills students need to read a variety of text materials accurately and rapidly. The goal of the Comprehension strand is to develop academic language skills to use in comprehending oral language and written language, then independently applying these skills to complex written materials. The teacher, paraprofessional, or tutor delivers daily lessons that vary in length according to the strand and number of students in the group. Each strand requires 45-55 minutes of instruction for groups of 15 or less.

The Decoding and Comprehension strands of *Corrective Reading* consist of four levels: A, B1, B2, and C. The instructional sequence is clearly delineated with a specific scope and sequence at each level. Explicit instruction is provided through precise directions for teaching each lesson and aligned student practice materials. New learning is practiced to mastery and cumulatively reviewed to maintain the skill.

The daily lessons in the Decoding strand are divided into several parts with the specific activity based on the level. The first part is always word-attack skills and begins with identifying the sounds of letters, sounding out regularly spelled words, reading words "the fast way", reading in context and spelling. Instruction progresses to identifying letter combinations (e.g., tch, ir, tion, ai, ou aw), affixes (e.g., un, ex, re dis, able), and reading multisyllabic words. While students are taught to read and spell these word parts and words, the meaning of the word or its parts is also included. In this way the program continually focuses on developing the student's understanding of language. The second part consists of Workbook Exercises in Decoding level A or Story Reading in the other levels. These exercises provide oral, writing, and reading practice to apply the skills taught in the lesson. For Story Reading, students read as a group with the teacher asking questions at specified points; by level C, individual students read a section of the selection. The third part provides Individual Reading Checkouts to assess fluency. After Level A, pairs of students read two passages; the first reading comes from the daily story and the second from the previous day's story. A specified rate and accuracy is set for each checkout in order to determine if the student is successfully applying the skills taught in the program. Levels B1, B2 and C have a fourth part for Workbook Exercises. These include activities that are directed by the teacher or done independently. Additional practice activities and games directly linked to the daily lesson are provided on a CD-ROM.



The daily lessons in the Comprehension strand are divided into two to three main parts, each with numerous exercises. Level A has Thinking Operations, Workbook Exercises, and Information; whereas, the higher levels have Group Work and Workbook Exercises. The intent of these lessons is to learn new information using basic reasoning skills, increase vocabulary knowledge, construct meaning from all subject areas, and

develop analytical skills to answer both inferential and literal comprehension questions. For consistency, each type of exercise follows a format that uses the same instructional wording with different examples. These skills are taught orally, practiced in the Workbook Exercises and applied using student books, the Fact Games every five lessons, and the Ravenscourt books or CD-ROM. The FCAT Practice books for each strand provide additional practice.

The materials for each level of the Decoding Strand consist of a Teacher's Guide, two Teacher Presentation Books, a consumable student Workbook, and for Levels B1, B2, and C, a nonconsumable Student Book. Additional tools to differentiate instruction include access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities, practice software, and blackline masters for enrichment activities. Each level of the Comprehension Strand consists of a Teacher's Guide, Teacher Presentation Book/s, and a student Workbook. Other materials aligned with Corrective Reading include: FCAT Practice books, a Teacher's Resource Book, a Content Connections Book, and Ravenscourt Books and Audio CD-Rom's with theme-based fiction, nonfiction, biographies, and retold classics.

The *Corrective Reading* placement tests for Decoding and Comprehension indicate the appropriate level of instruction for each student. Progress monitoring is accomplished through Mastery Tests that are given every tenth lesson and an End-Of-Program Mastery Test to determine mastery of all skills taught in the program. Individual Reading Checkouts regularly measure reading accuracy and rate to provide the teacher with detailed information on the student's reading performance and to show the students how they are progressing. A Behavioral Objective Chart describes the kind of performance that is expected of a student who has mastered the skill and the specific lessons to use in reteaching the skill. A Skills Profile Chart lists each skill taught, the lessons where it is taught and a space to record student mastery of the skill. In addition to the record charts for progress monitoring and mastery tests, there is a point system intended to motivate the students throughout each lesson.

How is Corrective Reading aligned with Current Research?

In the *Corrective Reading* program, the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) are incorporated into a well-integrated design of instructional delivery that is effective for struggling readers. Instruction is explicit and systematic with consistent instructional routines that include teacher modeling, immediate specific feedback, and multiple opportunities for practice. Lessons are built on previously taught information, from simple to complex, with skills cumulatively reviewed and monitored for mastery.

Phonemic awareness, including blending, segmenting, and manipulation of phonemes (deletion, addition, and substitution), are taught in Levels A and B1 of Corrective Reading Decoding. Physical representations are used to help students make the connection between sounds and print with all activities directly linked to the word attack and word reading parts of the lesson.

Phonics is the primary focus of all Decoding levels. Initially, instruction emphasizes the regular and generalizable elements of the reading code. Letter-sound relationships are taught in a defined sequence so that letters that look or sound similar are separated from other similar letters and more frequently used letters are taught before less frequently used letters. Students learn the sounds of the letters in words then blend them together to read the words. After students read the words in isolation fluently, they read these words in context. Highly decodable text (95%) is composed of words with known letter-sound correspondences to ensure greater success with reading

new text. Text gradually increases in difficulty as students develop the prerequisite skills. Spelling becomes a natural extension of these activities through the use of workbooks.

Fluency instruction is addressed in the Group Reading and Reading Checkout part of each lesson (Decoding strand, levels B1, B2, C). The research-based strategy, partner reading, is utilized during the Reading Checkout section. The teacher models prosody and immediate feedback is given to students in the form of formal correction procedure. Fluency goals are included and require students to meet a precise criterion for rate and accuracy. In particular, Decoding strand level A requires students to master reading 60 words per minute (wpm) with 90% accuracy, level B1 requires reading of 90 wpm with 98% accuracy, level B2 requires reading 120 wpm with 98% accuracy, and level C requires reading 150 wpm with 98% accuracy.

Vocabulary is developed through explicit instruction of more difficult words, teacher read alouds, class and independent reading, and writing to solidify understanding. In the Decoding strand, instruction includes an explanation of the word's meaning and use of the new words to answer questions about the stories. In level C, affixes and their meanings are taught in addition to the definition of the new vocabulary in the daily story. In the Comprehension strand, there is extensive work on developing vocabulary knowledge through definitions, synonyms and antonyms, descriptions, and meaning from context. There is a strong focus on developing academic language.

Comprehension instruction focuses on reading to learn. Detailed lessons require teachers to model, guide, and scaffold instruction, while explicitly directing students to monitor their comprehension. Many opportunities exist for students to engage in discussions relating to the meaning of text before, during, and after reading. Teachers use questions during student reading as well as graphic organizers, maps, graphs, and charts to check the student's understanding. Teachers use read alouds from the Content Connections book to model thinking strategies and the use of graphic organizers thus allowing students to focus on the thinking processes without the obstacle of decoding. Through the use of read alouds, students may observe the teacher using experiences, knowledge, and one's view of the world to explain how to understand what is read. Graphic organizers (comparative maps, story maps, thematic maps, continuums, and series of events maps) are included to help students organize, clarify and express their ideas with a variety of fiction and nonfiction text. In this way, the program helps students remember and apply information to new contexts.

SRA consultants offer professional development to teachers, reading coaches, and administrators over a period of three years. In year one, three grade-specific training visits are conducted at all the schools using the program in a county. This includes a focus on how to teach reading, use Corrective Reading, and monitor the success of their instruction. In year two, new teachers receive training at the beginning of the year in addition to two site visits to schools in the county. In year three, beginning teachers have grade-specific training and workshops become part of the district's professional development program. On-site demonstrations of lessons, coaching, teacher observations, and grade-level meetings are available to teachers and coaches. Principals are oriented to the materials and trained in the use of the Corrective Reading Administrators Guide. A Teaching Tutor CD-Rom is provided for ongoing support.

Research Support for Corrective Reading

The *Corrective Reading* program was found to have potentially positive effects for word attack, letter-word identification, sight word efficiency, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. A number of studies have been conducted on *Corrective Reading*.

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Two studies were qualitative and one was a single subject design. These three studies (Torgesen, Myers, Schirm, et al. 2006; Benner, Kinder, Beaudoin, & Stein, 2005; and Flores & Ganz, 2007) met the FCRR standards for research designed to examine program effectiveness (see

http://www.fcrr.org/FCRRReports/PDF/Research_Criteria.pdf).

In 2003-2004, a large-scale, longitudinal study examined the effect of *Corrective Reading* on reading (Torgesen, Myers, Schirm, et al. 2006). This independent third party evaluation was conducted in third and fifth grade classrooms just outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to examine the effectiveness of the word-level components of the *Corrective Reading* Program, along with the effectiveness of three other intervention programs: Failure Free Reading (Lockavitch, 1996), Spell Read P.A.T. (MacPhee, 1990), and Wilson Reading (Wilson, 2002). The design used random assignment at two levels: (1) 50 schools from 27 school districts were randomly assigned to one of the four interventions, and (2) within each school, struggling readers, as identified by their teachers and low test scores, were randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups or a control group receiving regular reading instruction. Students in all five conditions received 50 minutes of instruction five days a week for a total of approximately 90 hours. Students in the treatment group received small-group instruction; students in the control group received regular classroom instruction.

In this study, the students (N=772) had the following characteristics: 45% qualified for free or reduced-price lunches, 27% were African American and 73% were white, 33% had a learning disability and, on average, the sample scored about one-half to one standard deviation below national norms on measures used to assess their ability to decode words. The following seven measures were administered at the beginning and end of the school year to assess student progress in learning to read: phonemic decoding (Word Attack subtest from the *Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests- Revised*, (WRMT-R) (Woodcock, 1998) and Phonemic Decoding Efficiency subtest from the *Test of Word Reading Efficiency*, (TOWRE) (Torgesen, 1999); word reading accuracy and fluency (Word Identification subtest from the WRMT-R, Sight Word Efficiency subtest from the TOWRE, Oral Reading Fluency subtest from *Aimswest Passages* (Edformation, 2002); and reading comprehension (Passage Comprehension subtest from the WRMT-R and Passage Comprehension from the *Group Reading and Diagnostic Evaluation* (Williams, 2001).

Student performance was compared using a hierarchical linear model for each grade to account for the clustering of students in schools. The student's free and reduced lunch status and their pretest scores were controlled for in the analysis. The results indicated a statistically significant gain in Word Attack, Word Identification, Sight Word Efficiency, and Oral Reading Fluency for the third grade students in the *Corrective Reading* treatment group. Fifth grade student outcomes for the *Corrective Reading* treatment group revealed a significant impact on Sight Word Efficiency. For third grade students who were at lower risk (i.e., not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch), there were statistically significant gain scores in Sight Word Efficiency and Oral Reading Fluency.

In another study, fifty-one students enrolled in five elementary and one middle school participated in a research study to determine the efficacy of the *Corrective Reading* Decoding B1 reading program with students of high-incidence disabilities (Benner, Kinder, Beaudoin, & Stein, 2005). Students were in grades three, four, five, six, and eight. A pre-post test quasi-experimental design was implemented with a *Corrective Reading* group (n=28) and a control group (n=23). Both groups were matched on demographic information with the exception of five students not being matched. Both groups were pretested and posttested using three third grade Oral

Reading Fluency measures from the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS)(Good,2002) and the Letter-Word Identification and Word Attack subtests of the *Woodcock Johnson III: Tests of Achievement* (Woodcock, 2001) to assess word reading. The control group participated in typical reading instruction provided in the classroom and the *Corrective Reading* group received an average of three 40-45 minute lessons per week over a four month period. Results indicated that the *Corrective Reading* group showed statistically significant improvements in basic reading over the control group when analyzed using Mann-Whitney U Tests. Effect sizes were larger for the Word Attack subtest (ES=1.15) and moderate for the Letter-Word Identification subtest (ES=.52). The mean change scores of the control group and *Corrective Reading* group on the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency probes were statistically significant at the .05 level with a large effect size (ES=.84). Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine the percentage of students in the *Corrective Reading* group who did not meet normative criteria for nonresponsiveness at posttest. Statistically significant differences were found from pretest to posttest using all three measures of word reading and fluency. This indicates that over half of the students in the *Corrective Reading* group were able to move from the below average to average range during the period of the intervention.

A study designed to observe the effects of *Corrective Reading Thinking Basics: Comprehension Level A* was conducted with four students in grades 5 and 6 with developmental disabilities including autism spectrum disorders and reading delays (Flores & Ganz, 2007). A multiple-probe-across-behaviors experimental design was used for each student in the study. The behavioral conditions implemented were statement inferences, using facts, and analogies. The program was implemented with fidelity with the exception of the addition of visual cues during instruction in the using facts condition. Results indicated that all students did not demonstrate these comprehension skills during baseline which was established by at least three consecutive data points. After instruction all four students met the criterion for each condition (100% accuracy for three consecutive probes) based on assessment using skill-specific probes randomly administered for an average of two to three probes per week per student. After a relatively short period of instruction, 9 or fewer probes, there was a marked increase in student's comprehension scores. All students maintained their performance after reaching criterion and one month after instruction ended. This indicates a functional relationship was demonstrated between the reading comprehension skills measured and the *Corrective Reading Thinking Basics: Comprehension Level A* program.

Conclusion

In summary, the instructional design and content of the decoding component of *Corrective Reading* is consistent with research suggesting that struggling readers may benefit from explicit and systematic instructional sequences on word attack, letter-sound identification, oral reading fluency and beginning levels of comprehension. We conclude that there is an initial level of research on the use of *Corrective Reading* to support decoding and oral reading fluency, particularly for students in third through eighth grade who are reading below grade level. There is additional support for the use of the *Corrective Reading Comprehension A* program to develop a specific set of comprehension skills with students who are more severely impaired. Additional well-designed studies that include random assignment, matched units for assignment and analysis, and equivalent scores on pretests between the treatment and control groups will be useful in determining the efficacy of this program.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths of *Corrective Reading*:

- This program is explicit and systematic, skills build cumulatively, and instruction is differentiated, which may be particularly beneficial for struggling readers and English language learners.
- Scaffolding is consistently emphasized throughout the program.
- The highly organized, all-inclusive nature of the Teacher's Guide will serve as a helpful guide throughout the program.
- Ongoing assessment with oral reading fluency and retell checks help guide instruction.
- The design and content of this program are derived from research.

Weaknesses of *Corrective Reading*:

- None were noted.

Which Florida districts have schools that implement Corrective Reading?

Alachua	352-955-7880	Okeechobee	863-462-5000
Bay	850-872-7700	Orange	407-317-3202
Brevard	321-631-1911	Osceola	407-870-4008
Clay	904-284-6510	Palm Beach	561-434-8200
Columbia	386-755-8003	Pasco	813-794-2326
Escambia	850-469-6130	Polk	863-534-0521
Flagler	386-437-7526	Putnam	386-329-0602
Lake	352-253-6510	Santa Rosa	850-983-5010
Lee	239-337-8301	Seminole	407-320-0006
Leon	850-487-7147	Sumter	352-793-2315
Marion	352-671-7702	Wakulla	850-926-0123

For More Information

<http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/sra/correctivereading.htm>

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Important Note: FCRR Reports are prepared in response to requests from Florida school districts for review of specific reading programs. The reports are intended to be a source of information about programs that will help teachers, principals, and district personnel in their choice of materials that can be used by skilled teachers to provide effective instruction. Whether or not a program has been reviewed does **not** constitute endorsement or lack of endorsement by the FCRR.

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