Goals for Today

1. Learn about the purpose, content, and process, for reviews of instructional materials conducted at FCRR.

2. Learn how to access FCRR's web-based Reports and related resources.

3. Learn important factors to consider when selecting instructional materials that are aligned with SBRR.
Purpose of FCRR Reports

- To be a reliable resource for school districts as they make decisions about instructional materials
- To report the alignment of instructional materials to *Reading First* guidelines and the degree to which they are consistent with current scientifically based reading research (SBRR)
Content of FCRR Reports

- Description
- Alignment with Reading First
- Review of Research
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Contact information of Florida districts that implement the program
- Link to the program’s website
- References
Content of FCRR Reports

- Description
  - Type of program: who, what, where, why
  - Materials
  - Instructional Design
  - Lesson Format
  - Assessment
Content of FCRR Reports

- Alignment with Reading First
  - How each component is addressed
  - Explicit and Systematic
  - Ample practice opportunities
  - Professional development
  - Use this as a “teaching tool” for our readers
  - Describe specific weaknesses or concerns
Content of FCRR Reports

• Review of Research
  – Instructional Content and Design
  – Empirical Research Summaries
• Strengths and Weaknesses
• Contact information of Florida districts that implement the program
• Link to the program’s website
• References
Content of FCRR Reports

• Is
  – Informational
  – factual

• Should not be construed as an
  – Advertisement
  – Endorsement
  – “Approved” product
Process for FCRR Reports

• Florida School districts request a review.
• A comprehensive review of teacher and student materials is conducted.
• A thorough literature review is conducted and all available research is gathered. This research is analyzed and succinctly summarized.
Process for FCRR Reports

- More information is gathered through
  - observations of the program in classrooms.
  - conference calls with principals and teachers who use the program.
  - meetings with the author/publisher.
  - the program’s website.
Curriculum Review Team Members

- Collaborative effort by a review team with one team member taking the lead for each program.
- Former classroom teachers with Doctoral or Master’s Degree in Elementary or Special Education.
- Experience teaching struggling readers, teaching reading methods courses at the university level, and developing reading curriculum.
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How to access FCRR Reports

1. Go to www.fcrr.org
2. Click on FCRR Reports
   • FCRR Reports
     • Initial Instruction; Interventions; Tutors/Mentors; Pre-K; 4-12; Professional Development
     • A Reader’s Guide
     • FAQ’s
     • Information about methods for reviewing materials and programs
FCRR Reports

The Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) has been asked to establish a review process for analyzing reading curricula and materials available for use in Florida. Please read the reports carefully. We have organized them such that a single report may be located under more than one category (e.g., Initial Instruction and Technology Resources).

A Reader’s Guide to FCRR Reports

This important one-page document describes the purpose and process of FCRR Reports.

Frequently Asked Questions About FCRR Reports

This section contains a list of frequently asked questions and answers concerning FCRR Reports.

Information About Methods for Reviewing Materials and Programs

This section contains important information for school districts to consider when making decisions about instructional materials and programs.
## FCRR Reports

### Initial Instruction
A Comprehensive Core Reading Program is intended to be the instructional tool used to guide high quality initial instruction in K-3 classrooms.

### Programs to provide interventions for children lagging behind
These materials are intended for flexible use as part of differentiated instruction or as guides for additional interventions that meet student learning needs in specific areas of deficiency (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary).

### Technology
Programs that use technology to support instruction.

### Programs implemented by Tutors/Mentors
These materials may be appropriate for Volunteers (Tutors or Mentors) to implement. It is important to note that training and supervision is a critical component for successful student outcomes.

### Pre-Kindergarten
These materials are intended to support literacy instruction for children in Pre-K.

### Interventions/Remedial Programs for students in grades 4-12
These materials can be used to guide interventions for students in grade 4-12 who are lagging behind in reading.

### Professional Development
These materials and procedures focus mainly on professional development to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers and other school personnel in the area of reading instruction. Ongoing professional development is essential to the long term success of any reading program.
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Selecting Research Based Instructional Programs: An Overview
Why be concerned with selecting reading programs?

We have evidence that curriculum matters. That is, instruction that’s guided by a systematic and explicit curriculum [SBRR] is more effective, particularly with at-risk learners, than instruction that does not have these features.
There are 3 elements that constitute scientifically based reading programs. We are going to focus on the first 2, Instructional Content and Instructional Design.

The third element, Empirical Evidence, refers to the experimental research that has been conducted to support the efficacy of the use of the program itself. A majority of reading programs do not have this type of evidence (although some do). Many have testimonials and anecdotal evidence and even some research with a pre/post test design. However, most reading programs do not have research that used a true experimental design (with control groups, randomization, etc.).
Who has ever baked a chocolate cake? What are the ingredients? Would you ever add garlic? Salmon?  
If we wanted to bake a chocolate cake, we need to know what type of ingredients to include to achieve our goal.  
A reading program needs to have specific ingredients— or content— included as well.
Instructional Content

• Core elements of scientifically based programs include explicit and systematic instruction in the following:
  – phonemic awareness
  – phonics
  – fluency
  – vocabulary
  – comprehension strategies

Just as there are specific ingredients that need to go into baking a chocolate cake, there are specific ingredients that make up a reading program that is SBRR. Here is the instructional content that should be included in scientifically based reading programs. For each of the five elements, I’m going to provide a definition of the element, the research base to support the element, and instructional examples of the element from reading programs.
Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words (Torgesen, 1998).
PA Research & Instruction

• PA improves word reading, spelling, and comprehension
• Poor readers who enter first grade with weak PA are most likely to be the poor readers in fourth grade
• Auditory Activities
• Needs to follow the developmental hierarchy of phonological awareness
There are 5 levels of phonological awareness. It is important for teachers to understand the developmental hierarchy of pa so that instruction is sequenced logically.

The stair steps represent the hierarchy of pa skills beginning with easier pa skills and progressing towards the top of the stairs which is phonemic awareness—the most sophisticated level of phonological awareness.

Word Level: Rhyming & Alliteration; Sentence Segmenting
Syllable Level: Blending and Segmenting Syllables
Onset-Rime: Beginning of word (until the first vowel) is the onset. Rest of the word is the rime. Segmenting them and then blending them together.

Phoneme Level—the most sophisticated level of phonological awareness—we want all students to successfully achieve this level. Segmenting and blending words by individual sounds
Phonics

An understanding of the alphabetic principle—the relationship between phonemes and graphemes.
Phonics Research

- “Systematic and explicit phonics instruction is more effective than non-systematic or no phonics instruction”
  (Put Reading First, p. 13).

- “Systematic and explicit phonics instruction significantly improves children’s reading comprehension”
  (Put Reading First, p. 14).
Phonics Instruction

• Systematic
  - pre-specified sequence of letter–sound correspondences taught in a logical order (e.g., most common sounds taught first; progresses from simple to more complex; once a few letter sounds are learned, students are taught a decoding strategy; students apply recently learned phonics to reading connected text)

• Explicit
  - taught directly (teacher modeling, providing guided practice, and independent practice)
Fluency

• The ability to read text
  – quickly,
  – accurately,
  – and with proper expression

(NRP 2000)
Reading programs should:
- encourage teachers to read aloud to students to provide a good model of fluency
- provide teachers with guidelines to determine students’ independent reading levels
- include activities where students are reading orally and receiving corrective feedback from teachers
- provide research based fluency building strategies
Vocabulary

- The knowledge of the meanings and pronunciation of words that are used in oral and written language.
Vocabulary Research & Instruction

• Can be developed
  – directly (teach important, difficult, and useful words)
  – indirectly

• Teach word learning strategies
  – How to use dictionaries and reference aids
  – How to use word parts to determine meaning of words
  – How to use context clues to determine meaning

• Provide multiple exposures to words

• Read aloud to students

• Encourage independent wide reading
Comprehension

• The ability to make sense of text and to monitor for understanding.
Comprehension Research

“Text comprehension can be improved by instruction that helps readers use specific comprehension strategies.”

• “Effective comprehension strategy instruction is explicit, or direct.”

*Put Reading First, pp. 49, 53*
Comprehension Instruction

• Monitoring comprehension (promoting metacognition)

• Using graphic and semantic organizers
  – e.g., teaching the use of a Venn diagram to compare and contrast 2 characters from a story

• Main Idea

• Summarizing

• Text Structure
Instructional Content of a Reading Program = Ingredients

We have just been discussing examples of instructional content—or our ingredients of a reading program.
Now we are going to talk about some general features of well-designed programs and show a few examples that illustrate those features. This section focuses on how program components are organized and how the lessons are designed.

Now, we still have the goal of baking a chocolate cake, so we need a recipe, or guide to tell us let us know how to put the ingredients together in order to have the outcome we desire—in our case a chocolate cake! The instructional design of a reading program is the coherent plan that puts the content together in a logical way so that we can successfully help students achieve reading success.
Instructional Design

• Features of well-designed programs include:
  – explicit instructional strategies
  – coordinated instructional sequences
  – ample practice opportunities
  – aligned student materials
Explicit Instruction

1. Teacher Models and Explains
2. Teacher provides Guided Practice
   • Students practice what the teacher modeled and the teacher provides prompts and feedback
3. Teacher provides Supported Application
   • Students apply the skill as the teacher scaffolds instruction
4. Independent Practice

This is a teaching routine that should be evident in research based programs for all components of reading.
Coordinated Instructional Sequences

Phonological → Phonemic Awareness

Phonics

Fluency

Vocabulary

Comprehension Strategies
Coordinated Instructional Sequences

• Phonemic Awareness:
  – Students practice orally segmenting and blending words with /m/
• Phonics:
  – Students learn to connect /m/ with the letter m
• Fluency & Comprehension:
  – reading word lists that include words that have /m/ and other previously learned letter sounds
  – reading decodable passages (using repeated readings) that include many words with /m/
• Spelling
  – spelling words that include /m/ and other letter sounds previously learned

Elementary Example
Notes:
An example of a coordinated instructional sequence with three different instructional activities (phonological awareness, connecting sound-spelling, and practice/apply) with the letter/sound m
• first students practice oral blending focusing on the /m/ sound
• then students learn to connect the sound with the letter m
• finally, students read words which include the /m/ sound
Ample Practice Opportunities

• Ample practice opportunities are provided when students are asked to apply what they have been taught in order to accomplish specific reading tasks.
• Practice should follow in a logical relationship with what has just been taught in the program.
• Once skills are internalized, students are provided with opportunities, for example at student learning centers, to independently apply previously learned information.

An example of ample practice opportunities to promote reading fluency

- The program provides teachers with various practice exercises to promote fluency on a daily basis.
- The program provides teachers with activities organized to accommodate a range of reading abilities.
Aligned Student Materials

• The content of student materials (texts, activities, homework, manipulatives, etc.) work coherently with classroom instruction to reinforce the acquisition of specific skills in reading. Student aligned materials include a rich selection of coordinated student materials at various readability levels to help build skills through practice.

• One way a program aligns student materials with instruction is by providing materials for the students to read that reflect that instruction.
• One example: the text selections that students read should be closely aligned with the phonics instruction they receive.
Examples of Aligned Student Materials

- If students are taught specific letter-sound relationships, they should have the opportunity to practice applying that knowledge to decoding words in text. Instruction should support the kind of reading practice students are assigned.
- If students are taught specific vocabulary words, they should have the opportunity to read materials containing those words, or engage in writing activities that apply those words in sentences or paragraphs.

> One way a program aligns student materials with instruction is by providing materials for the students to read that reflect that instruction.

> One example: the text selections that students read should be closely aligned with the phonics instruction they receive.
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<thead>
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**Ingredients**

**Recipe**
Reading Programs PLUS

- Reading programs can make a valuable contribution to raising the reading achievement of at-risk students, however…

Notes:
Notes:
Reading achievement for at-risk students can be improved. Scientifically based reading programs will provide the foundation for this effort. In concert with effective instruction, assessment, and professional development, and under good leadership, all students will learn to read.
Delicious Chocolate Cake!
Happy, independent, fluent readers!
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Thank You