



Archived: Catalog of School Reform Models Reading/Language Arts Models

Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (K - 12)

Accepted for Inclusion 7/1/1999

Description Written 8/1/1999

Re-accepted 12/1/2005

Description Updated 3/1/2006

Type of Model	reading/language arts
Founder	Ethna R. Reid
Current Service Provider	Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction
Year Established	1974
# of Schools Served (6/1/2002)	3,436
Level	K - 12 (with primary focus on K-8)
Primary Goal	teach students to read, write, listen, and speak so they can communicate effectively and achieve at significantly higher levels
Main Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mastery learning approach to language arts instruction • individualized instruction • emphasis on expressive skills (writing and speaking) as well as receptive skills (reading and listening) • applications to other content areas
Impact on Instruction	teachers learn to identify students' learning styles and adjust instruction accordingly
Impact on Organization/Staffing	program is facilitated through grade-level planning, coaching, mentor teachers, and an on-site staff facilitator (recommended)
Impact on Instruction	three daily instructional components: skills, practice, and backup skills; considerable time devoted to small group and individualized instruction; multi-day schedules are used when time is limited
Impact on Organization/Staffing	educators evaluate possible re-deployment of current staff; key persons serve as site facilitator and certified trainer(s)
Impact on Schedule	educators evaluate current schedules and use of time
Subject-Area Programs Provided by Developer	yes

Parental Involvement	ECRI materials address parent involvement
Technology	no new technology required
Materials	22 teacher texts required; teaching materials and mastery tests that correspond to student textbooks are provided

Origin/Scope

The Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) has been teaching teachers since 1966 when Granite School District in Salt Lake City received a Title III grant. Ethna R. Reid has been its director since that time. Teachers from thousands of schools (mostly elementary and middle schools) in all 50 states have received ECRI training. Developers estimate that 1,850 elementary and 509 secondary schools have adopted ECRI as a schoolwide reading program.

General Approach

ECRI is a highly structured, teacher directed, mastery learning approach to instruction in language arts. Increased time on task, high expectations, individualized instruction, positive reinforcement, use of overt responses from students, and integrated instruction are all hallmarks of this approach.

Using reading materials currently in place at the school, ECRI-trained teachers follow dialogues, or scripts, as they move students through three daily instructional components: skills, practice, and backup skills. During skills time, teachers use a three-step process to introduce new material: modeling, prompting, and practice. Students sometimes respond in unison and sometimes individually to teacher prompts. ECRI teachers deploy a variety of instructional methods as they teach vocabulary, comprehension, literature, creative and expository writing, and study skills.

Practice time, when students learn to use the skills introduced in skills instruction, is devoted to three primary tasks: small group discussions, individual conferences with students, and individually administered mastery tests (oral or written performance-based tests). Teachers learn to develop mastery tests based on the curriculum and materials in place at the school. Students progress at their own pace as they demonstrate mastery of skills. Students also learn to keep records, diagnose problems, and judge when they are ready for mastery tests.

Backup skills time is reserved for instruction in penmanship, spelling, dictation, and proofreading. Throughout all components of instruction, ECRI stresses that expressive skills (writing and speaking) are more important than receptive skills (reading and listening). Therefore, ECRI students write and discuss daily.

Although the ECRI approach was designed for language arts instruction, it can be used in other content areas as well.

Content teachers are given units that pre-assess; teach key vocabulary, comprehension and study skills; provide hands-on experiences, and stimulate discussion.

