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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS:
A PARENT EDUCATION MODEL

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts
in
Education: Reading

by

Joan Marie Prehoda

June 1993

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June 1993

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ABSTRACT

Beginning reading is a passage from language heard to language seen" (Bissex, 1980). For most children the journey begins before entering school. For others, the beginning of school finds the transformation yet to begin. The passage is made easier when parents understand their role in the achievement of literacy.

A pertinent issue is informing parents of this mandate and making it understandable. Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. From infancy through childhood, parents instinctively respond to their child's attempts at oral language. As children progress from babbling to first sentences, parents are proud and understand that oral language is learned through a gradual process of approximations. This method will lead to a standard form of communication. Reading is another form of language and the same type of parent guidance is required.

When parents become involved with their child's education, great things can happen. There is overwhelming evidence that points to the success of parent participation. Parents who become involved in their child's school empower themselves, their children, and the community in which they live. Children who receive help from their parents with reading, have a great advantage over those who do not. Most parents instinctively provide a supportive reading environment. Parents need to be assured that they are on the right track and introduced to new ways to expand their current methods.

The purpose of this project is to support and educate the parents of early readers. A series of workshops will introduce the parent to the stages of reading development. Parents will learn how to identify each stage and will learn ways to support and encourage their young readers. In addition to the workshops the parent will receive a handbook that will introduce a variety of ways to help young readers. During each session the handbook will be expanded. Parents will use it to respond to activities that occur during the sessions. The workshops will introduce, demonstrate, and practice the strategies of reading aloud, guided reading, and shared reading. Parents will also learn how to help their child predict and read for meaning as well as learn additional oral reading strategies.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Beginning reading is a passage from language heard to language seen" (Bissex, 1980). For most children the journey begins before entering school. For others, the beginning of school finds the transformation yet to begin. The passage is made easier when parents understand their role in the achievement of literacy.

A pertinent issue is informing parents of this mandate and making it understandable. Parents today face many problems. Frequently both parents work outside the home. They are overworked and often too tired to help their children at the end of the day. Some families are hard hit by economic times. Many unemployed parents, dealing with the day to day struggle to survive, cannot focus on anything else. They have no time to help with school work. Large numbers of children come from single parent homes. The custodial parent is frequently overwhelmed by the pressure and demands of being both mother and father. Another factor that must be addressed is the non English speaking population and how they can be informed. One must also consider how to get the information to parents. In most schools there already is a tremendous paper trail. How can we ask parents to read one more thing? Finally, there is an informed population. This presents a different type of challenge. Some parents may have preconceived views such as this from the magazine *Better Homes and Gardens* (Atkins, 1992), "One of the latest and most controversial, approaches to teaching reading and writing is called whole language" (p. 36). All of these points must be

considered when working in the area of parent education, and when developing resources for parents of early readers.

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher: "the primary architect" of beginning literacy (Bissex, 1980; Darling, 1992; Greer-Jewell, & Zintz, 1990; Kanoti, in press). A five year old has learned a great deal about communication because parents support the child's acquisition of oral language. From infancy through childhood, parents instinctively respond to their child's first attempts at language. They are pleased as the child progresses from cooing sounds to their first words. Parents understand that oral language is learned through a gradual process of approximations that will lead to a standard form of communication. Reading is another form of language and it requires the same type of parental support. Children learn to talk, "...gradually, naturally, with a minimum of direct instruction" (Weaver, 1988, p. 45). It is logical to use the same procedure when learning to read and write. A child is surrounded by print: signs, food packages, advertisements, magazine, books, and newspapers. Most children learn to read the word "McDonalds" and their name at a very young age. Some children have a favorite book which has been read to them on repeated occasions. The children practice this book on their own. This occurs naturally because it is meaningful to the child. Initially, children will read by looking at the pictures and telling the story. Parents believe that this is not really reading. When the child memorizes the text, the parents once again are concerned that this is not reading. Parents applaud first

attempts at literacy, but seldom understand the significance.

When a child enters first grade and begins formalized reading instruction, the issue of greatest concern to parents is that their child read every word correctly. Parents consider minor work substitutions such "a" for "the", to be errors. Current research has found that substitutions or miscues, are not of concern if the meaning of the story is not affected (Weaver, 1988; Harp, 1991; Goodman, 1986). Another concern of parents is what strategy to use when the child stumbles on an unknown passage. Many parents choose decoding as the first and only strategy. Teachers want the child to handle unfamiliar passages with other strategies which include, skipping the difficult section and reading on to gain meaning, rereading, and making use of picture and context clues. Children are frustrated when their parents ask them to decode. Parents are disgruntled with the school's lack of emphasis on phonics. The child is caught between two authorities and each expects something different. "However, neither is aware of the others' expectations" (DeJesus, 1985, p. 847).

There is much information available on the importance of reading to children and many resources for parents on creating a literate environment. There is however, a limited amount of material on how to help emergent readers with oral reading. Parents become frustrated when their child memorizes a story because they do not view this as reading. In addition, most parents have one strategy when listening to their child read: sound out unknown

sections. Research shows that good readers employ more than one method when faced with the unfamiliar. There is a need to inform parents of other ways to help emergent readers. This project will introduce parents to new ways to help their beginning reader that reaffirms the importance of the role of parents in their child's success (Nicoll, & Wilkie, 1991). In the face of reductions in educational funding and rising classroom size, it is necessary for teacher to enlist the support and help of parents.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Whole language has been referred to as a controversial approach to reading instruction (Atkins, 1992). However, educators have wrestled with the tenets of whole language since the progressive education movement of the late 1800's and early 1900's. From the Quincy Literacy Lessons to John Dewey's "Schools of the Future", educators have debated the best approach to teaching. It was Dewey who suggested that "...the interests of the child are the primary sources of learning" (Spring, 1989, p. 79). By starting with the interests of the student, the lessons could then be connected to the world outside of school and learning made meaningful. Watson, Burke, and Harste (1989) suggest that "Learning involves finding patterns that connect" (p. 29). In today's classrooms teachers still struggle to make this connection. Students are active participants in their learning, making choices along the way. The teacher has the role as the guide, rather than imposer of knowledge (Flores, 1991).

The child centered schools of the early 1900's also searched for ways to make learning meaningful. The curriculum was based on the interest of the student. According to Shannon (1990), "...through projects, students would use their literacy in meaningful contexts as a method of coming to know ideas of interest" (p. 84). These schools included opportunities for students to express their understanding of literature through the various art forms. This practice is being used more and more in today's classrooms.

A basic belief of whole language is that learning is easy when it

makes sense. In the 1920's, Lucy Sprague Mitchell also understood the importance of this concept. She examined the reading materials available during her time and found that "...familiarity of the words, subjects, and rhythms helped children comprehend better and become more involved in language lessons" (Shannon, 1990, p. 117). This reflects a major belief of whole language: Reading and writing should be meaningful. According to Smith (1995), "Children learn to read by reading" (p. 88); by reading books that have appealing stories and illustrations; books that children are eager to read again and again. Books that make sense and do not contain contrived and controlled vocabulary. This is an essential ingredient in the whole language experience.

Socio-psycholinguistics have expanded the knowledge of language and learning. They have broadened the foundation of whole language by considering how factors such as culture, race, and economic class, affect literacy. According to Shannon (1990), "Early studies concluded that a literate environment (many books, literate parents, and siblings, etc.) were associated with young children's later success with literacy" (p. 140). The involvement of parents further strengthens the development of reading. Fostering the parent and child relationship in the learning process builds a sense of ownership and cements the bond between home and school. This project will empower parents to take an active role in their child's reading education.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"The better the bridge between home and school, the better the education--that's the message of recent research" (Nicoll et al, 1991, p. 22). If the message of research is greater parent participation, then why is this area of education so often ignored? Henderson (1988) proposes that the decline in educational achievement has paralleled the decline in parental involvement. Recruiting parent interest and help is an urgent need in our current educational system. However, recruitment alone is not enough. Thoughtful planning, an understanding of the power of the teacher-student-parent relationship, and a consideration of current research are all essential. Parents are a plentiful and often untapped resource available to all schools (Henderson, 1988). In reviewing the literature relative to this project, three key areas emerge. They include research on the success of parent involvement in education, common characteristics of flourishing parent programs, and specific strategies for parents to use when helping children with reading.

The Success of Parent Involvement in Education

The history of parental involvement in the American school systems is long and varied. During colonial America, few children received a formal education. Parents were responsible for their child's education. In 1852, Massachusetts passed the first law requiring formal schooling for all children. Through the early part of this century schools played a major role in the social structure of towns. It was common to meet the principal or a teacher at

community functions or the local store. James Comer (1986) writes of the impact that this had on him as he was growing up, "The knowledge that my parents knew and appeared to like and respect the people at my school had a profound impact on my behavior" (p.5). As a result of increased industrialization and improved technology, Americans have moved from the rural setting to urban societies in increasing numbers. In this situation school personnel are rarely a part of the community in which they teach. The difference between school and home is further emphasized. Parents are in charge of their child's first five or six years of learning and the schools are in charge of the remainder (Burke, 1985). Teachers are exasperated when children come to school unprepared and parents are upset when their children are not learning in school. Burke (1985) contends that it is necessary to rethink traditional roles. A collaborative role between student, parent, and teacher is the most logical and powerful solution, "No one is to blame, but everyone is responsible" (Burke, 1985, p. 842). Redding (1991) refers to the supportive role of combining teachers, parents, administrators, and students as a means to build "...social capital...the expectations and obligations people feel toward one another" (p, 6). This will in turn advocate education.

A collaborative role in education produces significant gains for both the student and the school. Students improvement as a result of parental help is well founded in research. In 1981 the National Committee for Citizens in Education examined 35 studies on parental

involvement in its publication, The Evidence Grows. The results of all studies supported parental involvement with students. Henderson (1988) reported that "...parental help in almost any form appears to produce measurable gain in student achievement" (p. 149). In 1987 the National Committee for Citizens in Education conducted a similar study of parental involvement that "...place the conclusion well beyond dispute..." (Henderson, 1988, p. 149): Parents can produce positive and impressive gains on student achievement. These results are further strengthened by Gelfer (1991) who states that "...when parents participate or are involved in their children's learning at school, children have a greater chance of success" (p. 164). A strong connection between home and school is essential to the child's success (Flaxman & Inger, 1992; Howe, 1991).

A concern of many administrators and teachers is the diminished potential for success when the parents are low income and poorly educated. Unfortunately this is a common stereotype. James Comer (1986) studied this problem and designed a long term parent involvement program. An inner city school in the New Haven, Connecticut school district was chosen for the study. The school was ranked second to last in achievement in the district, had poor student and teacher attendance, and a myriad of problems including apathy, conflict, and severe student behavior problems. Comer, with input and help from the Yale Child Study Center, the National Institute of Minority Group Studies, and the local Title 1 program, created and implemented a number of programs. Of utmost importance was the

emphasis on parent participation. The results have been impressive: student and faculty attitude and attendance improved, behavior problems were greatly reduced, parent and staff relations improved, and academic achievement was at or near targeted levels. This study began in 1969 and was re-evaluated in 1984. Once again the results were commanding: The school continued to maintain high attendance for staff and students, serious behavior problems were virtually nonexistent, and the school was ranked fourth in the district in achievement levels. After examining results such as these, Henderson (1986) argued that, "Parent involvement is neither a quick fix or a luxury; it is absolutely fundamental to a healthy system of public education" (p. 153). The strength of the Comer Process is evident in the 1990's. The model is used by many inner city schools throughout the country and continues to be highly effective (Elliot, 1992). The Jackie Robinson Middle School in New Haven, the first school to implement the program, reports consistent success with 85% to 90% of the students continuing on to complete high school. The crux of education in the Comer Process are the children. However, they are "...not alone, around each child are significant adults in the child's life" (Elliot, 1992, p. 37). The adults' role is to offer support, assistance, and encouragement. By doing this, the child's self esteem and self confidence are strengthened. These in turn serve to increase the child's chance for success.

In the 1960's Dolores Durkin undertook a significant study of early readers which further confirms the importance of parental

involvement. This project has become a landmark in the field of parent education. Durkin conducted two longitudinal studies: one in Oakland, California and the other in New York City. The purpose was to understand how young children learned to read without formal instruction and without completing the required reading readiness exercises. Through observations, parent interviews, and formalized reading assessments, Durkin assembled a list of the common experiences of early readers. She found that from an early age the children were read to on a daily basis. The parent and child interacted during the reading which made the experience a positive social connection. A variety of reading and writing materials were available. Parents modeled reading and they were responsive to the child's requests for help. Once again a deciding factor in the child's success is the involvement of the parents. Durkin also stresses the type of parent interaction. The families of early readers were willing to give help but did not try to teach reading. Rasinski (1991) believes that "A literate environment doesn't teach children how to read; rather it provides children with opportunities to enjoy reading and discover the many ways it can be used to enrich the experiences in their lives" (p. 439). In this study early readers came from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, disputing a concern that only educated, economically stable homes can support reading. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) undertook an ethnographic study of young, black children who were living in extreme poverty, and yet were becoming literate. The authors found that family attitudes play

an important role in reading achievement. Taylor et al. (1988) discovered that the parents accepted and praised the child's first attempts at literacy. Parents also took an interest in the child's homework and provided help and encouragement. The correlation between family attitudes and reading achievement is illustrated in the observation of a young mother, Tanya, with her children. Tanya enjoyed reading and passed this enjoyment to her children, "...reading books with her children was one of the ways she helped them as they learned to read and write..." (Taylor et al. 1988, p. 135). In order to survive and to encourage literacy, the families in this study believed in their ability to raise healthy children. The children lived in a loving, structured environment where rules were expected to be followed. Families were concerned with the welfare of their children and parents celebrated the child's growing independence and literacy. According to Dorsey et al. (1988) "Sex, race, economic status, and setting, cannot be used as significant correlates of literacy" (p. 201). Research in this area is expanding and continues to confirm the connection between family attitudes and reading achievement (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986; Stanovich, 1986). California's English-Language Arts Framework (1987) recognizes the importance of family and states that, "Parents and families too must invest in the growth of students' facility with language arts by being willing to read to them, support and model the need for reading and writing..." (p. 37).

The research on parental help as it relates to reading

achievement was further broadened by Hewison (1988). This study was designed to compare three groups of six to eight year old children. Each group received reading help; one group was given extra reading help in school from a trained specialist, and the third group, the control group, received no extra help. The parents were asked to simply listen to their child read. The specialists used supplementary reading materials. At the end of the year long study the children who had received parental assistance were reading better than the other groups, even better than the group taught by the teacher specialist. Hewison (1988) reassessed this project three years after it was completed. The strong argument for parental involvement is evident in the results of the follow up study. Hewison (1988) states "Children...who had taken part in the parent involvement exercises were reading better at 11 years of age than comparable children who had not" (p. 187).

After examining the research on the success of parent involvement programs, it is evident that this area deserves serious consideration by educators and parents. Taylor et al. (1988) believes that parents empower their children to become literate, "If we believe that the family is the primary institution that endows meaning and value to human life, we must support the family and help parents to raise and educate their child" (p. 203).

Characteristics of Flourishing Parent Programs

When developing a parent involvement program it is prudent to analyze existing models for success and failure. According to

Redding (1991) the driving factor of any parent program should be centered around "A partnership model of parent involvement..." that "...makes parents and school personnel part of the same enterprise; seeing that all children succeed" (p. 7). After examining the research available for this topic, several key areas require consideration: the reasons why some parent programs fail, the guiding principles of successful planning, and an examination of successful programs.

In spite of good intentions and detailed planning, some parent involvement programs are destined to fail. This occurs for a number of reasons. Some parents have uncomfortable and negative memories of school which carry over to their adult life. These adverse feelings often lead to a mistrust of school personnel (Rasinski, 1989; Handel, 1992; Vandergrift & Green, 1992). In addition many programs are designed with the middle class parent in mind. According to Flaxman et al. (1992):

...models of parental involvement do not always reach the parents who most need it, teach skills parents may not want to learn, and imply that school success is only for children whose parents conform to established middle class norms, such programs reinforce barriers already in place between low income and minority parents and the schools (p. 4).

Many parent programs fail because the needs of low income and minority parents are not met by traditional programs. Parents cannot be molded to the program, rather the program must be adapted to meet the parent (Auerbach, 1998). Vandergrift et al. (1992) have done extensive research on school with at risk

populations. They believe "The secret to ..." a successful parent program "...is to know who your parents are and to have in a school's repertoire as many options for involvement as possible" (p. 59). As a result of the Arizona At Risk Project, Vandergrift, et al. (1992) have developed a list of suggestions for the most effective ways to involve parents. It is essential to establish a personal rapport with the parents. Initially, do not require high levels of participation and frequently assess the needs of the parents. It is critical to offer a broad range of activities, and to personalize home and school communication. A final area to be considered is the school's understanding of what parent involvement means. Is it joining the PTA, helping with homework, or volunteering in the classroom? Many schools have not answered this basic question and consequently are unfamiliar with ways to include parents (Coleman, 1991).

When designing a parent involvement program it is crucial to examine the guiding principles of existing exemplary programs. Mavrogenes (1990) believes that a successful parent program begins with an emphasis on the importance of the parent as the child's first teacher. The needs of the parents and children are then assessed. The strengths of the family must be taken into consideration. A productive program will be long term, well planned and preventive, not remedial (Flaxman, et al. 1992; Rasinski, 1989). According to Mavrogenes (1990) a parent program requires the support of the entire school staff as well as the school board and the community.

Handel (1992) stresses the importance of the role and attitude of teachers. Their support is essential to the success of the program. This is also confirmed by Edward and Jones-Young (1992), "An ecological approach and shared responsibility through multiple partnerships could free educators to better focus on learning needs" (p. 78).

Parent involvement programs must also assess the best means to include parents. Rasinski (1989) states that parents should be included from the very beginning; the planning phases. Program leadership that is shared between school personnel and parents is the most effective means of starting. To reach the low income and minority families a varied approach should be taken. Newsletters and dittos on helpful suggestions will not be effective; Mavrogenes (1990) recommends the use of workshops. A variety of activities offered at different times, will reach the widest audience. Coleman (1991) stresses the use of modern technology: voice mail, fax machines, and videos. Additional suggestions on the best way to contact parents include: "flood" parents with a large amount of visual information, involve students in recruiting and design, give recognition for involvement, use flexible scheduling, and enlist community support (Fredericks & Rasinski, 1990).

An examination of thriving parent participation programs offers insight into worthwhile practices. Mavrogenes (1990), in developing models to use with low income and minority parents, provides many useful ideas. The author stresses the use of

interactive workshops which are offered at a variety of times. The affective aspects of parent involvement include to greet parents as they arrive, provide name tags, and have displays of student work. The most auspicious programs offer transportation and babysitting. Door prizes and refreshments serve as an enticement for parents to attend. Recognition is given to parents for their participation.

Handel (1992) addresses the uniqueness of low income and minority families, "...family literacy programs attempt to break the cycle of under achievement by providing literacy experiences that benefit all members of the family, adults as well as children" (p. 116). Handel is the director of the Partnership for Family Reading Program in New Jersey. The goal of the program is to help parents support literacy for their children as well as improve their own literacy. The Partnership is a series of workshops which introduce parents to exemplary children's books. It also shows parents how to read aloud and ways to discuss the book. Parents watch a demonstration and then have a chance to practice the procedure with another adult in the workshop. The parents are then given the opportunity to borrow the books to use at home. Workshops do not tell parents what to do, rather "...seek to engage the adults in the reading process" (Handel, 1992, p. 119). Parent and teacher support for this program is strong. Parents report a new sense of family closeness, teachers are pleased that the quality and quantity of home reading has improved, children feel a sense of pride and community because their parents are involved in school, and many parents are

inspired to return to school to complete their own education or seek new employment.

In addition to the programs discussed in the previous section, there are many other outstanding programs. The Nuebert Elementary School in Algonquin, Illinois has an effective partnership with parents. The basis of the program is a receptive school climate: parents feel comfortable, and mothers can bring their preschool children. The teaching staff is cooperative and involved. The students are proud to have their parents working at the school (Fredericks , et al. 1990). In rural Mississippi, Lovelady (1992) is associated with the Quality Education Project (QEP). The project is founded on two basic premises: all parents love their children and schools need the entire community working together to improve the educational system. Lovelady reports a powerful example of community support. An important meeting to introduce parents to ways to help their children was scheduled during the day. The manager of the local mill closed the plant so that parents could attend: the epitome of community support. Redding (1991), after examining the research on parent involvement, summarized the findings:

To include 15 parents in a parent education program that causes them to spend more time reading with their children and less time watching television with them will have a more profound effect than a school chili supper attended by 100 parents (p. 6).

Reading Strategies for Parents

Parents frequently ask for advice concerning the best way to

help their child with reading. However, many parents believe that they are unqualified to help. According to Mavrogenes (1990) "All parents can learn to foster children's literacy" (p. 4). Many things that a parent can do to help with reading involve patience, sensitivity, and encouragement; money and special training are not required. A common problem is the lack of knowledge about whole language. Most parents were taught to read using the skills model of reading. Whole language is very different. In order to gain acceptance and support from parents it is essential to explain and demonstrate the basic elements of the theory. A comparison of reading, writing, and the acquisition of oral language is an effective means to introduce the whole language philosophy (Greer-Jewell et al. 1990; Nicoll et al. 1991). "It takes children approximately 18 months to learn to talk and about the same to learn to read and write (Nicoll et al. 1991, p. 18). This comparison allows parents to understand and accept deviations from standard language.

When learning to talk, a child progresses from babbling to first words and sentences. Learning to read also progresses in recognizable stages. Informing parents of this, and giving suggestions on ways to help, permits the children to learn to read in a natural manner. Hart-Hewins and Wells (1990) in a book written for teachers, offer five stages of reading development. The information in the text is also appropriate for parents. Stage One encompasses the youngest of readers. Children are not aware of the print on the page, but can tell the story from the pictures. When the

adult reads the book, the child may be able to join in on the repetitive sections. Nicoll et al. (1991) recognize the significance of this stage, "When a child sits alone turning the pages of a book and telling themselves the story...they are exhibiting reading like behavior--a fancy term which means that they are learning about stories and their importance" (p. 8). In Stage Two the child develops an awareness of print, but still relies heavily on prior knowledge of the book. Repeated reading of books is essential (Strickland & Morrow, 1990). Hill (1989) states that "rereading the same material to children helps to affirm previously held information while at the same time helps them to extend the knowledge they have" (p. 34). Parents often worry that the child is merely memorizing and not reading. This, however, is a natural stage and it shows that the child is constructing meaning from the story. Memorization, according to Hoskisson (cited in Greer-Jewell et al. 1990) "...appears to be a very important component and should receive more attention than it has because all children seem to go through this phase of constructing their knowledge of the written language when learning to read naturally" (p. 492). It is in Stage Three, the emergent reader, that children reach a milestone. There is an awareness of the sound to print connection and children enjoy practicing their books repeatedly. During Stage Four, the developing reader, the children seem to have learned to read almost overnight (Hart-Hewins et al. (1990), "They use a combination of semantic, syntactic, and phonic cues to decode words they don't know" (p. 41). The final step in

reading is Stage Five, the independent reader. The child is able to read silently and is developing into a lifelong reader.

Greer-Jewel et al. (1990) recognize similar developmental stages of reading when a child is learning to read a favorite book. First the child listens and talks about the pictures, with no awareness of the print. The correction phase follows. It is during this stage that the child notices which parts of the story are missed and demands to hear the correct version. This is followed by the memorization phase. "The child is literally bringing meaning to print; and in reading what the brain says to the eye matters more than what the eye says to the brain" (Greer-Jewel et al. 1990, p. 13). The child then develops a sense of sound to print and is ready for assisted reading. During this activity the child and parent read together with the child chiming in at the familiar sections.

Several researchers have compiled a list of tips for parents. Due to the fact that whole language strategies vary from skills and decoding strategies, it is important to thoroughly explain these to parents. In whole language the purpose of reading is to gain meaning. Whereas in skills and decoding, it is to read the words or sounds correctly. In whole language, each word does not have to be correct if meaning is obtain. "There are two key concepts which developing readers should come to associate with books: Meaning and enjoyment" (Nicoll et al. 1991, p. 57). One of the best ways to support beginning readers is to praise their efforts, and trace the print as it is read. The parent can assist with unfamiliar sections but

first must allow time for children to track back through their memory. Memorizing is part of the process of learning how to read. Parents need to be re-assured of the importance of this stage. A final way for parents to support reading is to talk about the story, discuss what is happening and why (Nicoll et al. 1991). Hill (1989) advocates many of the same suggestions. She believes that a child must be able to read without interruption. Hill (1989) suggests that parents encourage the reader to skip the unknown passage and read on. At that point ask the reader to go back and predict the unknown word. "The main thing to keep in mind is that whenever the reader stops or is interrupted, comprehension usually suffers" (Hill, 1989, p.45). The exception to this rule is when the child has lost the meaning of the story. This often happens when the reader spends the majority of time decoding. Parents understand the importance of comprehension and the crux of whole language is obtaining meaning. It is necessary to introduce parents to whole language reading strategies. "Rasinski (1990) states that "...such advice needs to be non threatening, easy to offer initially and to continue offering, and something that both parents and children find rewarding" (p. 344).

Parents are essential to their child's success in reading. When designing and implementing a parent involvement model, three key elements emerge. First, the research in parent programs points to overwhelming gains in student achievement. Second, the characteristics of effective programs must be studied. Finally there is a need to introduce parents to whole language and to new ways of

helping their children with oral reading. It is this last area that presents the greatest need. This project will give parents the necessary background as well as introduce them to a variety of ways to help their child with oral reading.

GOALS

This project develops a program for parent instruction that includes three workshop sessions, and an interactive parent handbook aimed at giving parents information critical to supporting a whole language environment. The specific goals for the program include:

- Parents will understand their importance to their child's success in education and as a consequence will become more involved.
- Parents will be introduced to the whole language philosophy, and will learn strategies that can be implemented at home.
- Parents will understand the stages of reading development and will learn a variety of ways to help their child.
- Parents will learn how to select appropriate reading materials.

LIMITATIONS

Various factors will effect the implementation of this project:

1. Due to time constraints, this project has not been field tested with parents or students. It will be field tested during the 1993-1994 school year.
2. There is an inability to predict the reactions or commitment of parents. Parents are the essential ingredient to the success of this project. This project is designed to meet their needs and solicit their input, however it is impossible to forecast how active they will become in acting on the material that will be supplied.
3. The support of individual administrators and teaching staff will effect the outcome of this project. Research for this project has shown that the most effective programs employ support from the entire school community. This is a factor that is complex. It is impossible to predict the interest and commitment of the administrators and staff.
4. A lack of translators for the non English speaking population may limit the application of the project. The center of whole language is creating meaning from the text, consequently it is adaptable to any language. When a school serves a large non English speaking population, the project must be adapted to their needs.
5. An added enhancement to this program is the use of incentives to motivate parent attendance. Although not a necessity, it is advisable to consider this option. Budgetary constraints will effect

the employment of incentives.

6. Budgetary constraints will also limit the ability to provide multiple copies of books for parents to use during the workshops and with their children at home.

EVALUATION

...effective parent programs should be based on a thorough and ongoing assessment of what children need and what parents are interested in doing (Fredericks, & Taylor, 1985, p. 3).

This directive provides the basis for the evaluation of the project. A variety of assessment, both formal and informal, will be used to evaluate the four goals of the program: (1) to encourage parental involvement, (2) introduce parents to the whole language philosophy, (3) learn a variety of ways to help children with reading, (4) and learn how to select appropriate reading materials.

To design an effective program the first step must be to survey the needs and interests of the parents. This will be accomplished through a questionnaire (see Appendix B). According to Fredericks, et al. (1985), "... well designed questionnaires can provide highly specific and easy to interpret information that is relevant to a given group" (p. 4). Involving students in the process will provide a greater probability that the parents will see the questionnaire and respond. The questionnaire will be considered effective if there is a response from 50% of the parents.

The first goal of this project is to increase parental involvement. To determine how well this goal is met, a self-evaluation scale will be used as a pre and post assessment (see Appendix C). To determine long term commitment, the scale can be administered at the end of the school year. This program will be considered productive if there is an increase of 50% in parent

participation.

The second goal of the program is to introduce parents to the philosophy of whole language. A number of means will be used to determine if this goal is reached. During the workshops, the interactions of parents will be observed as they practice whole language reading strategies (see Appendix D). The parent and child will be asked to complete an evaluation sheet (see Appendix E) after each reading session and they will participate in a reading contract (see Appendix F & G). At the completion of the contract, the parent and child will receive recognition for participation.

The third goal is to increase the variety of reading strategies that parents use with their children. This goal will be measured through another pre and post self evaluation scale (see Appendix H & I). Informal measures such as individual interviews and observation will provide further information.

The fourth goal is to introduce parents to appropriate reading materials for children. This will be evaluated in two ways. The parent and child reading contract (see Appendix G) will provide the names of the books read. From this record the appropriateness can be determined. A second means of evaluation is to conduct informal sharing sessions (see Appendix J) in which parents can discuss books that they found successful with their children.

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APPENDIX A

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS:
A PARENT EDUCATION MODEL



BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS:
A PARENT EDUCATION MODEL
INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS:
A PARENT EDUCATION MODEL

SUMMARY

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. From infancy through childhood, parents instinctively respond to their child's first attempts at oral language. As children progress from babbling to first sentences, parents are proud and understand that oral language is learned through a gradual process of approximations. This method will lead to a standard form of communication. Reading is another form of language and the same type of parent guidance is required.

When parents become involved with their child's education, great things can happen. There is overwhelming evidence that points to the success of parent participation. Special training or money is not required. Most parents instinctively provide a supportive reading environment. Parents need to be assured that they are on the right track and introduced to new ways to expand their current methods.

The purpose of this project is to support and educate the parents of early readers. A series of workshops will introduce the parent to the stages of reading development. Parents will learn how to identify each stage and will learn ways to support and encourage their young readers. The parent will receive a handbook that will introduce a variety of ways to help young readers. During each session the handbook will be expanded. Parents will write in it

and use it to respond to activities that occur during the sessions. The workshops will introduce, demonstrate, and practice the strategies of reading aloud, guided reading, and shared reading. Parents will also learn how to help their child predict and read for meaning as well as learn additional oral reading strategies.

WORKSHOP #1 GOALS

1. The purpose of the workshop is for parents to learn ways to help their child with reading. It is also a time for parents to get to know each other.
2. The workshop leader will share memories of being read to as a child, and share a favorite book from childhood. Parents will be asked to write the things they remember about being read to as a child. They will use the page called **READING MEMORIES** in their handbook. If a parent was not read to as a child, they are to write about this. Parents will be asked to share this in a small group. The workshop leader will ask a few volunteers to share their memories.
3. The leader will explain how important parents are to their child's success. Connections will be made to the number of things parents have already taught their five to eight year old children such as oral language, and social skills. This will be linked to the parent's importance in a child's reading success.
4. The first strategy, "Read Aloud", will be introduced at this time.
5. The leader will read a children's book, When the new baby comes, I'm moving out!, by Martha Alexander, to the group. A parent may be asked to volunteer to play the role of the child and will be asked to give reactions. The leader will then read the book quickly and with little or no expression. The next step will be to re-read the book using good read aloud techniques: prediction, a link to previous background and knowledge. The reader will use expression to make the story more enjoyable. At several points in the story additional predictions will be made. The parent volunteer will be asked for a reaction to the second reading. The group will be asked to point out differences between the two readings, and which one they preferred and why.
6. Parents will be asked to work in pairs and books will be distributed. They will be given time to practice the activity with a partner. Remind them to relax, play the role, and practice reading

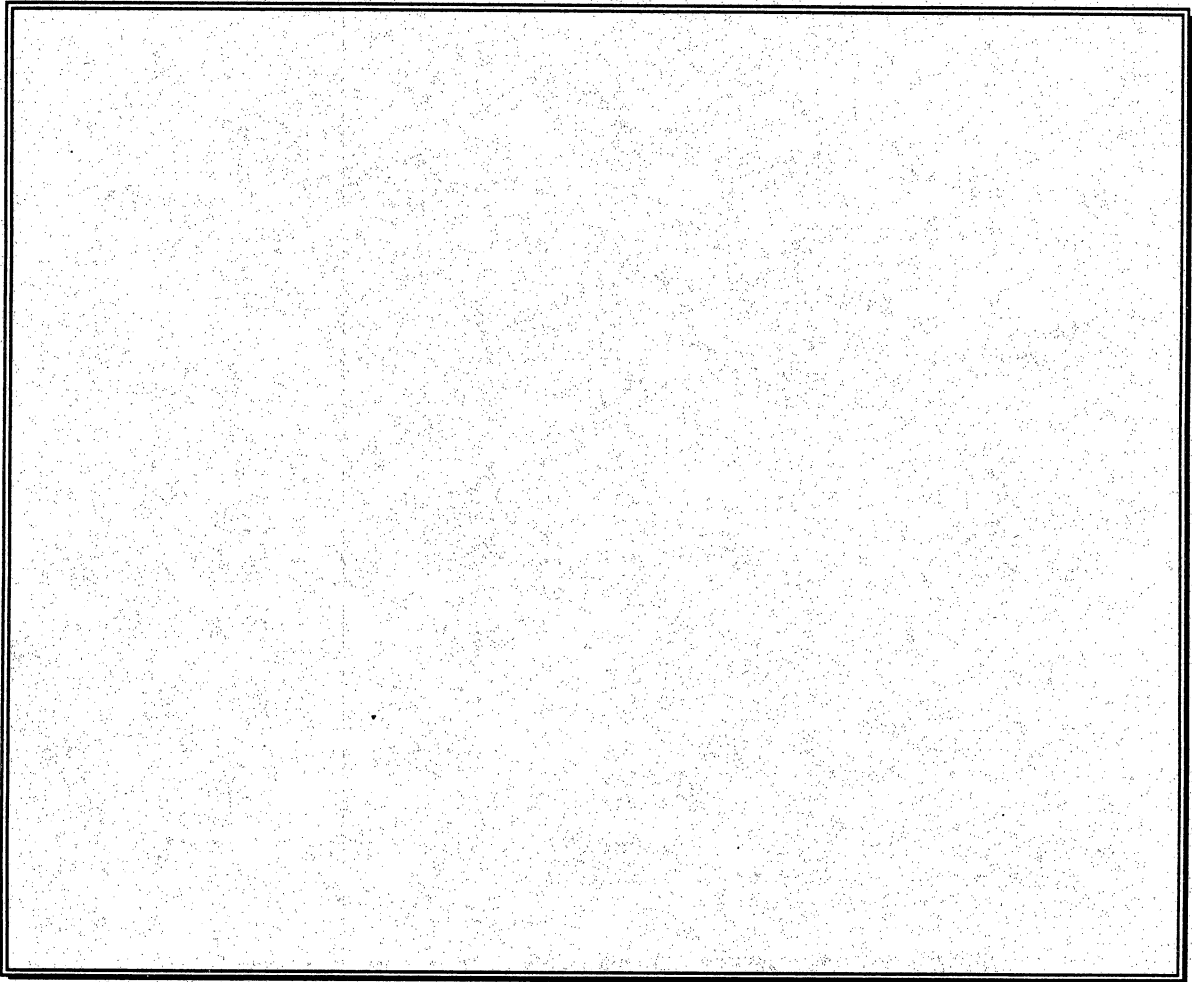
to make the story enjoyable.

7. A discussion will follow as to why reading aloud is so important: see READ ALOUD HINTS, and THE TEN BEST WAYS TO READ ALOUD for important points. Parents will be given a copy of this handout to add to their handbook. The handbook section, "What Does It Mean?", a discussion of common parental concerns, can also be distributed at this time.
8. A break can be taken at this time.
9. Bring the group back together. Ask parents to fill out PARENT INVOLVEMENT: SELF EVALUATION and the PRE WORKSHOP EVALUATION. Stress that their help is needed in evaluating the effectiveness of the workshop. It is of utmost importance that the form be filled out honestly. Remind them that their name is not required.
10. Go over the techniques learned for read aloud. The children of the parents will be brought in at this time so that the parents can practice read aloud techniques.
11. Parents will sign out a book to use at home with their child. They are to write their reactions to reading at home on the READING CONTRACT and use the PARENT CHILD EVALUATION FORM. Remind them of the next session date and of the importance of bringing the handbook.
12. Refreshments will be available.

READING MEMORIES

Please think back to some of your own early childhood memories. Try to remember a time when someone read to you. Think about how you felt and what you remember most about those times.

In the space below write or draw something that shows what you remember about this time. If you have no memories of being read to, you may imagine such a time or you may use an experience that you have had as a parent, reading to your own child.

A large, empty rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for the student to write or draw their response to the prompt above.

READ ALOUD HINTS

One of the easiest ways a parent can help with reading is to read to their child. It is an enjoyable activity for parent and child. It is also extremely important because children learn so much from it.

HOW DOES READING ALOUD HELP AT HOME?

- children view reading as an enjoyable activity
- children learn how to handle a book correctly
- children learn the parts of a book and how a book is read
- reading aloud is a fun, quality activity that can help build your relationship with your child.
- reading aloud is the best way to motivate your child to learn to read.

HOW DOES READING ALOUD HELP IN SCHOOL?

- reading aloud builds vocabulary
- reading aloud improves listening skills
- reading aloud improves comprehension
- reading aloud strengthens your child's imagination.
- reading aloud helps your child learn more about themselves and their world.

THE TEN BEST WAYS TO READ ALOUD

Reading to a child is an important job. Here are a few suggestions to help you and your child get the most out of the activity.

1. Choose a quality book: good illustrations and an interesting story that your child can relate to. Allow your child to help in the choice.
2. Sit close together in a comfortable spot. Enjoy a special time with your child.
3. Talk about the title, the author, look at the pictures. Before reading the book, ask your child to predict what the story may be about. To increase thinking skills, ask , "Why do you think that will happen?"
4. Read slowly and with expression. This will help your child to understand the story and will make it more enjoyable.
5. After reading several pages, stop and talk about what has happened and what may occur next.
6. At the end of the story, confirm the events that your child predicted. Then talk about the story. What did you like about it? What parts were the most exciting, interesting, or surprising? Does it remind you of something in your life? Who was your favorite character, and why?
7. If your child shows an interest, read it again. If not keep the book available so that it may be chosen on another occasion.
8. Make reading a part of your daily routine: read before bedtime, right after dinner, or anytime that is best for your family.
9. Include the whole family in reading aloud: have dad, grandparents, older brothers or sisters, and mom take turns reading.
10. The most important suggestion is to relax, and have fun.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"READING IS TAUGHT IN SCHOOL, I DON'T WANT TO INTERFERE"

- Learning to read and write is very similar to learning to speak. As parents of five to eight year old, you have successfully taught your child oral language. This probably took about 18 months. That is the same amount of time it will take to learn written language.
- When your child learned to speak, you responded to their first attempts at babbling with encouragement and pride. The same encouragement is needed with reading and writing.
- A child learns best when given individual attention. Teachers give as much time as possible to your child. Supplemental attention at home from the parent, older brothers or sisters, or friends, can strengthen and reinforce what is taught in school.
- When you read at home or when you read to your child, you demonstrate that reading is important. This will motivate your child to learn to read.

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Read to your child everyday.
- Provide many books for your child to enjoy with you and alone.
- Listen to your child read.
- Praise their attempts. Remember: learning to read takes about the same amount of time that it took to learn to learn to talk.
- Each child masters reading at a different pace and time frame. Try not to compare one child to another.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
"MY CHILD MEMORIZES BOOKS"

- Memorizing a book is a natural stage of reading development. All children go through this stage.
- Learning to read is similar to learning to talk; it takes about 18 months for each.
- Your child learned to talk by imitating your words. Your child imitates your reading by memorizing the story.
- Remember: some children learned to talk earlier than others and some children learn to read earlier than others.
- Memorizing builds confidence and will develop the sense of one to one correspond of the print to the sound.
- Memorizing helps the child to feel like a reader and gives a sense of pleasure.

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Praise your child for reaching this stage of reading.
- Trace your finger under the print as you read. Trace the the passage as a continuous flow: not one word at a time.
- To check if your child is moving beyond memorization: copy a sentence from a book that your child has memorized. Cut the sentence into individual words and see if your child can re-assemble it.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"MY CHILD SOUNDS OUT WORDS BUT IS A POOR READER"

- Sounding out words, or decoding, is hard because the English language has so many sounds. For example the sound of the vowel "a" is different in many situations: "hat", "hate", "repeat" "arm". In each word the "a" has a different sound.
- Decoding slows the reader down and the child forgets the meaning of the story. Consequently the child doesn't understand what was read.
- Good readers use many strategies when reading. In addition to decoding, the reader will think about what makes sense in the story and what sounds right when reading.
- Teaching reading with phonics alone is like "...teaching a baby to walk by tying one foot behind his back and tying up the arms needed for balance" (Weaver, 1988, p. 103).

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Read and re-read many enjoyable books to your child. By doing this your child will hear and will naturally learn sounds in the form of understandable language.
- Encourage your child to write. Make simple books at home by stapling or folding paper to form a book. Write a story with your child helping to spell the words. Stories such as "I can...." are easy and meaningful. Writing is similar to reading and it takes about the same amount of time and requires them same encouragement and support.
- Additional writing suggestions:
write to a grandparent or friend
help with writing the grocery list

Weaver, C. (1988). Reading process and practice: From socio-
psycholinguistics to whole language. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
Educational Books.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
"MY CHILD DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE STORY"

- Your child may spend too much time trying to sound out words. This causes the reader to lose track of the meaning of the story.
- Good readers try to make sense of what the author has written and try to relate it to what they know about the subject. When something does not sound correct, they stop and go back and try to understand what was written.
- As your children read aloud, do they stop to correct themselves when something does not sound correct? If not, they are not reading to understand the story.

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Before reading a story ask your child to predict what it will be about. Then ask your child, "Why do you think that?".
- Relate the subject of the story to something in your child's experience. This helps to build the background knowledge necessary to comprehend the story.
- During the reading talk about what is happening, why it is occurring and what may happen next.
- After reading there are many ways to extend the story and to strengthen comprehension. A new ending can be made up for the book. You and your child could design a book cover or make up a comic strip about the main events.
- Re-reading a book helps to strengthen comprehension.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
"MY CHILD MAKES MANY ERRORS WHEN READING"

- Some children makes many errors during reading. Consequently the story does not make sense. This means that your child is not reading for meaning. In other words, the child does not understand the story.
- Think about the changes (or errors) your child makes during reading. Does this change the meaning of the story? For example, if the passage read, "Everybody had fun. The teacher read a book.", and your child read, "Everyone had fun. A teacher read a book". The changes are very minor and do not alter the meaning of the passage.

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Praise your child for their attempts at reading. Learning to read takes time and requires practice, just like any new activity.
- Focus on what your child is doing well.
Say:
 - "Good for you, you are really trying hard."
 - "That was a good try. Does it sound right to you?"
 - "You are very smart to look at the pictures for help."
 - " I'm proud of you. You are becoming a good reader."
- Listen to your child read. Does it make sense?
- When your child comes to something unknown try the following suggestions:
 - Ask, "What would make sense there?"
 - Wait for a few seconds to see if your child can help himself.
 - Ask "What could it be?"
 - "Look at the picture, does that help you?"
 - "Skip that part and read on to the end of the sentence."
 - "Go to the beginning of the sentence and read it again>"
 - "Look how the word begins."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"MY CHILD IS IN PRESCHOOL AND IS TOO YOUNG TO LEARN TO READ"

- Children are natural learners. They learn by watching the people around them.
- Reading, at any age, strengthens listening, and improves vocabulary.
- Reading together provides quality time for parent and child.

"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"

- Read to your children, they are never too young or too old.
- Children who are read to daily have an easier time learning how to read.
- Talk to your child. The more words your child hears, the greater their understanding of the world. This will help them when they learn to read.
- Listen to your child. This gives them practice with language and increases their knowledge of the world around them.
- Point out signs and labels when you are going somewhere or when you are shopping. The first word some children learn to read, after their name, is "McDonald's".

WORKSHOP # 2 GOALS

1. The main goal of this session is to introduce the stages of reading development. Parents will discover the characteristics of their child's reading behavior.
2. The leader will read David McPhail's book Fix it book. This book is the story of a young child who is introduced to the world of reading. She becomes so enthralled with the book that she asks her parents to read it over and over. The last page of the book shows her reading it to herself. This is an excellent example of prereading characteristics. The book will be used as a springboard to a discussion of reading behavior.
3. The various stages of reading will be explained. This will be presented as a natural process. It is also normal for a child to sometimes be in a transition between two stages. Parents will be asked to fill out the STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT survey.
4. The workshop leader will have a display of children's books for each reading stage. The leader will show and talk about a few books from each category.
5. Parents will be allowed to sign out a book from one of the reading stages. They are asked to first read the book to their child. The child may want to read along with the parent during the second reading. Ask parents and children to continue filling out the PARENT AND CHILD EVALUATION form.

THE STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT: PREREADING

Please think about your child's reading behavior and answer the questions below by circling your response.

Does your child read a book by telling the story from the pictures and ignoring the print?

YES

NO

If you read a familiar book, does your child say some of the parts as you read?

YES

NO

If you answered "yes" to both of these questions, your child is probably in the first stage of reading development that can be called the Prereading Stage. This is an important stage because your child is becoming aware of books and is developing a love of reading. Make reading to you child a part of everyday. Children like to imitate their parents, so make reading a part of your day also.

BOOKLIST FOR PRE-READING STAGE

During this stage of reading children enjoy telling stories from the pictures. Wordless picture books are excellent for this activity.

- Aruego, J. (1971). Look what I can do. New York: Scribner.
- Briggs, R. (1988). The snowman. New York: Random.
- Mayer, M. (1978). A boy, a dog, and a frog. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Mayer, M. (1976). Ah-Choo! New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- _____. (1978). Hiccup. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- _____. (1978). Opps! New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

READ ALOUD BOOKS

- Alexander, M. (1981). When the new baby comes, I'm moving out!
- Carle, E. (1987). The very hungry caterpillar! New York: Scholastic Inc.
- Gag, W. (1977). Millions of cats. New York: Putnam Publishing Group.
- Hutchins, P. (1978). Don't forget the bacon. New York: Penguin Books.
- Kraus, R. (1982). Whose mouse are you? New York: Macmillan Publishers.
- McPhail, D. (1986). The bear's toothache. New York: Penguin Books.

STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT: THE BEGINNING READER

Please think about your child's reading behavior and answer the questions below by circling your response.

Does your child ask to hear the same book over and over?	YES	NO
Does your child correct you if you do not read the story exactly as it is written?	YES	No
Is your child able to pick out some letters or words?	YES	No

If you answered yes to most of these questions your child is probably in the second stage of reading: the beginning reader. During this stage the child knows every word of a story as it appears. Children enjoy reading the book by themselves and it is obvious that they have memorized the story. Parents often worry that this is not really reading. This is a natural stage of reading and parents can be pleased that their child has progressed this far.

A BOOKLIST FOR THE BEGINNING READER

During this stage children need books which are enjoyable, have good illustrations, and a text which has phrases or words repeated throughout the story. The story should be simple enough that the child can predict what may happen next, but not so simple that the story is boring.

Allen, P. (1987). Who sank the boat? Crystal Lake, Illinois: Rigby Education.

Asch, F. (1981). Just like daddy. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Brown, M. W. (1977) The runaway bunny. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

Galdone, P. (1985). Billy goats gruff. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

_____. (1984). Little red hen. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

_____. (1984). The three bears. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Martin, B. Jr. (1982). Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

SING ALONG BOOKS

Sing along books are popular with children because they are familiar with the words to the song. Predicting becomes easier and the child feels successful when reading the book.

Aliki. (1988). Hush little baby. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.

Bonne, R. (1985). I know and old lady. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Raffi. (1988). The wheels on the bus. New York: Crown Books.

STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT: THE EMERGENT READER

Please think about your child's reading behavior and answer the questions below by circling your response.

Does your child frequently
ask someone to listen to
them read?

YES

NO

Does your child have an
awareness of the print
and try to follow along?

YES

NO

If you answered "yes" to both of these questions, your child is probably an emergent reader. Your child is learning more and more about reading. Children at this stage understand that the print on the page corresponds to what is spoken. Reading vocabulary is building. Children at this stage continue to need books which are interesting, have good illustrations which match the text, and have a repetitive and predictable story.

A BOOKLIST FOR THE EMERGENT READER

The following books provide fun and interesting stories. The books are written with simple language. The stories are predictable because the authors have used phrases or words which repeat throughout the story.

Ahlberg, J. (1985). Each peach pear plum. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Asch, F. (1980). Turtle tale. New York: Dial Books For Young Readers.

Barchas, S. (1998). I was walking down the road. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Cameron, P. (1981). "I can't", said the ant. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Hutchins, P. (1978). Happy birthday, Sam. New York: Penguin Books .

Tafari, N. (1984). Have you seen my duckling? New York: Greenwillow.

STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT: THE DEVELOPING READER

Please think about your child's reading behavior and answer the questions below by circling your response.

Is your child able to read more books without your help?	YES	NO
Do your children think of themselves as a reader?	YES	No
Is your child's reading knowledge increasing, allowing him/her to to more independent?	YES	NO

During this stage of reading children are becoming confident readers. They are more independent but still need the support of illustrations and a predictable text. Continue to read to you children, and praise them for their progress.

A BOOKLIST FOR THE DEVELOPING READER

During this stage of reading, the child is becoming independent. The books on this list are slightly more challenging. More print is on a page and the stories are longer. The books have a picture on every page and a predictable story line.

Carle, E. (1986). The secret birthday message. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Degan, B. (1985). Jamberry. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Hazen, B. (1978). The gorilla did it. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Keats, E.J. (1983). Peter's chair. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Kraus, R. (1971). Leo the late bloomer. New York: Windmill Books.

Waber, B. (1984). Ira sleeps over. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Zolotow, C. (1977). Mr. Rabbit and the lovely present. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

WORKSHOP # 3

1. Discuss reactions to books that were read at home.
2. Inform parents that the purpose of this session is to provide them with new ways to help their children with reading.
3. Activity: reading for meaning. (see READING FOR MEANING). Put this on an overhead transparency and, pass out a copy for parents to use. Give parents a few minutes to look over the passage. Then ask for volunteers to read out loud.
4. Discussion: What was missing from this paragraph?, Why were you still able to read it? What helped you to understand?
5. The leader will explain that the passage was readable because the group read for meaning. In other words, we tried to make sense of the story by using the clues available (the consonants of each word) and by using previous knowledge (the experience of hearing and reading fairy tales which start with the phrase "Once upon a time...).
6. Pass out handout for parents handbook: WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE READER?
7. Discuss handout and then ask parents to reflect on what they wish

for their child as they learn to read. Write down ideas on the handbook page, MY WISHES FOR MY CHILD AS A READER. Share in a small group and share with the whole group.

8. The next demonstration is of the reading strategy "Shared Reading". Use the book by Frank Asch, Just like daddy. Ask for a volunteer to play the role of the child. A copy of the book on overhead transparencies will help the group to see what the leader is doing.

- a. Ask the parent volunteer to predict what the story will be about.
- b. The leader will read the book with expression, tracing the print in a continuous flow.
- c. Stop at appropriate points to confirm and to predict.
- d. At the end of the reading, discuss the story. Ask what the parent volunteer liked, if the story had any surprises, and if it reminded the readers of something in their own life.
- e. Read the story again and this time ask the parent volunteer to join in on the familiar parts.

9. Brief discussion will follow and then a break.

10. The workshop leader will then demonstrate the strategy of

"Guided Reading" for next the reading stage. Use Bill Martin Jr.'s book, Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? Ask for a volunteer to play the role of the child. A copy of the book on overhead transparencies will help the group to see what the leader is doing.

- a. Ask the parent volunteer to predict what the story will be about.
- b. The leader will read the book with expression, tracing the print in a continuous flow.
- c. Stop at appropriate points to confirm and to predict.
- d. Ask the parent volunteer to act like a beginning reader, stumble over passages say things that do not make sense.
- e. The leader will lead the parent volunteer through several reading strategies. (See handout: READING STRATEGIES).
- f. Discussion: The goals of reading are to enjoy, understand, and become an independent reader. Discuss the reading strategies that were demonstrated. Talk about how these procedures help the child to become more confident and independent.

11. Distribute the handout: READING STRATEGIES.

12. Parents will practice the strategies with a partner.

13. Children will join their parents. Parents will read to their children using the strategies just demonstrated. The leader will circulate and use Appendix D, WHOLE LANGUAGE GUIDELINES, to assess strategies used by the parents.

14. Parents and children will sign out a book to use at home. Remind parents and children to continue filling out the READING LOG and the PARENT AND CHILD EVALUATION, after each book.

15. Invite the parents and children to a final session. Ask for ideas to make the event more enjoyable. A few suggestions include a pot luck dinner, a salad, or dessert night . Certificates and other forms of recognition will be given out on the final night. Each child that attends the last meeting will be given a book.

16. During the final session, the parents will be asked to complete the final evaluations, PARENT INVOLVEMENT: SELF EVALUATION (APPENDIX C), and the PARENT CHECKLIST, POST WORKSHOP (APPENDIX H).

READING FOR MEANING

Please look at, and read the following passage .

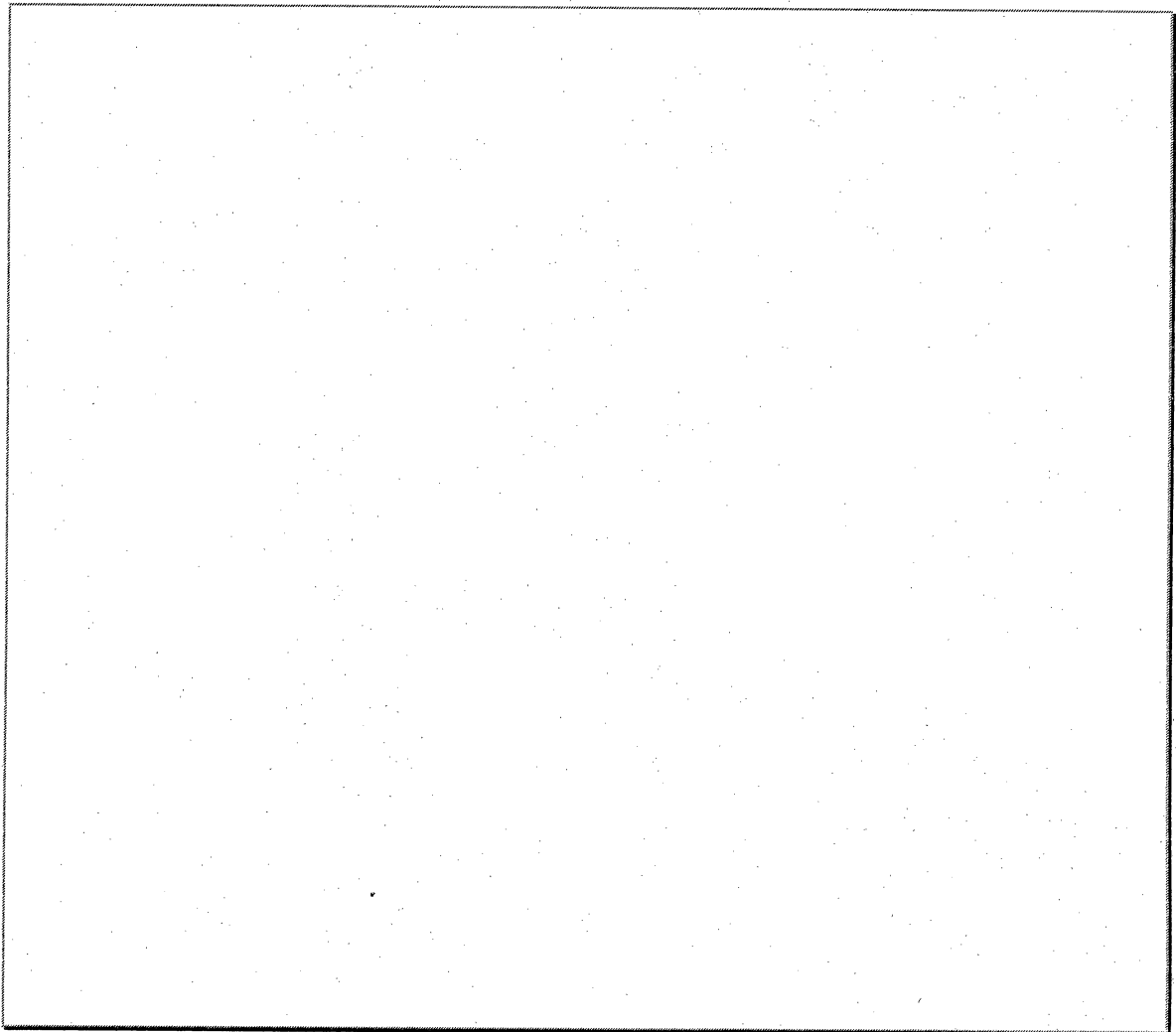
One person thought the birds. Peter, Mary, and Bob. When they set down the breakfast, Peter said, "My pudding is hot!" Mary said, "My pudding is cold!" Bob said, "My pudding is just right!"

WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE READER?

- Good readers always read for meaning.
- If the story does not make sense, the reader tries a number of ways to understand sections that are unclear.
 1. Read it again.
 2. Leave out the unclear section and read again.
 3. The reader makes a guess (a prediction) and asks "Does that make sense?"
 4. The reader thinks about what he/she knows about this subject.
 5. The reader asks "Have I seen this somewhere else?"
 6. Good readers will ask for help.
 7. Good readers look for clues in the pictures and in the story.

MY WISHES FOR MY CHILD AS A READER

Think about your child as he or she learns how to read. What do you wish for your child? For example, do you want your child to enjoy reading, or do you want your child to understand what is read? Write or draw what you wish in the box below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write or draw their wishes for their child as a reader.

READING STRATEGIES

As children learn to read, it is important to help them develop into independent readers. Just as you encourage your child to grow into a self sufficient adult, you can guide your child to become a self sufficient reader. Here are some ways to help a young reader when they come to something unknown.

- Ask the child to start the section again. ("Try it again.")
- After the child reads the section, ask if what was just read makes sense, ("Does that sound right to you?")
- Tell the child to skip the part that is unknown and read on to the end of the passage. Then ask ("Do you know what it is now?", "What do you think it could be?")
- If the child has not discovered it by this point, you can then tell the child.

Your goal always is to encourage the child to first try it by themselves. By doing this you are helping them to become independent readers.

Adapted from: Routman, R. (1988). Transitions: from literature to literacy. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books Inc..

APPENDIX B

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE APPENDIX B



Below you will find ideas that help parents become more involved in their child's education. In order to design a program that will fit your needs and interests, please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire.

As the parent of a young reader, I would like to have more information in the following areas:

	Much Interest	Some Interest	No Interest
1. How all children learn to read.	much	some	no
2. How to help my child with reading.	much	some	no
3. How reading is taught in my child's school.	much	some	no
4. Ways to encourage my child to read.	much	some	no
5. Ways to develop good comprehension skills.	much	some	no
6. How to choose books for my child.	much	some	no
7. How to help my child develop good attitudes toward reading.	much	some	no
Please circle your choice:			
8. I would attend parent meetings to learn new ways to help my child with reading.	YES	NO	

9. I would like to receive newsletters with tips on ways to help my child with reading.	YES	NO
10. I would like to borrow books to use at home with my child.	YES	NO

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
Please think about your answers to questions 1-10. Write the number of the three areas that are most important to you.	_____	_____	_____

This area is not listed but I believe that this topic should also be addressed: _____

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
What times are most convenient for you to attend workshops at school?	_____	_____	_____
Will you need free babysitting?	YES	NO	
How many children will you bring for babysitting and what are the ages?	_____		

Thank you for your help. Please return this to your child's teacher or to the school office.

Adapted from: Fredericks, A.D. & Taylor, D. (1985). Parent programs is reading: Guidelines for success. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C
PARENT INVOLVEMENT: SELF EVALUATION

Please check the items that you do with your child. If you do this everyday, put two checks next to the item.

HOME

- _____ 1. I read to my child.
- _____ 2. My child reads to me.
- _____ 3. I take my child to the library.
- _____ 4. I help my child with homework.
- _____ 5. I talk to my child about school.

SCHOOL

- _____ 6. I belong to the PTA.
- _____ 7. I read the school newsletter.
- _____ 8. I attend Back To School Night.
- _____ 9. I volunteer to work in my child's classroom.
- _____ 10. I attend Parent Teacher Conferences.
- _____ 11. I assist the teacher on field trips.
- _____ 12. I serve of the School Site Council.
- _____ 13. I attend PTA meetings.
- _____ 14. I attend school programs.
- _____ 15. I help with class parties.

Adapted from: Fredericks, A.D. & Taylor, D. (1985). Parent programs in reading: Guidelines for success. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

WHOLE LANGUAGE OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

In order to determine the parent's understanding of the principles of whole language, the following areas should be observed:

1. Does the parent predict and discuss the book before reading?
2. Does the parent stop during various sections of the story to predict?
3. Does the parent use an oral cloze procedure during predictable sections of the story?
4. Does the parent employ more than one strategy when helping the child with a difficult section? Does the parent remind the child to reread the passage again, ask the child to predict what would make sense, or suggest skipping the section and reading on to gain meaning?

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E
PARENT AND CHILD EVALUATION FORM

TELL WHAT YOU THINK?			
1.	Did you like the story?	YES	NO
2.	Did you enjoy having your parent read to you?	YES	NO
3.	Did you like reading the story to your parents?	YES	NO
4.	Do you think you are learning more ways to discover the parts of the story that are difficult to read?	YES	NO

EVALUATION			
1.	Do you think your child enjoyed the story?	YES	NO
2.	Do you use different ways to help your child discover parts of the story that are difficult to read?	YES	NO
3.	Do you plan to use the same strategy again?	YES	NO
4.	Do you have any suggestions or thoughts to share with me?		

Adapted from: Oleson, C.A. (1992). Children + parents + books = enhanced literacy. Master's project, California State University, San Bernardino, San Bernardino, CA.

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

PARENT AND CHILD READING CONTRACT

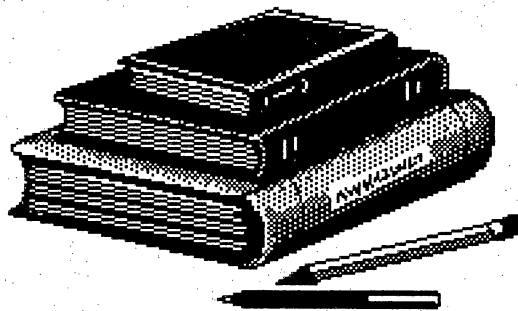
I promise to listen to (or read) to my child everyday for 15 minutes a day during the month of _____.

X _____

Parent's signature

X _____

Child prints name



APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G

BOOKS THAT I HAVE READ

Title	Author	Date	Opinion

Title	Author	Date	Opinion

APPENDIX H

APPENDIX H
PARENT CHECKLIST PRE-WORKSHOP

Please check the items in each section which best describe your family. Your name is optional.

My Child:

- 1. understands what he/she reads.
- 2. reads everyday.
- 3. enjoys reading.
- 4. likes to go to the library.
- 5. knows how to figure out the unknown.

As a parent I:

- 6. read with my child on a regular basis.
- 7. know several ways to help my child with difficult sections.
- 8. believe that my child is making progress in reading.

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX I
PARENT CHECKLIST: POST WORKSHOP

Please check the items in each section which best describes the changes in your behavior or attitude that may have occurred as a result of these workshops.

- Working with my child has become more enjoyable.
- Our family reads more books together.
- We visit the library more often.
- As a parent, I understand more about how reading develops.
- I am more confident about helping my child with oral reading.
- I understand the importance of reading in my child's life.
- My child:
- finds reading more enjoyable.
- Enjoys reading with me.
- Brings more books home to read.
- Reads more frequently.
- Knows several way to discover parts of the story that are difficult to read.

APPENDIX J

APPENDIX J

QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATION DISCUSSION

1. Have you noticed any changes in your child's attitude toward reading?
2. What were the most satisfactory parts of the program for you?
3. What ideas do you have to improve the program?
4. What books did you and your child enjoy the most?
5. What reading strategies were most successful for your child?
6. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

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- McPhail, D. (1984). Fix it book. New York: E. P. Putnam.
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