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LEARNING THEORIES AND HOLISTIC PHILOSOPHIES:
PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE
TO ACHIEVE EARLY LITERACY

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

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies

by
Maria Rosa Menendez
September 1994


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Approved by:


Stanley L. Swartz, Chair, Education

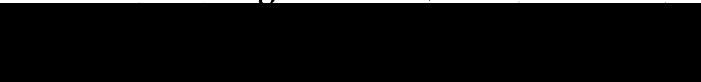
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LEARNING THEORIES AND HOLISTIC PHILOSOPHIES:
PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE TO ACHIEVE
EARLY LITERACY

Maria Rosa Menendez, M.A.
California State University,
San Bernardino, 1994

The public education system in California has been trying to cope with an ever increasing influx of multicultural students. For many of these students traditional methods have failed to lead to educational success. Concerned educators are attempting to find viable solutions to the problems that beset public education. Holistic approaches which are child and meaning centered have been found to be more effective than traditional methods with multicultural populations.

The work of major researchers in literacy acquisition has shown that all children can learn. Whole language educators base their classroom instruction on the various philosophies and theories of how children acquire knowledge. Research has shown that successful implementation and achievement of early literacy in the primary language of the pupils can provide the necessary base for subsequent success in second language literacy. Early intervention programs have been found to be successful for children experiencing difficulties acquiring reading skills. Reading Recovery is a research based early intervention program for children receiving early literacy instruction in English. Descubriendo La Lectura is the Spanish application of Reading Recovery methods for Spanish speaking children who are receiving early literacy instruction in their primary language.

This project presents a review of current literature on whole language, early literacy and learning theories, Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura/Reading Recovery in Spanish. The project also presents a model geared to kindergarten and first grade teachers, emphasizing holistic approaches to early literacy. The strategies suggested in the model can be implemented regardless of the primary language of the classroom. The model presents a collection of significant literacy approaches which provide an avenue to begin the change process from traditional to holistic methods.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The public education system in California has been trying to cope with an ever increasing influx of multicultural students. Many of these students are part of a minority, lower socio-economic population (Melendez, 1993). For many of these students, traditional methods have failed to lead to educational success. This failure has prompted a need to look at current practices, to restructure education, to improve student performance.

The severity of the problems facing California's schools prompted the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene several task forces to look at the problems and formulate recommendations. One of the resulting documents, Here They Come: Ready or Not! The Report of the School Readiness Task Force (1988) helped to spark the reform of early childhood education. The task force which developed It's Elementary! The Report of the Elementary Grades Task Force (1992) expressed the desire to instigate similar efforts with respect to elementary education. In response to this growing problem, many schools have begun to restructure, moving from basal texts and worksheets to a teaching reading and writing through a literature based approach.

There is a great need to restructure education in order to ensure that all students learn. Educators must learn how to teach children with different learning modalities and from different cultures and backgrounds. Currently, efforts are underway in many districts to implement change. As educators, we need to do more than just create a handful of model classrooms or schools, we need to develop the mindset and create the conditions that will allow all classrooms and schools to become extraordinary.

Teachers are embracing a holistic perspective and creating a classroom environment that engages learners through authentic experiences. Teachers learning to be more effective must go through a learning process. This involves changing teachers' perspective of the process of becoming literate. Classroom teachers have begun to perceive a need to read research, to develop a working theory of how children learn. There is a continued need for educators not only to read current literature and research, but to discuss with colleagues their ideas and clarify their interpretations. As teachers become involved in reading research, they will change, expand and refine their philosophy of learning and teaching. This process will become on-going as they continue to incorporate their philosophy into their teaching.

Teachers attempting to create a literacy environment may need to develop strong support systems. They may need to persuade their districts that they need to change their views of how children learn. They may need to become the advocates of change. They will need to become part of a leadership with a strong commitment to early literacy. Early literacy will provide children with the capability to have a successful school experience. Restructuring efforts must make a commitment to long-term systemic change. Educators must make strides towards creating a learning environment that engages students in authentic and challenging tasks. Opportunities must be made available for teachers to gain knowledge to better build on their student's strengths.

As educators strive to create good classrooms where literacy is a priority, they must also be aware that some students will still need special help. Educators and school districts need to realize that it is crucial to reach children before they develop inadequate skills and experience low self esteem. For those children experiencing learning difficulties, the earliest possible intervention is the

most effective. Reading Recovery is an early intervention model designed to help at-risk students become readers. Descubriendo La Lectura is the application of Reading Recovery methods for Spanish speaking students receiving instruction in their primary language. These interventions are based on sound theoretical principles. Both programs enable students that might not otherwise have been successful in our educational systems to become good readers and experience success.

This project is written with the intent that individuals reading it will become informed about the perceived need for change, find the research and literature supportive of their own beliefs and will consider implementing the holistic approaches to literacy presented therein. The power of a single individual committed to change can be tremendous. The literacy model is presented as an avenue for implementing change to enable all students to learn the strategies necessary to acquire knowledge and develop the attitudes needed to reach their fullest potential.

This project is based on a vision that it will be possible to develop classrooms and schools in which all children can receive high quality education. It may not be an easy endeavor. It will require dreamers and visionaries who will pursue what they envision and will not rest until they accomplish this significant achievement. We must all become visionary and forge the will to act on our vision.

This project will review current literature and research on whole language and early literacy with the purpose of developing a holistic, early literacy model for teachers to implement in their classrooms. The model will be geared to kindergarten and first grade teachers. It will present significant holistic approaches to implementing early literacy. To further ensure that all children are

successful in their literacy acquisition, Reading Recovery and Reading Recovery in Spanish/Descubriendo La Lectura (Descubriendo La Lectura) will be incorporated as part of the model.

Theoretical Views

Children can learn to read naturally, providing the environment is stimulating, literate and secure (Durkin, 1966). Pre-school children have a wealth of literate knowledge in oral language, reading and writing before they come to school (Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Holdaway, 1979; Clay, 1975). Research which supports a holistic, natural approach to learning is abundant. These findings have been influential in the development of the whole language approach.

A holistic approach to teaching emphasizes a whole-to-parts approach. Concepts can be understood more clearly when seen in context, as part of a larger meaningful whole. Holistic thought is considered to be a function of the right brain; analytical thought is considered a left brain function. Both hemispheres of the brain can act in concert when involved in such activities as reading for critical understanding or writing for anticipated communication. An integrated approach to all strands of language (listening, speaking, writing and reading) through holistic experiences can lead to literacy development for the child (Zarry, 1991). Young fluent readers learn language through a complex process as they are engaged in actual acts of speaking, reading and writing (Smith, 1969). Students will learn to read and write for specific purposes naturally in a holistic setting.

The whole language approach places the student at the center of the curriculum. Teachers create a climate where the learning is child-directed. They

have an awareness of the students' interests and learning styles. Many noted educational thinkers such as Pestalozzi, Montessori, Dewey, Froebel and Piaget believed that learning should be active, based on children's interest and make use of sensory materials. In whole language classrooms, children are encouraged to explore, discover and experiment using manipulatives and a variety of literacy tools in a supportive climate.

The curriculum developed in whole language classrooms is based on both psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic elements. This implies an understanding that language is influenced by both psychological and social factors. Children in a holistic classroom are viewed as naturally curious and engaged learners. They have a voice in their curriculum and experience learning through social interaction. A characteristic of whole language classrooms is the level of productive talk. Children engage in conversations and receive feedback from their peers. This talk helps to clarify concepts. The children discuss their writing, the books they have read and the work they are doing.

Children from middle class families typically enter school with thousands of hours of guidance about print (Adams, 1990). They have exposure to story reading, as well as, message writing from parents, preschool teachers, educational toys and television. Children from less advantaged homes may not have such experiences. This home advantage may not be related solely to money, but also to the parents' knowledge of how schools work (Lareau, 1989). Most parents expect their children to learn to read in first grade. Unfortunately, however, many lower socio-economic, working class parents may not be able to compensate at home when the classroom curriculum turns out to be weak, or their children have trouble keeping up in school (McGill-Franzen, 1992).

Children differ in their acquisition and use of language. They differ in

social development, learning styles, attention span and memory skills. Children differ also in the personal literacy histories they bring to school and their families differ in the resources and time they have to promote the educational well-being of their children (McGill-Franzen, 1992). Awareness of these differences influence holistic teachers in their interactions with children and in planning the curriculum. The instruction in whole language classrooms is more personalized, intended to engage the children and make them feel valued.

All children need to experience good teaching. Children from disadvantaged homes who are at risk of educational failure especially need to be involved in supportive classrooms where they are taught through memorable demonstrations and have the opportunity to engage at their individual level of learning. All children need teachers who will notice behaviors and will be able to interpret them in terms of knowledge and processes. Children need teachers that can highlight their strengths and validate their attempts to make sense. Children will benefit from teachers that provide them many opportunities to use what they know; to become fluent and flexible with this knowledge (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993).

Language develops within a culture, therefore the student's culture must be considered in understanding the child's language and how it is learned. Instructional programs which develop cognitive and academic skills in the student's first language demonstrate significantly better results than those which emphasize immersion in the second language. The extent to which the child's language and culture are incorporated into the school program also provide a significant predictor of their academic success in both the first and second languages. Initial success in native language literacy provides the necessary base for subsequent success in second language literacy (Medina, 1988; Thonis, 1981;

Leyba, 1978).

The need to restructure early literacy education has become paramount among the educational research community. Children are considered to be at-risk if they do not acquire the expected literacy skills in the lower primary grades (Schwab, et al., 1992). Many theorists and researchers such as Cambourne, Holdaway and Smith asserted that learning to be literate is a process of learning how to make meaning. Goodman K. and Goodman Y. (1981) stated that, "Comprehension of meaning is always the goal of reading and listening. Expression of meaning is always the goal of writing and speaking" (pg. 2). A holistic approach to early literacy integrates listening, speaking, writing and reading. Skills and processes are not taught in isolation. Whole language teachers advocate a meaning centered curriculum.

The most important element to the success of a whole language approach is the classroom teacher. The teacher must be an enlightened individual who can serve as the guide to the children in their quest for meaning. The holistic teacher must be a facilitator and a resource. An effective teacher will be a "kid-watcher," a noticing teacher who can capitalize on the children's strength and assist in making literacy an extension of the children's natural language learning (Goodman, K. & Goodman, Y., 1981).

Conclusion

Traditional educational methods have not been successful. The current multicultural population in California's public schools deserves an appropriate education. Holistic methods which are child and meaning centered have been found to be more effective. Successful achievement of literacy in the primary language has been found to provide the necessary base for subsequent success in

second language literacy. Implementing whole language early literacy programs in the children's primary language with the contingent availability of viable early intervention programs such as Reading Recovery/Descubriendo La Lectura must be a priority. This project will be guided by a holistic philosophy of learning. It will review current literature and present a model incorporating a collection of holistic approaches for implementing early literacy supported by Reading Recovery/Descubriendo La Lectura as early interventions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the past, educational research on literacy has focused mainly on the acquisition and use of basic skills. Currently, studies in education have become more qualitative in nature and have focused on philosophies and practices utilized in the classroom. Although the literature on the topics of whole language and early literacy is abundant, it is not necessarily well known to practitioners in the field of education. The practices, organizations and processes that comprise literacy instruction in the elementary classroom have been well documented. Extensive research on whole language, early literacy, Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura is available. This project will present a review of the aforementioned topics.

Whole Language Philosophy

Research which endorses a holistic approach to learning has been reported for many years. The theories proposed in the beginning of this century by such noted educational thinkers such as Pestalozzi, Montessori, Dewey, Froebel and Piaget support the current holistic philosophy. These influential individuals put forth philosophical theories which have been explored by modern researchers and have helped shape current views of how children learn. Whole language is based on a set of beliefs related to teaching that has slowly developed out of many sources which include psycholinguistic research as well as theory and beliefs about good teaching.

Defining Whole Language

Developing a definition of whole language can assist educators by

making clear the dimensions of this holistic viewpoint to learning acquisition. Watson (1989) elaborated on three critical dimensions of whole language that teachers need to be aware of, "...first, of the *research* in literacy and learning that is accepted as credible by whole-language advocates; second, of the pedagogical *theory* that emerges from that research; and finally, of the *practice* that is consistent with the theory" (pg. 130). Clear definitions of whole language, however, are difficult. Most definitions are subjective, reflecting the personal path of the individual to that philosophical stance.

Many current researchers have defined whole language. These definitions are varied and have been arrived at through different paths. Most researchers would agree that they have refined their definitions many times since initially writing them. Educators must be aware that having a definition of whole language is not enough, what goes on in their classroom must be both consistent with and supportive of their definition (Watson 1989).

Anderson's (1984) definition stems from a theoretical stance with whole language being, "...written and oral language in connected discourse in a meaningful contextual setting" (pg. 616). Goodman (1986) stated, "Whole language is clearly a lot of things to a lot of people; it's not a dogma to be narrowly practiced. It's a way of bringing together a view of language, a view of learning, and a view of people, in particular two special groups of people: kids and teachers" (pg. 5). This philosophical viewpoint is broad enough to be open to subjective interpretation.

Bird (1987) defined whole language from a more holistic standpoint as, "...a way of thinking, a way of living and learning with children in classrooms" (pg. 4). Both Butler and Zarry have also written definitions of whole language from a holistic perspective. Butler (1987) stated that, "A whole language program

is one in which reading, writing, listening and talking are integrated in a stimulating, natural-learning environment" (pg. 3). Zarry (1991) wrote, "Whole language is an approach to teaching communication skills--literacy--in a holistic natural way" (pg. 1).

An explanation of the term was which supported and empowered holistic teachers was presented by Goodman, Bird and Goodman (1991). It stated, "Whole language brings together modern scientific knowledge of teaching, learning, language, and curriculum and puts it into a positive, humanistic philosophy, which teachers can identify with and which offers them strong criteria for their professional decisions and teaching practice" (pg. 10).

Newman's (1985) explanation of whole language also offered strong support to the application of holistic practices based on theory and research, she stated:

...whole language is a shorthand way of referring to a set of beliefs about curriculum, not just language arts curriculum, but about everything that goes on in classrooms... it is a philosophical stance; it's a description of how some teachers and researchers have been exploring the practical applications of recent theoretical arguments which have arisen from research in linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, child development, curriculum, composition, literary theory, semiotics and other fields of study (pg. 1).

A complete, clear, concise, theoretical as well as very personal definition was developed by Newman and Church (1990). Their definition speaks clearly to the heart of the holistic teacher, it exudes theory, it is philosophical yet practical, it demonstrates ownership of the concept and validates classroom praxis based on a well thought out personal philosophy. They stated:

Whole language is a philosophy of learning and teaching based on a number of fundamental assumptions....Teachers working from these assumptions try to create open learning environments. Our methodology is dynamic and continually

evolving--guided by our observations of students and our ever-changing understanding of theory. We use a variety of teaching strategies and materials depending upon the needs of individual students. We base our instructional decisions upon what we know about learning and the individual learners in our classroom. Whole language is practical theory. It argues for theoretically-based instructional practice (pg. 23).

The Whole Language Classroom

Whole language classrooms may seem as different to the observer as there seem to be differences in the definitions. There are, however certain tenets, strategies and interventions that are common to whole language classrooms. These strategies are consistent with holistic beliefs about language and learning. They reflect the classroom teacher's respect for the individuals and the community of learners (Watson 1989).

The environment in whole language classrooms is exciting and dynamic. Young active learners in a holistic classroom operate within a set of conditions as they become successful literacy learners. These conditions were studied and delineated by the Australian researcher Brian Cambourne (1988). The conditions, which are necessary for all effective language learning include immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility, use, approximation, response and engagement. Engagement occurs when the first seven conditions for learning are present.

A whole language classroom is meaning focused. Motivation for learning is intrinsic (Goodman, K. & Goodman, Y., 1981). A holistic program provides integration of the language arts (reading, listening, writing and talking) and content areas of the curriculum. Butler (1988) considered that a balance whole language program would contain ten elements: reading to children, shared book experience, sustained silent reading, guided reading, individualized reading,

language experience, children's writing, modeled writing, opportunities for sharing and reading and writing in the content areas. These elements are focused on different combinations of Cambourne's conditions for learning outlined previously. The conditions need to be operating to support natural learning, however, Butler (1988) stated that, "...reading to children and shared book experience focus more heavily on immersion and demonstration, while SSR [sustained silent reading] focuses more on employment" (pg. 5). Accordingly, the emphasis may change from element to element.

A whole language classroom is child-centered and directed. The holistic teacher facilitates language instruction in response to the children's interests. The environment appears informal in atmosphere and approach. Children are validated for their approximations and become risk-takers who are not afraid to try. There is an atmosphere of trust. Teachers put emphasis on communication for authentic purposes and stress collaboration among children (Slaughter, 1988).

In a whole language classroom attention is directed both towards product and process growth. In learning about process the students participate in such mental activities as categorizing, creating and condensing. Holistic teachers "kid-watch" to observe the processes in writing, editing and proofreading which lead the students toward a final product. The products demonstrate authorship and ownership and are authentic, created for practical purposes (Zarry 1991).

The Whole Language Teacher

Whole language teachers realize that they too are learners. The classroom is a community of learners. Holistic teachers are well-trained educators. They attend workshops, take courses and read research and literature on literacy development and instructional implementation to keep up to date in their

profession (Zarry, 1991). They have a philosophy and a theory about how children learn and are able to apply it to their classroom teaching.

Some teachers have formed study groups to share ideas, while others have written about their classroom experiences to help them sort out what they have learned through the experience (Newman & Church, 1990). All these activities assist holistic teachers in their reflective practice. Teachers can increase their understanding of the alternative possibilities by reflecting on their teaching (Lyons, Pinnell and DeFord, 1993). Whole language teachers do not finalize curricula before meeting the students in their class. They consider a variety of units, explore themes and lessons, however, the students' lives and interests are the guide that assists the teacher in planning a curriculum that is meaningful, appropriate and applicable (Watson, 1989).

Holistic Evaluation

Evaluation in a whole language setting primarily informs the teacher and students of current needs and strengths. Holistic teachers are constantly evaluating. Through observation and interaction they discern what and how the students are learning. Evaluation is on-going and guides the teaching (Newman & Church, 1990).

The whole language teacher evaluates and assesses many foci. The main reason to assess is to find out whether children are learning. Some of other concerns may include whether the classroom contains appropriate resources for children, whether the strategies utilized by the teacher are relevant and whether the classroom organization is conducive to the literacy development of children (Daly, 1991). Some of the ways teachers evaluate include developmental checklists, portfolios containing both teacher and student selected work samples,

pictures, anecdotal records, audio/video tapes and running records (Traill, 1993). In a running record, the teacher uses certain conventions to record everything a child says and does while reading a sample text of approximately 100 words (Clay 1993a). A running record can provide information for guiding instruction, such as appropriate text selection for guided reading.

A whole language learning environment invites children to see themselves as learners. Holistic teachers engage students in meaningful, challenging literacy activities. Learning to be a whole language teacher is an on-going process. Making the transition from traditional practices to whole language will require refinement of teaching theory and practices. Caution must be taken with the assumption that just knowing the holistic "gurus" and their philosophy is enough, or that it is an easy or haphazard approach. The very thing that makes whole language appealing to some, that the philosophy and theory can be interpreted and developed, its subjectivity, can also be what creates its enemies.

Early Literacy And Learning Theory

Several decades ago, the United States had one of the highest literacy rates in the world. Currently we are far from being the world leaders in literacy. Sagan (1994) wrote, "The gears of poverty, ignorance, hopelessness and low self-esteem interact to create a kind of perpetual failure machine that grinds down dreams from generation to generation. We all bear the cost of keeping it running. Illiteracy is its linchpin" (pg. 7). Many individuals are marginally literate. Some are only able to read simple material, below the sixth grade level. Many adults are unable to comprehend bus schedules, instruction manuals or mortgage statements. In contrast, the literacy requirements of the workplace are more demanding than ever.

Defining Literacy

The definition of what constitutes a literate individual changed through the years as man became more sophisticated. Many years ago, an individual was considered literate if able to write his name. Today many other complex aspects are involved. Young children need the opportunity to develop strategies to manipulate the linguistic tools which will allow them to be successful in academic and social settings. A comprehensive definition of literacy was developed by Brian Cambourne (1988), he stated:

... literacy is a word which describes a whole collection of behaviors, skills, knowledge, processes and attitudes. It has something to do with our ability to use language in our negotiations with the world. Often these negotiations are motivated by our desires to manipulate the world for our own benefit. Reading and writing are two linguistic ways of conducting these negotiations. So are talking, listening, thinking, reflecting, and a host of other behaviors related to cognition and critical thinking (pg. 3).

Theories of Learning Acquisition

Current theories about how children acquire knowledge have been shaped by the work of various psychologists during the early part of this century. Pavlov (1927) and Skinner (1938) developed the behaviorist theory which proposed that responses could be conditioned. Skinner further elaborated that behavior could be shaped through scheduled reinforcement. He suggested in his theories that teachers, at that time, were not taking advantage of behavior modification to shape the behavior of children in their class.

The theories proposed by Piaget (1967), Vygostky (1978, 1962), and Bruner (1975, 1966) have strongly influenced current thoughts on the acquisition of early literacy. All three believed that activity was central to learning and development.

Their perspectives differed regarding the impact on learning of culture, social experiences, social interaction and instruction (Wood, 1988).

Piaget (1967) believed children have to pass through a series of developmental stages before they have the ability to accomplish particular tasks. Learning, then, can only take place if the teaching happens at a time when the child is developmentally ready to assimilate and internalize what is said and done. Vygostky (1978, 1962) proposed that children learn through discovery and that they perfect their understanding through social interaction. He suggested that learning happens in the interactions between "novices" and "experts." This theory implies that the acquisition of literacy is a didactic process which occurs through mediation between the learner and a more knowledgeable other. The experts work within each child's "zone of proximal development". Material is introduced to the learners in ways that insure success while also continuing to challenge them to new insights. Therefore children can, if assisted by knowledgeable adults, perform tasks which they would be unable to perform alone.

Bruner (1975, 1966) appears to have been influenced by both Piaget and Vygostky. He believed children are natural learners. They can learn without formal teaching, however, knowledgeable adult experts can assist the child in the construction of knowledge. He proposed that learning could take place by focusing the child's attention, as needed, on relevant aspects of a particular task and structuring the task to support the child as meaning was constructed. Bruner likened this careful intervention by the experts to building a "scaffold" which would provide the necessary support for comprehending new concepts. He suggested that this process would result in the successful achievement of increasingly more difficult tasks.

Piaget's theory has influenced modern educators' views regarding the capacities that children have as learners and architects of their own knowledge. Bruner and Vygostky were influential in bringing "...attention to the historical and cultural relativity of knowledge and to the importance of social interaction, communication and instruction, both informal and formal, in the transmission of that knowledge" (Wood, 1988, pg. 225).

Research in literacy acquisition has shown that all children can learn. Educators need to be aware of various philosophies and theories of how children learn. Having a working knowledge of current theories such as Skinner's theory of behavior modification, Vygostky's theory of the "zone of proximal development" and Bruner's theory of "scaffolding" teacher/pupil interactions can provide teachers the theoretical base for successful practice.

Early Literacy Reform Efforts

Research has demonstrated that children are able to acquire literacy skills prior to entering school (Sulzby & Teale, 1987; Baghban, 1984; Hiebert, 1981; Goodman, Y, 1980; Doake, 1980; Holdaway, 1980 & 1979; Goodman K.S., 1974; Chomsky, 1969; Durkin, 1966). These skills have been acquired without formal teaching, in a natural, holistic way. Clearly, one of the most effective ways to ensure the development of a literate society and reduce the number of children who may ultimately need other services is to provide the opportunity for early literacy acquisition in a holistic setting. Programs that focus on early literacy have been prompted by a growing awareness of the need for strong initial instruction.

Current efforts to implement early literacy range from programs designed to provide early intervention for underachieving pupils to the restructuring of

whole school programs. While differing in design and implementation, the programs share areas of commonalty. The programs were designed to answer perceived needs and concentrated, documented efforts were made to institute change.

The Early Literacy Program

The Early Literacy program initiated in the Columbus, Ohio Public Schools during the 1990-91 school year was designed to provide early intervention to underachieving pupils in first and second grade. Targeted students appeared unlikely to acquire literacy skills without additional instruction to supplement regular classroom instruction. The program was designed to serve small groups of first or second grade pupils for 40-45 minutes daily. The instruction model made provisions for a more comprehensive assessment of the pupil's development of reading and writing strategies than would be possible during regular classroom instruction (Pollock, 1993).

The program assigned program coordinators who provided inservice training and instructional support for the teachers. Many of the instructional and assessment strategies utilized in the Early Literacy program were similar to those utilized in the Reading Recovery Program. Pollock (1993) made note in the final evaluation report that, "...the Early Literacy instructional program was enhanced by the fact that all three program coordinators and 48 of the 54 program teachers were trained in Reading Recovery techniques" (pg. 2).

The program established procedures for selection, services and guidelines for discontinuing. The program was evaluated on predetermined desired outcomes. The results of the evaluation demonstrated that it had met the desired outcomes which resulted in a recommendation for continuation during the 1992-

93 school year. Additional recommendations were made including sharing whole language instructional strategies and techniques utilized by the program teachers with the regular classroom teacher to ensure that both programs complemented each other. Also it was recommended that on-going inservice meetings be designed to provide program teachers opportunities to clarify concerns, share ideas and enhance their instructional intervention skills (Pollock, 1993).

The Early Literacy Project

Another program which focused on literacy acquisition was the Early Literacy Project. This project was implemented through the Illinois University Center for the Study of Reading. It targeted kindergarten pupils and was designed to provide them with positive literacy experiences. The study was carried out for two successive years. The principal research question in the study was to ascertain whether it would be possible to construct a successful two-tiered early literacy model for guided learning in which intervention was transferred from researcher to teacher and from teacher to pupils.

Literacy progress of children in the program was compared to that of children in a traditional kindergarten using a basal reading program (Stewart, Mason & Benjamin, 1990). A basic premise of the program was the use of Vygotsky's (1978, 1962) theory of the "zone of proximal development." The teachers would present new knowledge and function within the pupil's zone of proximal development. They provided what Bruner (1975) termed a "scaffold," a supporting structure for understanding new concepts.

Several instructional components were developed for the Early Literacy Project in the areas of reading and writing. Each component involved various

key elements including modeling, assessment of prior knowledge, comprehension activation, structural analysis, discussion, engagement and sharing. Careful consideration was given to development of the training component of the model. Teachers attended workshops to learn instructional strategies, techniques, methodology and the rationale for the components (Steward, Mason & Benjamin, 1990).

The results achieved by children involved in the Early Literacy program were better than those of children in the traditional program. In a discussion of the results, Stewart, Mason and Benjamin (1990) wrote, "The results indicate that implementation of the Early Literacy program can lead to striking progress in kindergarten children's early literacy development. An intervention model can change teachers' behaviors and enable them to provide more effective instruction for kindergarten children" (pg. 7).

The program appears to have been successful on several levels. The literacy activities developed and the format of the lessons promoted effective teaching interactions. Children were supported in their acquisition of knowledge by teachers who worked within each child's zone of proximal development. Teachers were trained to notice the children's strengths. The teacher training aspect of the model was perceived to have been one of the reasons for the success of the program (Stewart, Mason & Benjamin, 1990).

The aim of education needs to be to create a literate society. Achievement of early literacy must therefore be a priority. Early literacy programs which are based on theory and promote holistic approaches have been documented. Many of these programs have attributed their success to the implementation of current theories and approaches and thorough teacher training. More programs need to be implemented which emphasize these aspects.

School-Wide Literacy Reforms

Concerned educators throughout the state and the nation are attempting to find viable solutions to the problems that beset public education. Many school districts are exploring alternatives to traditional methods. While new ideas and strategies have limited impact if implemented singly, school-wide, indeed district-wide, restructuring efforts have a much greater impact and possibility of achieving success.

Restructuring Issues

A report titled Implementing Innovative Elementary Literacy Programs (Schwab, et al, 1992) presents a comprehensive discussion of relevant restructuring issues. The report includes selections from several schools in the Northwest that have made school-wide restructuring efforts to improve their literacy programs. A wide range of effective strategies and approaches were documented. While individual schools attempted the change process through the avenues best suited to their particular needs, there appeared to be some shared themes. Members of the staffs involved in the change process felt that the need for improvement was urgent and that while change was difficult, the literacy reforms were rewarding. A strong overall common theme that emerged from various restructuring efforts was the feeling that both the school's literacy program and the individual teacher's repertoire would never be finished. They have become part of a learning cycle where each lesson informs the subsequent practice.

From an analysis of restructuring efforts, several topics emerged that could be translated from successful practice into useful resources. These included clear identification of goals, innovations to achieve the goals,

implementation strategies to achieve the innovations, identification of barriers to implementation and of factors facilitating implementation as well as concerns regarding assessment and evaluation practices. Each school could follow a path best suited to its own concerns. However, successful approaches involved the teaching staff, administration and community in the change process. Input from these concerned sources was essential to the development, implementation and success of the restructuring efforts. Strong site leadership and supportive districts also facilitated the change.

Several critical issues were commonly found as teachers and administrators implemented innovations in literacy education. Curriculum and classroom instruction need to be reconsidered in light of the new philosophy and goals. Instructional materials for implementing literature based programs may not be readily available and will be costly. Another issue, incompatibility between the new, innovative practices and traditional measures of performance, such as standardized and basal tests will take time to work out. The issue of remediation has also begun to be viewed differently. Research has shown that early intervention is the most effective method. Many professionals are coming to the conclusion that it is more cost effective to implement early intervention than provide years of services. One approach which is being successfully implemented in schools that are restructuring is Reading Recovery.

Two important issues at restructuring schools are faculty relations and staff development. Administrators had to take a strong leadership role. It was found that they needed to be the resource to facilitate the change for teachers who were willing to take on the challenges and those who had to be brought along gradually. The most difficult issue regarding staff development continues to be how to provide the best program with limited financial and human

resources. Staff development can not be solely an occasional inservice, it needs to be thorough and on-going.

All schools that recognize the need to restructure their approach to literacy education will have to forge their own path. Each school will have to develop a program designed to fit their particular population and available resources. However, a review of current programs implementing change demonstrates that there are common grounds. Innovations and practices can be adapted to suit individual settings. Both early intervention programs, Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura, can be successfully implemented to support early literacy as part of a restructuring effort. In striving to offer all students meaningful literacy experiences the value of reviewing literature on successful practice enhances the eventual resulting programs.

Reading Recovery

Good teaching in the regular classrooms must be the first priority for educators (Clay, 1985). However, even in the best of classrooms, with caring, noticing teachers, some children do not demonstrate the same rate of progress. Early intervention can assist children having difficulty in acquiring the necessary strategies to achieve early literacy. Reading Recovery is an early intervention program that was designed to help first grade students at risk of developing reading difficulties.

The Reading Recovery program was developed by Marie M. Clay, a noted educator and psychologist from New Zealand. Clay conducted research in New Zealand which led to the design of techniques for detecting early reading difficulties and the development of the Reading Recovery program in 1979. The program gives the lowest performing students an opportunity to learn strategies

necessary to accelerate to the average level of the class.

Reading Recovery is based on sound philosophical principles. Its basic tenets are that reading is a strategic process that takes place in the reader's mind; that reading and writing are interconnected, reciprocal processes; that children learn to read by reading; that accelerated progress is possible and that it is most productive to intervene early before children become trapped in a cycle of reading failure (Clay, 1985). Pinnell (1989) stated that, "Reading Recovery teachers hold assumptions tentatively because the complex processes they are talking about cannot be directly observed" (pg. 169). The teachers involved in the Reading Recovery program revise their theories as they observe, read pertinent literature, discuss with peers and are involved in the daily interaction with children.

Implementation in the United States

In 1984, Reading Recovery was introduced in the United States. A joint effort of the Ohio Department of Education, Columbus Public Schools and Ohio State University provided funding for implementation. Clay and Barbara Watson, the National Director of Reading Recovery in New Zealand, were invited to Ohio State University to train Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders. The program piloted during 1984-85 demonstrated results which encouraged district-wide implementation for the following year. By 1987-88 Reading Recovery was well established throughout the state of Ohio (Pinnell, Fried & Estice, 1990; Pinnell, 1989).

Reading Recovery implementation was initiated in California in 1991-92. A training site was established at California State University, San Bernardino. The California program has shown rapid growth. Many districts trained their

own teacher leaders and have begun training their own teachers. Three university sites throughout the state began providing training during the 1993-94 school year (Reading Recovery in California, 1991-93, 1994).

Lesson Framework

The Reading Recovery program provides intense, one-on-one instruction for the lowest achieving first grade students. It is intended to be a short-term intervention, most students are able to complete the program in 12-20 weeks. Reading Recovery teachers are trained to help pupils develop strategies to become successful readers. The lessons focus on the child's strengths. The lesson framework develops reading and writing abilities through the use of natural language, supportive conversation, and predictable text (Clay, 1985).

The Reading Recovery teacher works closely with classroom teachers. Those first grade pupils which the classroom teacher has observed having difficulties are given a series of diagnostic tests. The Observation Survey of early literacy achievement consists of the following six measures: letter identification, word test, concepts about print, writing vocabulary, dictation test and text reading level (Clay, 1985). Clay (1993a) noted that, "...no one task is satisfactory as an assessment on its own" (pg. 43). Systematic observation of the child's behavior provide valuable insights on how effectively the child is able to problem solve.

The initial two weeks of Reading Recovery are focused on what the child knows. Clay (1993a) wrote, "In complex learning, what is already known provides the learner with a useful context within which to embed new learning" (pg. 20). This time period is known as "Roaming Around the Known." The teacher is expected to encourage the flexible use of what the child knows until he

is comfortable with the knowledge.

A typical tutoring session would include these components: reading familiar books, reading the previous day's new book while the teacher takes a running record, writing a story, working with a cut-up sentence and reading a new book. The program is different for each child. Each lesson has a framework, however the teacher and the child are involved in an oral interaction which guides the teacher's responses and questions (Pinnell, Fried & Estice, 1990).

Lessons are holistic in nature and designed to assist the pupils in developing effective strategies. Children are supported through a "scaffold" (Bruner, 1975) process in their understanding of new knowledge. The teachers work within each child's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978, 1962). Teachers are trained to capitalize on the child's strengths as they continue to challenge them to new insights.

Children in the Reading Recovery program are taught to use cues and strategies. They learn to read by reading and to write by writing. They develop the ability to solve problems by using what Clay (1985) called "their theories of the world and their theories of written language" (pg. 71). Children that develop a system of strategies which they can apply to any situation are considered ready to discontinue. Those children who discontinue the program will be able to work at the average of their class and will have the strategies necessary for a self-improving system. These children will continue to improve as they read and write (Clay, 1993).

Staff Development

The implementation of Reading Recovery requires that teachers participate in a year long training taught by a certified teacher leader. Teachers

participate initially in a summer inservice to learn how to administer the Observation Survey. This is followed by weekly sessions throughout the year. Teachers in training simultaneously implement the program with children. Class sessions typically include the observation of two lessons behind a two-way glass. Each teacher in training is expected to teach behind the class two or three times during the school year. The teacher leader guides the class session as teachers observe the lesson. As teachers participate in discussions they learn and refine skills they will use in their own teaching. After observing the behind the glass lessons, teachers participate in reflective discussion and demonstrations of techniques by the teacher leader (Pinnell, 1989).

The staff development component of Reading Recovery was developed as recommended by Clay's initial research team. The research team consisted of concerned New Zealand educators. The researchers that participated in the project felt that the learning process they had gone through would be a beneficial process for the teachers to go through as well. The aspects of the process included reading and discussing theoretical materials, gathering information about the students, learning techniques for assessing the children's strengths and needs, taking and analyzing running records, learning techniques for effective strategy instruction and learning to be noticing teachers able to make appropriate decisions based on the children's behaviors.

The original team of researchers recommended that the lessons behind-the-glass be part of the training model. They suggested that the discussions during the sessions clarified and increased the understandings of concepts. The observation of lessons was felt to be powerful in assisting teachers as they predicted, discussed and hypothesized. The behind-the-glass lessons help the teachers in training to build a "case-by-case" information source on which to base

their instructional decisions (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993).

An important aspect of Reading Recovery staff development model is the continuation of training. Teachers who have completed their initial training continue to have interaction with their peers as they are expected to participate in at least six continuing contact sessions per year. These sessions follow the same general format as the training year classes.

The Reading Recovery training model is unique in that it provides teachers an opportunity to learn as they teach, to test their budding hypothesis and theories and to extend their learning through the on-going observation of the children they are teaching. The model does not follow prescribed, step-by-step routines. The Reading Recovery interactive staff development model provides the key to the success of the program (Lyons, Pinnell & DeFord, 1993). It provides the theoretical background, techniques and strategies for teachers to make effective, powerful decisions as they support the children in their literacy acquisition.

Clay (1982) reported that reading failure can be, "...reduced only by the very early detection of difficulties achieved by the accurate monitoring of the earliest stages of learning" (pg. 166). Reading Recovery gives low achieving young learners an avenue to avoid this failure. Full implementation of the Reading Recovery program will greatly reduce the number of children requiring special services. Reading Recovery is a research based, educationally sound early intervention program which can provide an avenue to the achievement of literacy for children.

Descubriendo La Lectura

Research supports bilingual education which uses the child's native

language for initial literacy instruction. Initial success in native language literacy has been found to provide a solid foundation for subsequent success in second language literacy (Medina, 1988; Thonis, 1981; Leyba, 1978). Spanish is the first language of about 85 percent of the language minority students in the United States (Crawford, 1989; Fradd & Tikunoff, 1987). Instructional programs which utilize the student's first language in developing cognitive and academic skills have demonstrated significantly better results than those which emphasize immersion in the second language. Incorporating the child's language and culture into the school program also appears to provide a significant predictor of their academic success in both the first and second languages.

Students whose primary language is Spanish and who are receiving literacy instruction in Spanish may also require special attention. Unfortunately, most remedial programs provide the intervention in English which serves to further confuse this particular population. Descubriendo La Lectura, the reconstruction of Reading Recovery in Spanish, was developed as a result of the need for an early intervention for children receiving initial literacy instruction in Spanish (Escamilla & Andrade, 1992).

Development of Descubriendo La Lectura

In 1988, Tucson Unified School District began to implement Reading Recovery. Teachers training in Reading Recovery began to concurrently develop the Spanish adaptation of the program. The project identified culturally relevant literature for use in the program. Initially, many books had to be translated from English into Spanish. The Spanish version of the Diagnostic Survey was developed. The observational tasks were the same as in the English version. Analyses of the validity and reliability of the Spanish Diagnostic Survey were

conducted. The survey was established to be valid, reliable and comparable to the English Diagnostic Survey (Escamilla, Basurto, Andrade & Ruiz, 1991).

Lesson Framework

Children identified through the use of the Spanish Diagnostic Survey as needing Descubriendo La Lectura begin the program by "Roaming Around the Known." Teachers are trained to utilize this time to build rapport and encourage the flexible use of what the child knows until he is comfortable using his knowledge in a variety of situations. Lessons follow a standard format including the reading of familiar books, the reading of the previous day's new book while the teacher takes a running record, writing a story, rearranging a cut-up story and reading a new book (Escamilla & Andrade, 1992).

Each child's lesson and repertoire of familiar books is different as teachers are trained to follow the child. Children are supported in their attempts as they develop a system of strategies which they can apply to any situation. Pupils who discontinue the program are able to work at the average of their class and have in place the necessary strategies for a self-extending system. These children continue to improve as they continue to read and write (Clay, 1993b).

Staff Development

The training of Descubriendo La Lectura teachers can be accomplished in two ways. One would be for teachers to participate in the training program solely in Spanish. The teacher would then work with only Spanish children. Another way would be for the teacher to complete training in Reading Recovery and participate in a "bridging" into Descubriendo La Lectura. The bridging would require a summer session and a year long commitment. The teacher could then teach both English and Spanish pupils. Appropriate training is critical to

the successful and effective implementation of Descubriendo La Lectura.

Escamilla and Andrade (1992) caution, "This program is not simply a collection of materials and lesson plans that can be purchased and disseminated to teachers in a 'quick and easy' 1-day preservice meeting. Good DLL [Descubriendo La Lectura] programs will need to have training components specific to Spanish literacy that include sociocultural consideration of the learners" (pg. 223).

Early literacy programs in the child's native language supported by effective early intervention programs such as Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura can provide the avenue for the achievement of early literacy for all students. Ruiz (1992) stated, "...Descubriendo La Lectura creates an environment that validates the cultural background and first language of language-minority children, enabling these students to become good readers in two languages" (pg. 12). Children able to become literate in two languages will have better opportunities to be successful in their academic and social careers. Holistic, primary language early literacy programs with the support of effective early intervention programs such as Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura can facilitate such a successful future.

Summary

The work of major researchers supports the development of a holistic setting where students are validated and empowered to become lifelong readers and writers. Whole language teachers develop an evolving philosophy and "practice what they preach." The pursuit of literacy in a holistic classroom is a shared effort; it is not just the teacher's agenda, the students have a clear voice. Real learning takes place within a social context.

Current holistic educational practices have a solid theoretical base.

Teachers form their philosophies based on such theories as Piaget's theory of developmental stages, Vygostky's theory the zone of proximal development and Bruner's theory of scaffolding teacher/student interactions. Holistic teachers read research and current literature; they refine their philosophy through collegiate interaction, kid-watching and reflective teaching.

Bilingual education which emphasizes the successful achievement of early literacy in the child's native language has been found to provide a solid foundation for subsequent success in second language literacy. Research has shown that a large percentage of the language minority students in the United States are Spanish dominant. For these children, initial literacy instructional programs which utilize Spanish in developing cognitive and academic skills have demonstrated significantly better results than programs which emphasize immersion in the second language.

Educators are striving to implement early literacy in holistic classrooms, however, even in the best of classrooms, with noticing teachers, some children may not demonstrate the same rate of progress. Early intervention has been found to assist children who have difficulty in acquiring the necessary strategies to achieve early literacy. Reading Recovery is an effective early intervention program designed to help first grade students at risk of developing reading difficulties. Students whose primary language is Spanish and who are receiving literacy instruction in Spanish may also require special attention. Descubriendo La Lectura is the application of Reading Recovery methods for Spanish speaking students receiving instruction in their primary language.

A holistic primary language early literacy program with the support of effective early intervention programs such as Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura has the potential to develop empowered learners who

will become successful reader and writers. By striving to provide a holistic setting teachers will be striving to create joyful learners who will celebrate literacy. Goodman (1986) stated:

If kids are in whole language programs with whole language teachers right from the beginning, there are going to be a lot fewer readers and writers in trouble. Whole language teachers work at developing the full range of language functions in the context of the culture(s) of the learners. They are effective kid-watchers who see quickly when kids are not developing and find alternatives that will turn them on and get them moving. Most important, they believe kids have what it takes to become literate. They won't blame them for their lack of success. Rather, they'll build on their strengths and encourage them to believe in themselves and their ability to become literate (pg. 58).

GOALS AND LIMITATIONS

The purpose of this project is to review current educational theories and philosophies and develop a model which emphasizes holistic approaches to the development of early literacy. The holistic viewpoint suggests that the strategies in the model could be implemented regardless of the primary language of the classroom. The intent of the project is not to provide a manual for the implementation of whole language or early literacy. Rather, it is to spark sufficient interest in the philosophies and theories discussed as to cause readers to delve further into the research and literature on their own. By providing the collection of significant literacy approaches, the author hopes to provide the reader the path to begin to change.

The model will be geared mainly to kindergarten and first grade teachers. However many of the holistic approaches to literacy which will be discussed can be implemented at any grade level. The change process can be initiated with just one committed individual. The early intervention models suggested (Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura) will require a district and school commitment as they involve a monetary cost and university training.

An important limitation to this project is time. It would be more powerful if it were possible to pilot the project and document the results of the implementation. Due to the time constraints, this is not possible .

Another limitation is that the project is not intended to be all inclusive. The holistic philosophy supports this limitation as whole language teachers are expected to continue to read, learn and develop in their theories and practices. Approaches, strategies and suggestions will be provided as examples.

Another limitation will be the complicated series of issues involved in creating systemic change. Individuals may find it easier to start changing,

accepting and developing a holistic perspective and implementing elements of the whole language approach. Convincing site and district administrators will take time. Implementing innovations that appear initially costly such as Reading Recovery and Descubriendo La Lectura make take time as well.

APPENDIX A: EARLY LITERACY MODEL

Introduction

Current research supports the implementation of a holistic approach to early literacy. As educators, we seem to be in the midst of a revolution in early education. The professional literature abounds with articles on whole language, early literacy and reconstruction efforts. Conferences, workshops and seminars claim to provide the most up-to-date speakers and notebooks with the latest interventions and materials. Teachers feel overwhelmed and intimidated by the jargon. Making the transition from traditional instruction to whole language is a process that once begun will never end. Teachers that embark on this journey will continue to read, reflect on their teaching and take risks. They will strive to make literacy a priority and create a meaningful learning environment for themselves and their pupils.

Whole language is not a prepackaged program. As such, the value of reading research and current literature to assist in the formulation of a working theory of how children learn can not be over emphasized. Teachers attempting to implement a holistic early literacy program need to give themselves time to reflect and credit for their attempts, whether initially successful or not. The whole language philosophy impacts the entire curriculum; teachers need to be realistic and flexible in their planning. Planning will be more effective when it is based on theory and runs concurrent with praxis.

Holistic approaches can make literacy accessible to more children in today's classrooms. Unfortunately, however, even with noticing teachers utilizing holistic strategies, some children still do not demonstrate the same rate of progress. Research has shown that it is most effective to intervene early.

Reading Recovery is a research and theory based effective early intervention for first grade children experiencing difficulties in acquiring the necessary strategies to achieve early literacy in English. It is logical that first grade students whose primary language is Spanish and who are receiving literacy instruction in Spanish will also require special attention. Descubriendo La Lectura is the application of Reading Recovery methods for Spanish speaking children who are receiving instruction in their primary language. The available data concerning these programs demonstrates that they are an effective early intervention.

This project is mainly geared to kindergarten and first grade teachers. Current research clearly points out that literacy needs to happen early. The classroom environment needs to provide young children the opportunities to become literate. The model will emphasize holistic approaches to the development of early literacy. The strategies and approaches suggested in this model can be implemented regardless of the primary language of the classroom. The early intervention programs which are strongly suggested as companions to this model are designed for first grade students.

The model will discuss the learning environment in a whole language classroom including the physical environment, classroom management and necessary resources. Holistic approaches to reading and writing including reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, writing aloud, shared writing, guided writing and independent writing will be presented. Centers will be suggested as an avenue to provide children opportunities to develop and solidify their strategies. The model will also discuss integration of content areas and assessment and evaluation. Finally, the project will discuss early interventions for at-risk students, implementation timeline and present conclusions.

The Learning Environment

The environment in a whole language classroom is supportive and exciting. Children are not expected to be perfect; they are free to make mistakes and approximations. A holistic teacher understands how children learn and provides ample time and diverse opportunities for literacy development.

The intangible environment in a whole language classroom is guided by Cambourne's (1988) conditions of learning. These conditions are immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility, use, approximation, response, and engagement. Children in a holistic setting are immersed in print. The walls are covered with print, often it is the children's own writing and books. The teacher immerses children in texts. They have access to numerous books, magazines, environmental print and newspapers. In the whole language classroom the teacher facilitates learning by appropriate demonstration. Children are lead on the road to literacy by the teacher's demonstrations of how language works. Modeling of reading, writing, listening and speaking activities take place consistently. In a holistic classroom the inherent expectation is that the learners will become literate. Children are expected to be active learners, to make choices, to have a voice in their learning. It is the responsibility of the learners to learn. The classroom curriculum is a joint effort of the teacher and pupils. The whole language teacher provides opportunities for the children to use and practice their tentative literacy skills in authentic tasks. Students are comfortable and take risks; their approximations are valued as part of the learning process. Relevant feedback is provided to the learners. The teacher's responses are positive, appropriate and timely. The children view themselves as learners, they are engaged in their quest for literacy.

The Physical Environment

All whole language classrooms will look somewhat different. Teachers implementing holistic approaches will be at different levels of implementation and will be individually different in their classroom set-up. The physical environment of a whole language classroom characteristically includes certain areas:

- A central place for the whole class to come together.
- Various places for group work such as tables for group discussion or cooperative work, a library corner, a listening area, special interest centers.
- Places for individuals or partners to work such as a quiet writing center, a publishing area, a reading corner.
- Areas for displaying the children's products.

Whole language empowers each teacher to make theory based decisions regarding their teaching. The physical environment of a holistic classroom has established areas with purpose and meaning to the learners, yet it is flexible and dynamic. The children have ownership of their room, they are aware of the expectations. The classroom provides an environment in which children can become literate.

Classroom Management

Successful implementation depends on good classroom management. A whole language classroom at first glance may appear unstructured. It is not. The routines in the classroom need to be predictable, rules must be stated and enforced. Systems should be established for the storage and organization of materials. The involvement of the children in the management of their classroom is critical. Children need to understand the reasons for the various settings in

their classroom.

Children in a whole language classroom are actively learning. As such, they will move, talk and interact with their peers. Teachers need to provide the parameters for the children. They should plan, model, organize and prepare the setting to provide the purpose for the children's interactions. Modeling of all expected behaviors is essential to the successful implementation of the program. Kindergarten and first grade holistic teachers are aware of the power of modeling the various expected behaviors. Young children need to widen the range of options available to them in their search for expression. The teacher needs to provide the model for the children to emulate. Those behaviors which are expected to be exhibited in the school setting need to be modeled. Young children come to school with many appropriate behaviors in place, however, many children will still need to learn a variety of social, as well as academic behaviors in their first years of school.

Young children in holistic classrooms are happy, active learners. They experience immediate, inherent gratification. The classroom curriculum is designed to be relevant and meaningful. Teachers build on the children's strengths, they validate approximations. The children are not afraid to take risks. Teachers use verbal and written praise liberally. The children experience the joy of learning, their accomplishments are valued.

Classroom Resources

A whole language classroom requires a variety of resources. The most essential is books. The program requires that many books be available at levels which are appropriate for the children and the activity. Other resources include:

- Quality children's literature for reading silently and aloud.

- Big books which can be utilized for shared book experience.
- Audio tapes with books for the listening center.
- Poems, charts and songs for the children to read.
- Environmental print which the children recognize and read.
- Real world reading material such as newspapers, maps, catalogues, magazines.
- Dictionaries and encyclopedias as reference sources.

Individuals attempting to implement whole language on their own will find it initially costly. However, many book clubs have become aware of the need for inexpensive quality literature and are offering better books at cheaper prices. Some companies are also offering sets of titles in groupings which may be appropriate for guided reading groups. Many titles have been translated to Spanish and there is an increasing number of original Spanish stories which are appropriate for including in an early literacy program.

Teachers will need to spend time reading and examining many books to develop and refine the ability to match the books to the children. There are no specific formulas for determining the appropriateness of a particular book, however, there is a helpful continuum of patterns or descriptors which can assist in assessing the difficulty of the text (Peterson, 1988). Teachers will need to look at several interacting factors as they make decisions regarding the complexity of texts, such as, the language patterns, vocabulary, the level of support provided by the illustration, the narrative style, and the content in relationship to the children's interest. The process may become easier as similar books are compared (DeFord, Lyons & Pinnell, 1991).

Several aspects can be looked at when attempting to group books by levels of difficulty. Peterson (1988) identified some general characteristics which can be

helpful in this endeavor. The very early, easier books will tend to have a repetitive pattern, consistent placement of print, familiar oral language structures, objects and actions and illustrations which provide the readers high support. The next level in the hierarchy will continue to use some repetitive patterns, however the opening or closing sentence may change, the oral language will remain predominantly familiar and the illustrations will continue to provide fairly high support to the reader. The next category will utilize some repetitive phrases, refrains or sentences, however, the language becomes less dependent on the familiar oral structures, "book" language is more apparent and the illustrations provide moderate support. In the next grouping, as the texts become more difficult, the sentence patterns used vary throughout the story, there may be repeated patterns in cumulative format, written language structures are common, the characters engage in dialogue and the illustrations provide the reader less support. The books in the highest level of this hierarchy have story lines with elaborate events, extended descriptions utilizing literary language with challenging vocabulary and the illustrations provide the reader very little support.

The suggested guidelines can be utilized to assist holistic teachers in selecting appropriate instructional materials for the children in the classroom. The purpose of the activity will influence the book selection. Teachers can use higher level books for read aloud and shared reading. The books utilized for guided reading activities will also have to be carefully selected. The ability to match the book to the child or group will improve with time. Careful observation of the children and knowledge of their interests and abilities will assist in the selection of the most appropriate book.

Approaches to Early Literacy

A balanced literacy program will include various approaches to reading and writing. Each approach or element serves a specific purpose and will be geared at a particular classroom grouping, such as whole class, small group or individuals. Routman (1991), Mooney (1990) and Butler (1988) described, with some variance as to how many need to be included in a balanced program, the elements which will be presented in this model.

The approaches to reading which will be described include reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading and independent reading. The approaches to writing which will be discussed include writing aloud, shared writing, guided writing and independent writing. The approaches or strategies will be described independently. However, in a holistic literacy program, reading and writing will be interactive, interdependent and mutually beneficial. Strategies learned in one area can be applied to the other. Writing can be the result of a reading activity and further reading can be the result of a writing activity. The strategies are also applicable to reading and writing in the content areas.

Reading

Reading Aloud

To develop the children's love for books, teachers need to read aloud to their class daily. Children will enjoy listening to their favorite stories many times. The books can be simple and repetitious or complex stories or poems. Choosing stories from a variety of genres and authors will provide children an introduction to the rich world of literature. The intent is to immerse children in quality literature.

In reading aloud, the teacher reads the story, poem or chapter to the class.

This permits the use of more complex text than the children could read on their own. Reading aloud therefore allows the children to enjoy stories which they can comprehend but may be too difficult to read independently. Because the teacher is reading, the children will receive powerful demonstrations of how language sounds. Teachers can read with intonation and inflection and raise the children's level of enjoyment and comprehension. Characters in the stories can be brought to life, have different personalities; new vocabulary can be introduced in meaningful context and the children's imagination can be stimulated. The children will develop and enrich their knowledge of oral and written language. Reading aloud to children should take place more than once a day.

Many quality books exist which can be used for reading aloud to kindergarten and first grade students. Russell Hoban series about Frances the badger, Maurice Sendak books, like Chicken Soup With Rice and In The Night Kitchen, the series about Jesse Bear by Nancy White Carlstrom and just about any of the many humorous books by Robert Munsch are wonderful to read aloud.

This particular approach is usually used with the whole class. However, it works well for groups or individuals for a specific purpose. A group which has read a book at their level by an author which they have enjoyed may like to hear a more complex book by the same author. An individual may enjoy listening to a poem or a story which relates to an area that the teacher may be aware has relevancy to that child.

Shared Reading

Shared reading is similar to reading aloud in that it usually involves the whole class. The teacher will read the text, however, this approach encourages

the children's participation in the reading. The teacher, as the expert, provides the model for reading the text fluently and with expression. The children are encouraged to participate. The setting is relaxed, non-threatening and social. The approximations and efforts of the children are validated.

The books selected for shared reading will use language which is more natural to the children and will often have repetitive phrases or predictable patterns. The books need to have print large enough for all children to see. Often the books used are the big book versions, however any quality literature book with large print can be used. A particular favorite of many teachers and children is Joy Cowley's Mrs. Wishy Washy. Poems, charts and songs can also be copied on large chart paper and utilized for shared reading.

The teacher introduces the title, cover, the plot and pictures in the story. The teacher will often direct the children's attention to the printed page by using a pointer. Teachers engage the children's attention by reading the story with dramatic emphasis, inflection, fluency and expression. Books that have repetitive phrases or predictable patterns are especially good selections as they engage and motivate the children. The teacher will invite the children to predict and read along particularly on the predictable or repetitive phrases. The children will enjoy reading as a class; they will demonstrate vitality and feeling in their voices. Because there is no pressure, all children will join in, mistakes will not be noticed and all readers will be enthusiastically supported by their peers.

The first experience of a shared book can be done for enjoyment. Later readings can be used to incorporate particular teaching points. Butler (1988) recommends that only one or two strategies be taught per shared reading session. This approach lends itself to teaching the features of text. Teachers can use the shared book experience to demonstrate how to handle books, teach

reading strategies, conventions of print and written language. Holdaway (1979) discusses specific procedures, examples and rationales for using big books and the shared reading approach. Conventions of print and high frequency words will be seen repeatedly and learned naturally. The children will enjoy re-reading little copies of the shared books on their own.

Shared book experiences physically involves the whole class in the reading act. The children are sitting in close proximity, attending and participating in the reading. The teacher strives to stir the children's imagination and activate their interest. Children are encouraged to predict and participate in the reading. It is important to provide a fluent model while encouraging the children's participation. Subsequent readings will offer opportunities for teaching and more widespread participation as the children will have familiarity with the text.

Guided Reading

This approach is crucial to the success of the literacy program. The children will be involved in reading books at their instructional level with the teacher's guidance and support. Teachers of kindergarten students will initially spend more time on reading aloud and shared reading. As the year progresses, however, many of the children will be ready for guided reading.

Guided reading should be done with small groups of children who are at about the same instructional level. For this particular approach grouping by need is strongly recommended and will have better results. These groups are flexible and may change during the year. An accurate record of the children's reading level can be achieved by taking a running record (Clay, 1993a). The results of this assessment method combined with observations of the behaviors

that children may or may not exhibit will help guide the session.

Guided reading lessons should assist children in developing early reading strategies, fluency and confidence. The end result should be to promote independence. Lessons should include teacher directed discussions, teacher/student and student/student interactions, direct and indirect strategy teaching and reinforcement of the use of strategies. The book is introduced by the teacher through a discussion. The teacher is not expected to read the text first. It is not an echo reading activity. The text selected needs to be at a level which the group can attempt to read with the introduction and support of the teacher.

The guided reading session is the time to teach. The classroom management system should be designed in such a way as to make these sessions free of interruptions. Lessons should be of short duration, 20 to 25 minutes long. Guided reading groups should be small, 4 to 6 children is ideal. It is during guided reading that the teacher can introduce new strategies and observe what children are currently using independently at point of difficulty. Close observation of children's behaviors will guide subsequent lessons.

Guided reading sessions can have a variety of purposes. The purpose will guide the presentation. The focus may be to introduce a strategy, an author, a literary device or a convention of print. Groups may vary according to purpose. Occasionally, the teacher may vary groups by interest, strengths, needs or reading ability. The same book could be used with different groups for a different purpose.

The guided reading lesson begins with an introduction to the text by the teacher. The title and cover of the book are discussed. Children may be asked to predict what the story may be about from the title. The teacher may proceed to

explain the plot of the story. All the pictures in the text will be discussed. The teacher may ask children to locate a new word in the text after predicting what it begins with. All responses are validated. The children feel free to discuss and comment on the pictures and the story. The setting is interactive and non-threatening. Repetitive phrases or unusual language may be practiced. After the introduction and discussion the teacher will encourage children to read the text independently as a group. The book may be read a second time to a partner in the group, into a cassette or to a stuffed reading buddy. The book selected should provide enough challenge to students as to have them practice their strategies without reaching frustration level. The teacher functions within the children's zone of proximal development. The introduction and interventions should provide the scaffold for the children to understand new concepts

It is likely that for the individuals attempting to implement whole language approaches, this element will be the most costly to implement. The children need to read many books at their instructional level. Various companies have developed sets of books which can be used for guided reading lessons. The different companies level their books according to their own leveling strategy. The only way for a teacher to assess if the level is appropriate is by taking a running record. The instructional level is that which the child can read with approximately 90% to 94% accuracy. Teachers will become better able to judge the level of books and match the books to the children's needs with practice. The books that are read in the guided reading session can become part of the books that are read independently or in shared sessions. It would be more advantageous if it were not the other way around as guided reading books should be able to challenge the students to use their strategies but not be frustrating or boring.

Guided reading lessons are usually followed with some type of responding activity. These activities build on children's understanding of the text. All responses should be initially modeled and the repertoire can be increased throughout the school year. Children should be allowed to select the activity they want and occasionally to make no response to a particular text. Not every story needs a response.

Responding to the literature can take the form of drawings, arts and crafts projects, dioramas, acting out the story, rewriting the ending, making a big book, creating a new version, designing a book mark or a new book jacket, writing a letter to a character or the author, comparing various versions. These activities can be the work of individual, pairs or the whole group. They can also require teacher assistance or be completed independently. Responding activities can be utilized to reinforce shared books and books read aloud.

Independent Reading

Children should be encouraged to read independently. Initially, especially at the beginning of the kindergarten year children will be reading from memory those books which they have enjoyed most. The text may not match the print. Building a box of books that the children have heard many times and have supportive, repetitious text will be helpful. As children participate in guided reading lessons, the books they have read as a group can become part of their reading box. These books will be read many times and each subsequent reading will help strengthen the child's reading ability.

Many schools use a variety of silent reading programs for the independent reading time. This is not often a reality in the primary grades because young children do not read silently. Hearing the language of books while looking at the

print is still a necessary part of the process for young children. Children in the primary grades will reap more benefit by participating in quiet reading. This can be done in a specific area such as the library corner or at their desks. Young children may choose to read to or with a partner, a stuffed reading buddy or a group of friends. The time set aside for this activity varies according to the grade, for the primary grades, initially 5 to 10 minutes may be sufficient.

Writing

Writing Aloud

This approach is done by the teacher modeling writing for students. The teacher writes in front of the class and verbalizes the thinking and writing process for the children. The modeling is explicit. The teacher discusses the thinking, format, layout, spacing formation of letters, spelling and punctuation. The writing may be done on chart paper, the chalkboard or the overhead projector.

Writing aloud can be done daily in the form of a daily message or class news. The teacher can write the day's events or news that the children have shared earlier. This method offers the children an avenue to connect the activity with their lives. The children become engaged by the process. Conventions of writing are modeled and discussed. As the year progresses, the daily news activity can become a shared writing activity with more input by the students.

This approach is meant to be done with the whole class and takes only a few minutes. The teacher verbalizes the thought process and the actions involved. The children relate the spoken word to the written word. Writing aloud can be used to model specific formats for writing such as the friendly letter. As with reading aloud, writing aloud can be more powerful if it takes

place on a daily basis.

Shared Writing

This approach involves the collaboration of the teacher and pupils. Writing is negotiated. The teacher and pupils discuss topics, meaning and words choices. Shared writing is similar to shared reading in that the teacher provides the supporting scaffold needed for children to accomplish writing experiences which they could not complete alone. The teacher often acts as the scribe. The teacher and children discuss the topic and suggest the text. Sentences generated will be more detailed and descriptive than those produced independently by children. The text that is finally written will be immediate and relevant to the students. The children will have increased their ability to read the resulting text by having participated in the construction. This approach can be used with the whole class, small groups or individual children.

Shared writing provides an avenue for modeling of the conventions of writing such as spelling, punctuation and grammar. This activity is helpful for students who are able to produce elaborate oral stories but have difficulty writing. The teacher provides the supportive environment for these reluctant writers.

Shared writing can be used for recording language experience stories. The children can generate a story orally and the teacher writes their story. These stories use the child's language and are relevant to the children. Since the language experience story uses the child's language, it will be easy for the children to read.

Shared writing can also be utilized with the daily news activity. The children can have input in the development of the message and can also share in

the writing. Initially they may only write their name or a particular sound they can hear in a word. As the year progresses, they can write words or entire sentences.

Another form of shared writing is interactive writing (Pinnell & McCarrier, 1994; McKenzie, 1988). The teacher and students collaborate in the construction of the message. In interactive writing, the children have input in the development of the message and the children share the pen. This approach must be structured to create a message that the children can read independently.

Guided Writing

In this approach the teacher is the facilitator. The child does the writing. The teacher supports and suggests options. The ownership of the product is the child's. Guided writing may take place with the whole class, a small group or one-to-one.

The teacher provides for students the "sounding board" for their ideas. The teacher helps students to clarify their thinking and discover how to say what they are thinking meaningfully. The role of the teacher is to suggest and support, not direct or prescribe. Children are expected to apply their newly acquired skills to subsequent pieces of writing.

This approach, like guided reading should take place after the children have had many opportunities to see how writing works through writing aloud and shared writing. In guided writing mechanics or skills are taught strategically. The teacher uses the context of authentic writing situations to teach strategies as they are needed (Graves, 1983; Turbill, 1982). The intent of guided writing is to assist writers in their attempts, to lead them to writing independently.

First grade teachers may chose to devise a writer's workshop format to incorporate the writing process. The children can work individually, in pairs or groups. Children can participate the process of writing, (Walshe, 1981, 1980) moving through the stages, drafting, revising and publishing as they become confident writers. Teachers need to model the possible stages and the purposes and forms of writing. Children can receive assistance at any stage of the writing by conferencing with the teacher.

Independent Writing

Children can begin writing independently at their level as soon as they enter school. Kindergarten children can draw and write in their journals. Initially this writing may consist of scribbles, shapes or letters. Most children will begin to add more as the year progresses. Independent writing is done without teacher intervention.

Interactive journals can be used in the primary classrooms. Children write in these journals and the teacher writes a response to each entry. The response does not involve correcting the child's writing. It is simply a comment, often expressing agreement or curiosity phrased in a positive manner. The comment should relate to writing. The child's language can be used in the response. If the journal entry says, "The tree is green," the responses could be simply, "Great green tree!", "I like your green tree" or "I have a green tree in my yard." In kindergarten, it would advantageous to sit with the children as they are working in their journals. The response should be relevant to what the child is "writing." It would be powerful if the child could observe as the teacher writes the response. It takes time to respond to each child's journal. However, the responses do not need to be long and the modeling and attention to the writing

activity are conducive to more writing.

Holistic Centers

In a holistic early literacy classroom, the environment provides children many opportunities to develop and solidify their strategies. Centers can provide children with a variety of reading and writing experiences. The centers allow the children to manipulate familiar materials independently. All centers should be thoroughly introduced and modeled. The centers can be used as part of the responding to literature activities. Centers which can be incorporated include:

Art Center - The children can use a variety of arts and craft materials to create artifacts.

Science Center- This area can display hands-on experiments, science items relating to the literature, lab equipment, non-fiction texts.

Listening Center - This center can be used to listen to store bought stories or the children's recorded stories.

Drama Center - In this area the children can playact their favorite story.

Puppets or costumes can be provided.

Writing Center - This center provides the children with a variety of writing materials. Paper in different shapes, sizes and colors is available.

Pens, pencils and markers are also available. A classroom post office may be incorporated with this center.

Book Making Center - This area can also house a variety of writing materials. Construction paper, staplers and cardboard can also be available for the authors to create little books.

Research Center - Non-fiction books are housed in this area. Globes and maps are available for the children to find answers to their questions.

Library Center - Many books are housed in a cozy inviting area. A carpet, pillows and stuffed "reading buddies" make this area appealing to children.

Other activities which can be used as centers include the big book center, the poetry chart center, the pocket chart center, the overhead projector center, the flannelboard center and the chalkboard center. Children may also enjoy "reading the room" during center time. Teachers can provide special pointers, wands and oversized glasses for this activity.

Integrating Content Areas

In a holistic setting all language processes are integrated across the curriculum. Integration of the language arts needs to be in place before attempting to implement an integrated curriculum. Integration means that concepts and understanding are developed in social contexts and the related activities are relevant and important to the concepts that are being developed. Integration of major concepts can take place on a variety of levels as long as language arts, reading, writing, speaking and listening are interrelated and consistent with holistic philosophy. Teachers who become comfortable integrating the language arts through literature may be ready to begin integrating language arts across the curriculum. The process of becoming a whole language teacher and the process of integrating the curriculum are endeavors that will take time to implement successfully.

Units in a whole language classroom are initially explored by the teacher. The unit develops as the children and the teacher discover what they know regarding the subject, what they would like to find out, how to arrive at the knowledge and how to assess whether they have in fact found out what they

wanted to know. Units developed in a holistic setting take off in directions which preplanned units may not have foreseen. Whole language teachers are able to follow the lead of the children. The students are engaged and have ownership of the knowledge they are pursuing.

Concentrating on the development of the language arts often means that something is neglected. Developing math strategies and skills can be the area that falls by the wayside. An effective program for kindergarten and first grade students for math is Mary Baratta Norton's Math Their Way. This program emphasizes exploration and manipulations of concrete objects to gain abstract mathematical knowledge. Teachers who become adept at integrating the curriculum may find that the curiosity of children can raise higher level mathematical issues for which they need teacher support to arrive at the answer, but which are more meaningful learning experiences than contrived problems.

Assessment And Evaluation

It's Elementary (1992), the elementary grades task force report, made a series of recommendations regarding authentic assessment. They recommended that California continue developing a system of authentic, performance based assessments that measured the full scope of the thinking curriculum, that a set of performance standards for the elementary years be defined, that students be assessed in their primary language if receiving literacy instruction in that language and that letter grades not be used in progress reports for elementary children. These recommendations are in line with a holistic philosophy. Unfortunately, while some districts are moving in this direction, these recommendations are not necessarily in place throughout the state.

Holistic teachers implementing early literacy will probably have to satisfy

a variety of audiences as they assess and evaluate the children and the program. The terms "assessment" and "evaluation" are often used interchangeably, however, they do not mean the same thing. To assess is to collect data and evidence; to evaluate is to interpret and analyze the data collected. Holistic, authentic assessment includes observations, interviews, portfolios, demonstrations and work samples (Routman, 1991). Holistic evaluation begins with the gathering of assessment data. Holistic teachers focus on the child's areas of strength. They are constantly kid-watching, observing behaviors. Holistic assessment should result in the evaluation of the program by the teacher. The data gathered should inform subsequent teaching. The teacher and students should learn from the assessment and evaluation the direction that they need to pursue to continue learning.

A holistic teacher will observe and monitor each student's growth in terms of the individual child's placement on developmental or performance scales (Traill, 1993). Samples of the child's work will be collected throughout the year and placed in a portfolio. Children will have input regarding some of the items in their portfolio. Teachers may also keep anecdotal records, audio tapes of the children reading, video tapes of learning events and copies of running records. Teachers may still have to give standardized tests and report cards. However, children who are immersed in literacy and develop the strategies for a self improving system will probably perform well. It may become necessary to teach children the mechanics of the test, but they should have the strategies to achieve success.

An assessment tool which can be utilized by classroom teachers are running records (Clay, 1993a). In a running record, the teacher uses certain conventions to record everything a child says and does while reading a sample

text of approximately 100 words. Running records are meant to be done "on the run." This makes it possible for teachers to use this tool in a classroom full of children. A running record provides teachers information for guiding instruction such as selecting appropriate books for guided reading. For emergent readers, running records should be done every 4 to 6 weeks. For more fluent readers the recommended time frame is every 2 to 3 months. Teachers will learn to analyze running records to determine what cueing systems the children are using. The ability to take running records on the run will increase with practice. The information gained makes the effort worthwhile.

The Whole Language Catalog Supplement on Authentic Assessment (Goodman, Bird & Goodman, 1992) and Monitoring Children's Language Development: Holistic Assessment in the Classroom (Daly, 1991) offer a very good selection of articles regarding holistic assessment. The Whole Language Catalog offers a plethora of entries revolving around five central themes. The themes include revaluing assessment, teaching as inquiry, evaluating ourselves, tools for evaluation and documenting learning. Within each area there are several subdivisions. The topics cover a wide range including articles on the challenges presented by the change process, teachers as kid-watchers and mediators, teacher and student self-evaluation, learning portfolios and anecdotal records and developing literacy. The book edited by Daly offers a variety of articles ranging from whole language evaluation strategies to reporting the children's progress to parents. Both books are valuable resources for holistic teachers.

Whole language teachers use a variety of techniques for assessing and evaluating their students. The benefit drawn from the process is how the information is used. The methods, techniques and practices mentioned in this

project represent a small selection of those currently being utilized by teachers. Each teacher will organize the gathering of information in their own individual manner. It is important to remember that the assessment be fair, valid, meaningful and relevant to all students.

Early Interventions for At Risk Students

Teachers implementing holistic approaches to early literacy may find that some students do not demonstrate the same rate of progress. Early intervention has been found to assist children having difficulty in acquiring the necessary strategies to achieve early literacy. For children who receive literacy instruction in English, Reading Recovery is an effective early intervention program that helps first grade students at risk of developing reading difficulties. Students whose primary language is Spanish and who are receiving literacy instruction in Spanish may also require special attention. Descubriendo La Lectura is the application of Reading Recovery methods for Spanish speaking first grade students receiving instruction in their primary language.

These early intervention programs require university training and district commitment. However, data supporting the implementation of both programs is very promising. This project recommends that any children which need something extra be provided with the opportunity to achieve literacy via participation in either Reading Recovery or Descubriendo La Lectura. Many districts in California already have teachers and teacher leaders trained in these methods. Teachers in districts that do not will probably have to advocate the implementation of these early intervention programs.

Implementation Timeline

The approaches suggested in this model should not be attempted all at once. Each can be slowly incorporated into the daily routine of the classroom. Teachers will have to develop their own implementation timeline. Implementing reading aloud and shared reading should probably take place prior to guided reading. The same may be said of the approaches to writing. It would be more advantageous to implement writing aloud, shared writing and perhaps interactive journals before guided writing. Modeling of conventions and strategies will make the eventual implementation of guided reading and writing more successful. Teachers should be aware that they are embarking on a journey, literacy is the destination and the way to achieve success requires participation in a learning process for all involved.

Many whole language teachers will admit that they are still, and probably forever, learning. Many will also admit that while some approaches are easier, others still need to be worked on. Each year's class is different and what is highly successful with one group may only be marginally appealing to another. Part of the learning process is to be reflective and to grow from all the attempts whether successful or not.

A recommendation for teachers attempting the change process is to begin with a particular strategy. Once this seems manageable and has become comfortable, begin to add others. It would be beneficial to attend related conferences and workshops. In southern California, The West Coast Literacy Conference is held yearly and offers many relevant sessions and noted speakers. Teachers may find that attempting the change into whole language with a peer offers essential support to all involved. Collegiate dialogue can assist by providing further suggestions, trouble shooting and support.

Conclusions

As the United States moves into the twenty first century, we are more than ever, forced to look at our educational system. The development of a literate society to meet the challenges of the next century can not be achieved without changing current practices. Research supports the implementation of early literacy through holistic approaches. Creating classrooms where all children can feel validated and empowered to learn should be the goal of educators. This project has presented a review of the relevant current literature and has attempted to provide a model for the implementation of early literacy through holistic approaches. Providing young children a successful literacy foundation will facilitate their success in tomorrow's society.

Educators are known to be dedicated individuals. The average teacher spends many hours preparing for class. Elementary teachers often arrive at the school site early and leave late. Many teachers also spend countless hours in the evening and weekends on school related matters. It is not a nine-to-five job. Most of teachers thought they were doing the things in the classroom that would make literacy possible for the children. There is not one single teacher out there that was not trying to teach. Somewhere along the line, perhaps when Johnny became Juan, the population of the schools changed, in many cases drastically. Not only were the children from different cultures, but families had changed as well. In many households, both parents were working. Other families had become headed by a single parent. The expectations of what the school system would do for children had also changed. The teaching strategies had to change to better provide for the diverse population.

Traditional teaching methods did not demonstrate results with the changing population attending California's public schools. Young children

arrive at schools having had experiences in areas that many grown teachers can not begin to identify with. Educators are aware that there is a need to change. Holistic methods which validate the child and allow for risk taking in a supportive environment are more successful with children in today's schools.

Research in literacy acquisition provides teachers the theory from which to develop philosophies and teaching interventions. Enlightened teachers realize that children can be developmentally at different stages based on Piaget's theory. Teachers know that children are active, social learners. They provide the setting for effective learning through social interaction, teaching within each child's zone of proximal development based on Vygotsky's theory. Teachers design their interventions in ways that provide the learners a supportive scaffold according to Bruner's theory. This allows the children to successfully achieve increasingly more difficult tasks.

Developing a holistic philosophy of how children learn and the best ways to teach is part of the continuously evolving process of becoming a whole language teacher. As educators, it behooves us all to continue to read professional articles, to think and reflect on our teaching, to be observers, kid-watchers, to attend conferences and collaborate with other educators. The process of becoming a holistic teacher who is truly aware of children, a joyful learner/teacher, is not easy or fast. This model does not guarantee success. The collection of suggestions, approaches and strategies based on holistic philosophies are presented in the hope of sparking change, as a beacon towards the pursuit of further information. There are no maps, blue-prints or manuals. Before attempting holistic approaches each individual needs to develop a working theoretical base from which to form their teaching decisions, a firm personal commitment and understanding of the ramifications of the change

process and the ability to make attempts, take risks, reflect and grow from both failures and successes. Educators must learn to validate their own approximations and highlight their own strengths. The road may be long, but the destination, a literate society, will make it all worthwhile.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES - CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The following list provides some titles in order of increasing texts difficulty, from very easy to more difficult texts. These books may be utilized in guided reading lessons. The very easy books listed first provide the reader strong supportive illustrations, repetitive patterns, familiar language, objects, concepts and vocabulary.

Books In English:

Wildsmith, Brian (1982). Cat on the Mat. New York: Oxford University Press.

Carle, Eric (1987). Have You Seen My Cat? Natick, Mass: Picture Book Studio.

Tafari, Nancy (1984). Have You Seen My Duckling? New York: Greenwillow.

Wildsmith, Brian (1983). All Fall Down. New York: Oxford University Press.

Williams, Sue (1990). I Went Walking. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Martin, Bill (1984). Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Peek, Merle (1981). Roll Over. New York: Clarion.

Books in Spanish:

Cowley, Joy (1986). Bajan Al Pueblo. Washington: The Wright Group.

Green, Susan and Siamon, Sharon (1994). Me Gusta Comer. San Diego, CA.: Dominie Press.

Hoffman, Beverly (1994). Mi Papa Cocina. San Diego, CA.: Dominie Press.

Avalos, Cecilia (1992). Una Camisa Para Carlos. New York: Scholastic.

This group of books provide the readers familiar vocabulary, some repetitive patterns and fairly supportive illustrations. The sentences start to become longer and the opening and closing sentence may change.

Books In English:

Raffi (1989). Five Little Ducks. New York: Crown.

Browne, Anthony (1989). Things I Like. New York: Knopf

Ginsburg, Mirra (1972). The Chick and the Duckling. New York: Macmillan.

Peek, Merle (1985). Mary Wore Her Red Dress. New York: Clarion.

Shaw, Charles (1988). It Looked Like Spilt Milk. New York: Harper & Row.

Christelow, Eileen (1989). Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed. New York: Clarion.

Hill, Eric (1980). Where's Spot? New York: Putnam.

Books in Spanish:

Cowley, Joy (1986). Nuestra Abuelita. Washington: The Wright Group.

Flores, Barbara, Castro, Elena and Hernandez, Eddie (1993). Mi Perrita Chata. Miami, Fl.: DDL Books.

Cowley, Joy (1987). Senor Rezongon. Washington, The Wright Group.

Daddazio, Enriqueta (1990). El Carrusel. Ohio: Modern Curriculum Press.

The books in the following group have less repetitive patterns, although they sometimes have repetitive refrains or phrases. The stories are longer and the the illustrations provide moderate support to the reader.

Books In English:

Asch, Frank (1981). Just Like Daddy. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice-Hall.

Campbell, Rod (1982). Dear Zoo. New York: Four Winds.

Hutchins, Pat (1968). Rosie's Walk. New York: Macmillan.

Lloyd, David (1985). Grandma and the Pirate. New York: Crown.

Ward, Cindy (1988). Cookie's Week. New York: Putnam.

Gelman, Rita (1977). More Spaghetti, I Say! New York: Scholastic.

Kraus, Robert (1970). Whose Mouse Are You? New York: Macmillan.

Hutchins, Pat (1971). Titch. New York: Macmillan.

Krauss, Ruth (1945). The Carrot Seed. New York: Harper & Row.

Books In Spanish:

Cowley, Joy (1987). Quien Sera Mi Mama? California: Basic Plus.

Manning, Linda (1994). Refrescandose. San Diego: Dominie Press.

Cowley, Joy (1983). Dragolia. California: Basic Plus.

Salem, Lynn and Stewart, Josie (1993). En Casa de Abuelita Norma.
Columbus, Ohio: Seedling Publications Inc.

The next group of books have more elaborate story lines and use less familiar vocabulary. There may be repeated cumulative patterns and the characters will use dialogue. The illustrations provide the reader less support.

Books In English:

Tolstoy, Alexei (1968). The Great Big Enormous Turnip. New York: Watts.

Brown, Margaret Wise (1974). Goodnight Moon. New York: Harper & Row.

Butler, Dorothy (1989). My Brown Bear Barney. New York: Greenwillow.

Hutchins, Pat (1983). You'll Soon Grow Into Them, Titch. New York: MacMillan

Kraus, Robert (1986). Where Are You Going, Little Mouse? New York:
Greenwillow.

Fox, Mem (1987). Hattie and the Fox. New York: Bradbury.

Rosen, Michael (1989). We're Going on a Bear Hunt. New York: Macmillan.

Seuss, Dr. (1960). Green Eggs and Ham. New York: Random House.

Wood, Audrey (1984). The Napping House. San Diego: Harcourt Brace
Jovanovich.

Books in Spanish:

Peters, Sharon (1981). Feliz Cumpleanos. Mahwah, N. J.: Troll Associates.

Peters, Sharon (1981). Listos, en sus Marcas, Adelante! Mahwah, N. J.: Troll
Associates.

Joyce, Jennifer Leigh (1994). El Osito de Amada. San Diego, CA.: Dominie Press.

The following group of books have complex story lines with extended descriptions and challenging vocabulary. The illustrations provide the readers little support.

Books In English:

Bennett, Jill (1986). Teeny Tiny. New York: Putnam.

Carle, Eric (1984). The Very Busy Spider. New York: Philomel.

Charlip, Remy (1964). Fortunately. New York: Macmillan.

Hutchins, Pat (1973). Goodnight Owl. Viking Penguin.

Kraus, Robert (1971). Leo the Late Bloomer. New York: Windmill.

Mayer, Mercer (1968). There's a Nightmare in My Closet. New York: Dial.

Wells, Rosemary (1973). Noisy Nora. New York: Dial.

Bridwell, Norman (1985). Clifford the Big Red Dog. New York: Scholastic.

Hutchins, Pat (1986). The Doorbell Rang. New York: Macmillan.

Johnson, Crocket (1955). Harold and the Purple Crayon. New York: Harper & Row.

Lobel, Arnold (1972). Mouse Soup. New York: Harper & Row.

Mayer, Mercer (1987) There's an Alligator Under My Bed. New York: Harper & Row.

Carle, Eric (1970). The Very Hungry Caterpillar. New York: Philomel.

De Paola, Tomie (1973). Charlie Needs a Cloak. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall.

Joyce, William (1985). George Shrinks. New York: Harper & Row.

Martin, Bill and Archambault, John (1989). Chicka Chicka Boom Boom. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Sendak, Maurice (1963). Where the Wild Things Are. New York: Harper & Row.

Seus, Dr. (1967). The Cat in the Hat. New York: Random House.

Carle, Eric (1977). The Grouchy Ladybug. New York: Crowell

Hoberman, Mary Ann (1978). A House is a House for Me. New York: Atheneum.

Slobodkina, Esphyr (1968). Caps for Sale. New York: Harper & Row.

Tresselt, Alvin (1964). The Mitten. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

Books in Spanish:

Green, Sharon (1994). Los Tres Cochinitos. San Diego, CA.: Dominie Press.

Swan, Debbie (1994). Mi Mascota Hambrienta. San Diego, CA.: Dominie Press.

Parkes, Brenda and Smith, Judith (1989). El Patito Feo. Crystal Lakes, Il.: Rigby.

The following list of books may be appropriate for read aloud sessions.

Books in English:

Hoban, Russell (1964). Bread and Jam for Frances. New York: Harper & Row.

Carlstrom, Nancy White (1992). Better Not Get Wet Jesse Bear. New York: Scholastic.

Carlstrom, Nancy White (1989). Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? New York: Scholastic.

Munsch, Robert (1986). I Love You Forever. Ontario, Canada: Firefly Books.

Munsch, Robert (1985). Thomas' Snowsuit. Toronto, Canada: Annick Press Ltd..

Sendak, Maurice (1962). Chicken Soup with Rice. New York: Harper & Row.

Sendak, Maurice (1970). In The Night Kitchen. New York: Harper & Row.

Steig, William (1982). Dr. De Soto. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Turkle, Brinton (1981). Do Not Open. New York: Dutton.

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