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Dora Newell named Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Dora Newell, a third-grade teacher at Thigpen-Zavala Elementary in McAllen Independent School District, upon her selection as the Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year. Newell received the award at a luncheon and ceremony at the Connally Banquet Hall at The University of Texas Etter-Harbin Alumni Center. Newell was awarded a cash prize of \$5,000, a SMART Board technology package worth more than \$15,000, and a commemorative trophy. 



Dora Newell,
Teacher of the Year.

‘Elements of Understanding’ training modules target comprehension gains

Approximately 30 years ago, Dolores Durkin shocked the field of literacy instruction when she revealed the results of her comprehension instruction study. Her findings indicated that virtually no comprehension *instruction* was taking place during the reading instruction block within a regular school day. Instead, the study found that what teachers thought of as comprehension instruction mainly focused on questions asked by teachers after the reading of a story. While this type of questioning may be adequate to *assess* comprehension, these techniques were not useful in *teaching* students how to make meaning of what they had read.

In their book *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement*, Stephanie Harvey and Anne

Goudvis explain that, “Active readers interact with the text they read. Getting readers to think when they read, to develop an awareness of their thinking, and to actively use the knowledge they glean are the primary goals of [comprehension instruction]. In this way, reading shapes and even changes thinking.”

Texas Reading First (TRF) data analyses have shown strong gains in the areas of phonological awareness and graphophonic knowledge. However, gains in comprehension have not been as significant. In response to these data and additional research within the component of reading comprehension, the TRF Partnership has developed nine comprehension-related modules.

(Article continues page 4)

Collaborative coaching

Hundreds of miles apart, coaches put their heads together to craft GK routines

What does collaborative coaching look like between local campus coaches (LCCs) and reading technical assistance specialists (RTAs) 556 miles apart in three different Reading First school districts? Well, ask Socorro and Fabens LCCs in West Texas' Region 19 and Austin LCCs in Region 13 how they managed to collaborate on the writing and sharing of grapho-phonemic knowledge (GK) routines for second- and third-grade teachers in both English and Spanish.

In January 2007, Socorro LCCs began creating and implementing GK routines with Reading First teachers after a Children's Learning Institute training. A template developed by Socorro LCCs after the initial training was a helpful tool for developing the routines.

In the spring of 2008, Fabens LCCs and

classroom teachers were provided the GK routines training by their RTA and received the GK routines developed by Socorro. Fabens began using the English routines, and the bilingual teachers asked for routines in Spanish. This need led the Fabens LCCs to begin developing the routines in Spanish using the Socorro template.


In November 2008, Peggy Mays, Reading First director in Austin, invited Miriam Corral, LCC from Lujan-Chavez Elementary School in Socorro, to attend the Austin Independent School District (ISD) Reading First coaches meeting. Corral and her RTA, Lilia Montelongo, led a discussion about their experiences in planning the implementation of the enhanced GK spelling routines at the campus level for the Austin ISD Reading First coaches and response to intervention specialists.

As a result of Corral's excellent coaching when introducing the GK routines to her teachers — including modeling the routines in every second- and third-grade classroom — the campus GK scores improved dramatically in both grades. This first-hand experience in improving GK scores gave Austin LCCs a road map to campus implementation. Corral explained that her first step was using the second- and third-grade GK data from the Texas Primary Reading Inventory and the Tejas LEE. She also reflected on her experiences troubleshooting with her campus teachers. At the end of this collaborative, informative meeting, the Austin LCCs agreed to join Socorro and Fabens LCCs in writing, enhancing, editing, and revising the Spanish GK routines.

In December, the cross-regional collaboration continued with RTAs Lilia Montelongo, Lisa Drummond, and Nina Lillian; several LCCs; and Reading First


Facilitator Dalia Perez of Austin ISD creating numerous Spanish GK spelling routines that can be used by classroom teachers to improve GK scores. This collaboration was made possible by Reading First Directors/Coordinators Rebecca Gomez of Fabens, Raquel Martinez of Socorro, and Peggy Mays of Austin.

While the collaborative efforts to complete the Spanish GK spelling routines are still in progress, this cross-regional support can serve as a model well into the future for the sustainability of research-based reading instruction in Texas.

Special thanks for work on this project to: RF Directors/Coordinators Rebecca Gomez of Fabens, Raquel Martinez of Socorro, and Peggy Mays of Austin; UT System Project Manager Marsha Loyd; RTAs Lisa Drummond, Nina Lillian, and Lilia Montelongo; Austin LCCs Sandra Hendricks, Marla Hunt, Tracy Rakusin, Melanie Weedman, and Summer Woodman; Fabens LCCs Rosemary Gallo-Avitia and Alicia Macias; and Socorro LCCs Nancy Apodaca, Cindy C. Contreras, Helen Coplan, Miriam Corral, Sylvia Gomez-Soriano, Veronica Lomeli, Alta Rubio, Cynthia Velasquez, and Rosemary Yates. 

News Flash!

Going green!

The *Texas Reading First Quarterly* newsletter is going green! In an effort to become more sustainable and environmentally friendly, starting in April 2009, the newsletter will be published only online, at <http://texas-reading.org/TRFquarterlynewsletter>. The newsletter will no longer be printed and mailed. All previous editions of the newsletter can also be found at this site. We hope you enjoy the new format and continue to use and share this resource with others. 

Save the Date!

The Advanced Coaching Institute IV will be held May 12–13 at the Westin Galleria in Houston. Online registration opened on January 19. Visit <http://cars.uth.tmc.edu/readingfirst/ACI2009> to register.

Texas Reading First Spotlight on Success

Congratulations to the following Texas Reading First Schools:

2008 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon Schools, Reading First Campuses

- Ben Milam Elementary, Dallas Independent School District (ISD)
- Victor Hugo Hartsfield Elementary, Houston ISD

2008 Texas Education Agency (TEA) Exemplary Rating, Reading First Campuses

Athens ISD

- Bel Air Elementary
- South Athens Elementary

Austin ISD

- Campbell Elementary

Avery ISD

- Avery Elementary

Beaumont ISD

- French Elementary
- Homer Drive Elementary
- Price Elementary

Brownsville ISD

- Dr. Ruben Gallegos Elementary
- Morningside Elementary

Cisco ISD

- Cisco Elementary

Dalhart ISD

- Dalhart Elementary

Dallas ISD

- Ben Milam Elementary (also a Blue Ribbon School)
- Walnut Hill Elementary

El Paso ISD

- Bonham Elementary
- Cielo Vista Elementary

Fabens ISD

- Fabens Primary

Hale Center ISD

- Akin Elementary

Harlandale ISD

- Gilbert Elementary

Highland ISD

- Highland School

Houston ISD

- Allen Elementary
- Cornelius Elementary
- Love Elementary

La Vega ISD

- La Vega Elementary

Lubbock ISD

- McWhorter Elementary

McLeod ISD

- McLeod Elementary

Mount Pleasant ISD

- Annie Sims Elementary

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD

- North Alamo Elementary

Rio Grande City Consolidated Independent School District (CISD)

- Alto Bonito Elementary
- John & Olive Hinojosa Elementary
- North Grammar Elementary
- Ringgold Elementary

Socorro ISD

- Loma Verde Elementary

Three Rivers ISD

- Three Rivers Elementary

Tornillo ISD

- Tornillo Elementary

2008 TEA Recognized Rating, Reading First Campuses

Alvarado ISD

- Lillian Elementary

Amigos por Vida – Friends for Life Charter

- Amigos por Vida – Friends for Life Charter School

Austin ISD

- Pecan Springs Elementary

Beaumont ISD

- Blanchette Elementary
- Dunbar Elementary
- Fletcher Elementary
- Lucas Elementary
- Martin Elementary
- Pietzsch-MacArthur Elementary

Ben Bolt-Palito Blanco ISD

- Palito Blanco Elementary

Bloomington ISD

- Bloomington Elementary

Blum ISD

- Blum Elementary

Brownsville ISD

- A. X. Benavides Elementary
- Aiken Elementary
- Burns Elementary
- Canales Elementary
- Champion Elementary
- Cromack Elementary
- Del Castillo Elementary
- Egly Elementary
- El Jardin Elementary
- Garden Park Elementary
- Garza Elementary

Gonzalez Elementary

- Longoria Elementary

Palm Grove Elementary

- Perez Elementary

Resaca Elementary

- Skinner Elementary

Southmost Elementary

- Vermillion Road Elementary

Yturria Elementary

Buffalo ISD

- Buffalo Elementary

Castleberry ISD

- Castleberry Elementary
- Joy James Elementary

Chilton ISD

- Chilton School

Colmesneil ISD

- Colmesneil Elementary

Corsicana ISD

- Carroll Elementary
- Fannin Elementary
- Jose Antonio Navarro Elementary

Dallas ISD

- Albert S. Johnston Elementary
- Arcadia Park Elementary
- Ascher Silberstein Elementary
- City Park Elementary
- Erasmo Seguin Elementary
- F. P. Caillet Elementary
- Fannin Elementary
- Hogg Elementary
- Houston Elementary
- Ireland Elementary
- Leila P. Cowart Elementary
- Maple Lawn Elementary
- Medrano Elementary
- Miller Elementary
- Peeler Elementary
- Preston Hollow Elementary
- Roberts Elementary
- Ronald E. McNair Elementary
- Rowe Elementary
- Tolbert Elementary

DeKalb ISD

- DeKalb Elementary

Donna ISD

- C. Stainke Elementary
- J. P. Lenoir Elementary
- J. W. Caceres Elementary

Driscoll ISD

- Driscoll Elementary

Edcouch-Elsa ISD

- John F. Kennedy Elementary
- Santiago Garcia Elementary

El Paso ISD

- Bond Elementary
- Clendenin Elementary
- Coldwell Elementary
- Collins Elementary
- Fannin Elementary
- Hawkins Elementary
- Lamar Elementary
- Logan Elementary
- Newman Elementary
- Park Elementary
- Putnam Elementary
- Roberts Elementary
- Schuster Elementary
- Whitaker Elementary
- Zavala Elementary

Everman ISD

- Hommel Elementary
- Souder Elementary

Fort Worth ISD

- Clifford Davis Elementary
- Diamond Hill Elementary
- Dolores Huerta Elementary
- E. M. Daggett Elementary
- Eastern Hills Elementary
- Glen Park Elementary
- Oakhurst Elementary
- Richard Wilson Elementary
- Sam Rosen Elementary
- Springdale Elementary
- Worth Heights Elementary

Freer ISD

- Norman M. Thomas Elementary

Galveston ISD

- Burnet Elementary
- Morgan Elementary Magnet School

Harlandale ISD

- Gillette Elementary
- H. W. Schulze Elementary
- Rayburn Elementary

Harts Bluff ISD

- Harts Bluff Elementary

Hawkins ISD

- Hawkins Elementary

Hearne ISD

- East Side Elementary

Hempstead ISD

- Hempstead Elementary

Hooks ISD

- Hooks Elementary

Houston ISD

- A. A. Milne Elementary
- Alcott Elementary
- Almeda Elementary

Anderson Elementary

- Benbrook Elementary
- Briscoe Elementary
- Brookline Elementary
- Burnet Elementary
- Burrus Elementary
- C. Martinez Elementary
- Carrillo Elementary
- Crawford Elementary
- Crespo Elementary
- De Chaumes Elementary
- Durham Elementary
- Eliot Elementary
- Emerson Elementary
- Field Elementary
- Gallegos Elementary
- Garcia Elementary
- Garden Oaks Elementary
- Garden Villas Elementary
- Golfcrest Elementary
- Gregory-Lincoln Education Center
- Hartsfield Elementary (also a Blue Ribbon School)
- Isaacs Elementary
- J. W. Jones Elementary
- K. Smith Elementary
- Law Elementary
- Lewis Elementary
- Looscan Elementary
- MacArthur Elementary
- McDade Elementary
- N. Q. Henderson Elementary
- Patterson Elementary
- Port Houston Elementary
- Red Elementary
- Scroggins Elementary
- Shearn Elementary
- Valley West Elementary
- Wainwright Elementary
- Whidby Elementary

Kaufman ISD

- Monday Elementary
- Phillips Primary

Kenedy ISD

- Kenedy Elementary

Kingsville ISD

- Harrel Elementary
- Kleberg Elementary
- Lamar Elementary

Kirbyville CISD

- Kirbyville Elementary

Kopperl ISD

- Kopperl School

(Article continues page 4)

Reading comprehension training modules (cont. from p. 1)

These modules, delivered to reading technical assistance specialists (RTAs) and Partners, include *Reading With Purpose*, *Think-Turn-Talk*, *Listening Comprehension*, *Cognitive Strategy Instruction*, *Making Connections*, *Creating Mental Images*, and *Making Inferences and Predictions*. Remaining modules, to be delivered at the fourth Advanced Coaching Institute, include *Asking and Answering Questions* and *Determining Importance and Summarizing*. A complete set of the *Elements of Understanding* modules will be provided to every TRF local campus coach (LCC) during the 2008–2009 school year. Districts and campuses are encouraged to examine their data to determine which of the comprehension trainings would most effectively meet the needs of their students.

We will examine a sample school — May King Progress Elementary — and discover how this elementary school plans to implement training that may be appropriate to its campus needs. After the middle of the year (MOY) data point, the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) and El Inventario de Lectura en Español de Tejas (Tejas LEE), the TRF Campus Leadership Team at May King Progress Elementary met to analyze data in K–3 reading. Data indicated that listening and reading comprehension scores were low, with many students still struggling at all grade levels. The team asked the LCC and RTA to present one of the *Elements of Understanding* training modules: *Reading With Purpose*. Following the presentation of this module, the LCC:


- Met with her teachers to assist them in creating lesson plans that utilized routines outlined in the checklist found on page 106 in the *Tools for Administrators* section of the *Reading With Purpose* module.
- Modeled the selected instructional routines in the classrooms and had teachers use the previously mentioned checklist. Teachers then provided feedback to the LCC.
- Used the same checklist to provide feedback to the teachers

as she observed teacher instruction.

- Completed walkthroughs with the principal and the same checklist.

End of the year (EOY) TPRI and Tejas LEE scores indicated gains in comprehension across grade levels at May King Progress Elementary. However, as the TRF Campus Leadership Team at May King Progress Elementary considered their EOY data, the principal noticed a large number of students who were “Still Developing” in the comprehension section of the TPRI and “Nivel Intervencion” in the comprehension section of the Tejas LEE. One teacher on the Leadership Team commented that a number of students are struggling because they are not able to make necessary connections between the core reading stories and their own life experiences. The team decided that the *Elements of Understanding: Making Connections* module would help meet this need. A prerequisite for this training is *Cognitive Strategy Instruction*, a quick, 60-minute module.

This TRF Campus Leadership Team updated its Campus Reading Instructional Plan for the fall semester. The *Cognitive Strategy Instruction* module and the *Making Connections* training was included in the Instructional Plan for all K–3 teachers, interventionists, and special education teachers, as well as selected support personnel such as the librarian (who regularly coordinates her lesson plans with grade-level objectives). The LCC enlisted the help of the RTA, and they prepared to co-present these two trainings.

In summary, careful consideration of the data by the TRF Campus Leadership Team; specific planning as set forth in the Reading Instructional Plan; coordinated training efforts among the teachers, coach, and RTA; and follow-up by the principal and other campus stakeholders may lead to adequate and complete implementation of the professional development at May King Progress Elementary and to improved achievement for students in the areas of listening and reading comprehension. 

Spotlight on Success (cont. from p. 3)

La Marque ISD

- Highlands Elementary

Lake Worth ISD

- Effie Morris Elementary
- Marine Creek Elementary
- Miller Elementary

Laredo ISD

- Don Jose Gallego Elementary
- H. B. Zachry Elementary
- Heights Elementary

- Milton Elementary

- Santo Nino Elementary

Latexo ISD

- Latexo Elementary

Leary ISD

- Leary Elementary

Liberty-Eylau ISD

- Liberty-Eylau C K Bender Elementary
- Liberty-Eylau Primary

Loop ISD

- Loop School

Los Fresnos CISD

- Las Yescas Elementary

- Lopez-Riggins Elementary

- Los Fresnos Elementary

- Villareal Elementary

Lubbock ISD

- Bean Elementary

- Parsons Elementary

- Ramirez Charter School

- Roy W. Roberts Elementary

- Wheelock Elementary

- Wolfarth Elementary

Lyford CISD

- Lyford Elementary

Malakoff ISD

- Malakoff Elementary

- Toole Elementary

Malone ISD

- Malone Elementary

Marfa ISD

- Marfa Elementary

Marshall ISD

- Robert E. Lee Elementary

- South Marshall Elementary

Mart ISD

- Mart Elementary

McAllen ISD

- Alvarez Elementary

- Blanca E. Sanchez Elementary

- Crockett Elementary

- Dr. Carlos Castaneda Elementary

- Dr. Pablo Perez Elementary

- Escandon Elementary

- Jackson Elementary

- McAuliffe Elementary

- Rayburn Elementary

- Seguin Elementary

- Thigpen-Zavala Elementary

- Wilson Elementary

Mercedes ISD

- Ruben Hinojosa Elementary

- Travis Elementary

(Article continues next page)

Focus on: Using video for professional development

This time of year, many coaches are asking: “How can we make the biggest impact in the shortest period of time as we enter the second semester?” The answer to that question often is professional development (PD). But PD is most effective when we show participants what strategies look like in practice, rather than just talking about concepts.

An inexpensive and sustainable option for showing “how to” is using videos. Often, the most convenient time to deliver this PD is at grade-level meetings. When planning such meetings, make sure the videos are used to target particular instructional strategies by asking:

- Why are you choosing to use a video to demonstrate this practice?”

- How will this video connect to the current instruction in the classroom?
- Does this video show positive practices that you want to use as a catalyst for change?

After you have answered those questions, you are ready to start planning. Here are some guidelines to consider:

1. Set a clear purpose.

- What are participants watching for? Be specific.
- Are there clear examples and non-examples in this video?


2. Build in structure.

- Have participants use an observation tool.


- Analyze and reflect together.
- Consider multiple viewings for different purposes.

3. Connect to practice.

- Set manageable short-term goals for implementation.
- Follow up with classroom observations and feedback.

Don't forget: When the video has finished, your job has just begun. While a single viewing of a video can have a positive impact, creating a cycle of PD that includes watching “how-to” videos followed by structured analysis, implementation, and follow-up is an effective strategy for improving teacher competency. 

Spotlight on Success (cont.)

Mexia ISD	• Pharr Elementary	Elementary	• Ogden Elementary	Socorro ISD	Elementary
• A. B. McBay Elementary	• Reed-Mock Elementary	• General Ricardo Sanchez Elementary	• Robert B. Green Elementary	• Campestre Elementary	• Prada Elementary
Monte Alto ISD	• Sgt. Leonel Trevino Elementary	• Grulla Elementary	• Rodriguez Elementary	• Elfida Chavez Elementary	• Rodolfo C. Centeno Elementary
• Monte Alto Elementary	• Sorensen Elementary	• La Union Elementary	• Rogers Elementary	• Escontrias Early Childhood Center	• United D. D. Hachar Elementary
Mount Pleasant ISD	• Whitney Elementary	• Roque Guerra, Jr. Elementary	• Schenk Elementary	• Escontrias Elementary	Vanguard Academy
• E. C. Brice Elementary	• Zeferino Farias Elementary	Roosevelt ISD	• Storm Elementary	• H. D. Hilley Elementary	• Vanguard Academy Charter
• Frances Corprew Elementary	Pittsburg ISD	• Roosevelt Elementary	• Travis Elementary	• Hueco Elementary	Venus ISD
North Forest ISD	• Pittsburg Elementary	Runge ISD	• Wilson Elementary	• Lujan-Chavez Elementary	• Venus Elementary
• Lakewood Elementary	• Pittsburg Primary	• Runge Elementary	• Woodlawn Hills Elementary	• Robert R. Rojas Elementary	• Venus Primary
• Shadydale Elementary	Port Arthur ISD	San Antonio ISD	San Benito CISD	• S/Sgt. Michael P. Barrera Veterans Elementary	Waco ISD
• Tidwell Elementary	• Robert E. Lee Elementary	• Austin Academy	• Downs Elementary	Sonora ISD	• Bell's Hill Elementary
O'Donnell ISD	Queen City ISD	• Beacon Hill Elementary	• Dr. Raul Garza Elementary	• Sonora Elementary	• Hillcrest Professional Development Center
• O'Donnell Elementary	• J. K. Hileman Elementary	• Bowden Elementary	• Frank Roberts Elementary	Splendor ISD	• Kendrick Elementary
Olney ISD	Quinlan ISD	• Collins Garden Elementary	• Fred Booth Elementary	• Peach Creek Elementary	• Parkdale Elementary
• Olney Elementary	• D. C. Cannon Elementary	• Cotton Elementary	• Judge Oscar De La Fuente Elementary	St. Mary's Academy Charter	• West Avenue Elementary
Paint Creek ISD	Ralls ISD	• David Crockett Elementary	• La Encantada Elementary	• St. Mary's Academy Charter School	West Hardin County CISD
• Paint Creek School	• Ralls Elementary	• Fenwick Elementary	• La Paloma Elementary	Tarkington ISD	• West Hardin Elementary
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD	Ramirez ISD	• Foster Elementary	• Rangerville Elementary	• Tarkington Primary	West Orange-Cove CISD
• Austin Elementary	• Ramirez Elementary	• Graebner Elementary	Sealy ISD	Texhoma ISD	• Anderson Elementary
Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD	Raymondville ISD	• Hawthorne Academy	• Selman Elementary	• Texhoma Elementary	Winfield ISD
• Buckner Elementary	• L. C. Smith Elementary	• Henry Carroll Academy	Ser-Ninos Charter	Troup ISD	• Winfield Elementary
• Carman Elementary	Pittman Elementary	• J. T. Brackenridge Elementary	• Ser-Ninos Charter School	• Troup Elementary	Zapata County ISD
• Cesar Chavez Elementary	Dr. Mario E. Ramirez	• Japhet Elementary	Shallowater ISD	United ISD	• A. L. Benavides Elementary
• Garza-Pena Elementary	• Dr. Mario E. Ramirez	• Lamar Elementary	• Shallowater Elementary	• Juarez/Lincoln Elementary	• Zapata South Elementary
• Geraldine Palmer Elementary		• Maverick Elementary	• Shallowater Intermediate	• Judith Zaffirni	
		• Neal Elementary			

Instructional Connection


Tier III intervention: Ensuring that progress happens

For students who receive Tier III instruction, reading can be laborious and frustrating. Interventionists must find unique and motivating ways to encourage students, while also having an extensive “toolkit” to help students meet their learning goals.

Many times, this means that teachers must seize “teachable moments” and apply an “on-the-spot” strategy when students are struggling. Here are a few suggestions to help interventionists take advantage of teachable moments in any Tier III lesson:

- Plan an extension activity and a review activity within each lesson: An extension activity allows students the opportunity to apply the skill in a more difficult manner. A review activity allows students who are struggling the chance to review prerequisite skills to help these students connect the new concept to more familiar skills. This might mean planning for more than one prerequisite skill and will require careful data analysis to ensure the activities are specific to students’ needs.

- Plan multiple opportunities for practice within different groups of students: For example, three students are learning about words with the *igh* pattern, and one student is struggling with the concept more than the other two. Plan to structure the time so that the struggling student can develop this skill. For example, the student struggling with the concept (a) does a word sort with the *igh* and the *ice* patterns, (b) underlines the *igh* in the sorted words, and (c) reads the words. Simultaneously, the other two students practice reading flashcards with *igh* to each other for 3 minutes each (use a timer). All three students come together and chorally read five sentences that have the target *igh* words in the sentences. Each student then reads a sentence to a partner and one sentence individually. This plan allows for a comprehensive practice of the skill that meets the needs of all students.


Teaching on the spot is fundamentally about responding to students’ needs in every moment. The above suggestions can be used in any tier of instruction; however, they are powerful strategies for Tier III instruction. 

RTA Corner

Strategic leadership meetings (SLMs) have been a major focus for many reading technical assistance specialists (RTAs) the past several months. From El Paso to Beaumont to Brownsville to Abilene, SLMs have engaged district and campus stakeholders across the state in using data to reflect on accomplishments and challenges, planning instructional enhancements, and identifying ways to monitor and provide high-quality feedback. These sessions have also resulted in networks being developed within districts, as well as with other districts, to plan, adjust, and refine instructional techniques.

During November, many RTAs assisted Texas Reading First Partners in preparing for differentiated technical assistance visits. November also brought about an opportunity for Houston and Tyler area RTAs to collaborate with Higher Education Collaborative (HEC) members to present to university students on topics such as using data to guide instruction, Response to Intervention (RtI), progress monitoring, the 3-Tier Model, and differentiating instruction. In addition, several RTAs took part in a webcast to share graphophonemic knowledge routines.

December and January included at-

tending trainings delivered by the Vaughn Gross Center and the Children’s Learning Institute. The Vaughn Gross Center guided RTAs in analyzing scenarios in a problem-solving format, determining root causes and suggesting next steps. The Children’s Learning Institute provided another four comprehension element modules, *Making Inferences and Predictions*, *Creating Mental Images*, *Making Connections*, and *Cognitive Strategy Instruction*, which will be shared with campuses and districts in the near future. Also, several RTAs provided SLM follow-up sessions to analyze middle of the year (MOY) data. 

Assessment Update

Outcome assessments: Questions and answers

For this edition of *Assessment Update*, we address many of the assessment questions we receive from educators across the state. Outcome assessments are a frequent theme of these inquiries. As part of Reading First requirements, all students must be administered a reading outcome assessment. The criteria for ordering and administering these assessments follow below.

Which assessments are outcome assessments?

- Kindergarten: All students should be administered the end of the year (EOY) Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) or El Inventario de Lectura en Español de Tejas (Tejas LEE).
- All first- and second-grade students should be administered the full reading/language arts battery of assessments from either the SAT 10 or ITBS for English and the Aprenda or Logramos for Spanish.
- Third-grade students should be administered either the English or Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

How are these outcome assessments purchased?

- The TPRI and Tejas LEE outcome assessments are included in the assessment kits used throughout the year for benchmark assessing. The

kindergarten EOY is the outcome assessment for the year.

- The TAKS for third grade is sent from the state.
- The Stanford 10/Aprenda or ITBS/Logramos are ordered through and paid for by the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES), including the testing materials and scoring for grades 1 and 2.

I have submitted our campus/district numbers to TIMES for our grade 1 and 2 outcome assessments; do I need to do anything else?

This answer is simple. Wait for the shipment of assessments to arrive and verify the number ordered to ensure that you have an adequate number for all students being assessed.

Someone from Harcourt or Riverside contacted me about student information. Why?

Both publishers contact the district Reading First director or assessment director to set up student files so that student identification labels can be created. This ensures that the assessment data are accurate, with valid student demographic information. The bar code labels contain all of the needed information, so teachers do not have to bubble in all of the information on the student assessment booklets.

We want to administer the outcome assessments that we use in grades 1 and 2 to other grades; will TIMES take care of that for us, too?

TIMES is authorized to order and pay for assessment only for students in grades 1 and 2. If you want to administer the assessments for other grades, the district must contact the publisher directly.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for several of our students state that they cannot take group-administered assessments in the classroom. Should we still assess them with the class for Reading First?

Always follow the guidelines on the IEP. Each student's case should be handled according to the IEP on file at the campus.


We have students who need large print or off-level assessments. How do we handle ordering these?

Again, contact your TIMES campus manager, and these needs will be addressed with the publisher.

When should we administer the outcome assessments?

The TIMES suggested timeline recommends April 20–May 15. This timeframe is recommended so that the assessments can be scored and reports returned to the campuses/districts in a timely manner.

Whom should I ask if I have questions about assessment?

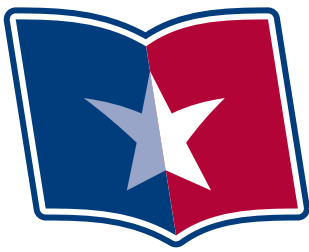
For any questions on assessments, do not hesitate to contact your reading technical assistance specialist (RTA) and/or TIMES campus manager. 

Reading First assessment timeline

January 12–23	MOY screening/diagnostic, K–3 (all RF campuses)
February 6	MOY data for K–3 due to TIMES. Vendor deadline for submitting data to TIMES.
Online System: February 16–28	Campus updates—addresses, contacts, grades, languages, instructional programs, assessments, teacher rosters, and general teacher information (all RF campuses; completed by LCC) Implementation survey (all RF campuses; completed by LCC)

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— Aristotle

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."