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Exploring the Depths of Leveled Literacy

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Why Leveled Literacy?

Imagine walking into a foreign language class for the first time. The teacher passes out a book in that language and expects you to read it. Then, she asks you question after question about the reading. Would you be successful in this environment? Probably not!

And yet, we do this to our students. We give them reading material that is not on their level and expect them to comprehend it. According to Marie Clay in her book entitled, An Observation Survey in Early Literacy Achievement, "The primary consideration in reading instruction should be the needs and strengths of each child..." If we only provide students with reading material that is on the wrong level, how are we considering their needs and strengths?
What the Research Says

What does the research say about the importance of using instructional level reading material with your students?

Gay Su Pinnell

According to reading guru Gay Su Pinnell, “...a key factor in the development of a self-extending system is supported reading of books that offer just the right level of support and challenge. When books are matched to readers, the young reader can continue the successful processing that builds the system.”

Lori Rog and Wilfred Burton

“...for too long we have tried to teaching reading using materials that are not at an appropriate level of difficulty. If students are to learn and apply reading strategies, they need texts that provide a balance of support and challenge...”

-Lori Rog and Wildfred Burton: Matching Texts and Readers: Leveling Early Reading Materials for Assessment and Instruction

Edna Brabham and Susan Villaume

“For effective reading instruction occur, struggling readers must have opportunities to read comfortable tests, rather than just experience frustration with texts that are too difficult. Similarly, proficient readers must be motivated with texts that offer sufficient challenge to stimulate growth and engagement...”

Edna Brabham, Susan Villaume- Leveled Text: The Good News and the Bad News

What Does This Mean for Us?

- We need to give our students reading material this is right for them!
- Why do we teach strategies and then not provide the support to practice them?
- Instructional level material benefits ALL of your students!
- Want your students to fall in love with reading? Give them material that they can read successfully!
LeveledLiteracy.org

- Website created by a teacher who was frustrated by lack of funds and lack of resources.
- Tried and true resources for leveled reading material.
- Tips and tricks from someone on the front lines—a teacher just like you!
- Forums to add in your own suggestions and get feedback from other educators.

"The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other. Without collaboration our growth is limited to our own perspectives."
- Robert John Meehan
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