

Reading Readiness Screening Tool & Follow-Up Intervention Workshops

The Reading Readiness Screening Tool

The Reading Readiness Screening Tool and Follow-Up Intervention workshops are part of the Right to Read Program under the umbrella of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta. This project was undertaken to focus on early identification and intervention for at-risk learners.

The RRST development team included three reading specialists, a psychologist, and a service provider who worked in collaboration with Dr. Linda Siegel, at that time a professor in reading and second language acquisition at the University of British Columbia. The impetus came from the North Vancouver School District Literacy Initiative and the results from that longitudinal study.

The Vision

The Right to Read's vision is:

- Every child in Kindergarten and Grade 1 will be screened for potential reading difficulties.
- Every child potentially at risk for reading problems will be provided with support at the earliest possible stage in their educational career.
- All teachers will have the capacity to provide effective interventions to children at risk for reading problems.

The Results

Pilot projects have been undertaken on two occasions within Edmonton Public Schools. In 2010, statistics compiled for Kindergarten children showed considerably reduced risk for reading problems by year end. In 2014, both Kindergarten and Grade 1 students' pre and posttest phonemic subtest scores were analyzed and growth was significant, particularly for the at-risk students. As research has linked phonemic awareness to reading outcomes, these results are encouraging.

The Right to Read Program Workshops

The Right to Read Program has facilitated workshops for cohorts of teachers from the same school district, individuals from various regions of Alberta, at universities, at teachers' conventions, at conferences, and at the Calgary and Edmonton Regional Consortiums and the Learning Network. Many districts now have their own Certified Right to Read Facilitators.

The first workshop is entitled, **Catching Children before They Fail: The Reading Readiness Screening Tool**. This full day workshop will provide participants with:

- An overview of the need for reading readiness screening,
- The background of the Reading Readiness Screening Tool (RRST),
- A review and administration guidelines of the RRST subtests, which address:
 - Oral expression skills
 - Phonological skills
 - Print-based skills
- Time for modeling and practicing the administration of the RRST,
- An overview of expectations for the next PD workshop,
- The connection between the subtests and a Developmental Continuum, and
- Interventions in Word Skills, Texts, and Syllables

During the workshop, participants will be provided with an: **RRST Teacher Manual**, **RRST Student Stimulus Booklet** and an **RRST Recording Booklet**. After being trained, teachers will be free to photocopy these booklets and asked to individually test and record the results of as many students as they can prior to the second workshop.

Teachers have found the RRST to be easy to administer with good instructions, scripts, examples, and recording of a child's responses. It is ready for immediate use following the first workshop. The results are

10/19/2018

electronically recorded on a Summary Sheet for each child and compiled into Class Summary pages. The results are interpreted using tables in the Teacher Manual. Strengths and weaknesses are identified for each child and for the class as a whole.

The second workshop, **RRST Follow-up: Assessment Informs Instruction** is a full day workshop. This session follows one to two months after the first workshop. It will provide teachers with an opportunity to:

- Share feedback from their experiences since the first workshop,
- Interpret results,
- Learn about considerations for programming, and
- Try out specific instructional strategies/interventions for the Graphemes, Phonemes, and Phonemes-Graphemes subtests through:
 - Picture book activities
 - Center activities
 - Games and songs
 - Reading of simple decodable books

Ample support is provided to the workshop participants. In addition to the information, activities, and recommended resources provided in the follow-up workshop, teachers receive electronic packages of Activities for Teachers to Build Reading Readiness Skills and the Activities for Parents to Build Reading Readiness Skills.

There are several ways to access the Right to Read workshops and materials. All facilitators are required to be certified, having successfully completed facilitator training.

LDAA Organized Workshops

The LDAA does all the advertising and organizing for the two full day workshops. Individual teachers would register by following the direct link to Eventbrite on www.righttoread.ca.

The cost is \$225 to attend the two workshops. The Reading Readiness Screening Tool – Teacher Manual, Recording Booklet, Stimulus Booklet, and Student Activities are free.

Following Workshop 1, the “Class Summary Score Sheets” and “Activities for Teachers to Build Reading Readiness Skills – Part 1” are available for download from the website.

Following Workshop 2, “Activities for Teachers to Build Reading Readiness Skills – Part 2” and the “Activities for Parents to Build Reading Readiness Skills”, along with supporting materials to assist with conducting a parent workshop, are available for download from the website.

District Organized Workshops

1. A **Right to Read facilitator** would conduct the workshop for two full days. The facilitator would supply all handouts and materials.

The workshops are designed for Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers; however, administrators, special education teachers and consultants are welcome to attend.

The Reading Readiness Screening Tool is free, but there are costs associated with providing the workshop and paying the facilitator. The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta has set the total cost at \$1500.00 plus travel and shipping expenses for the workshops regardless of the number of participants, plus \$25 per participant if the Student Activities packages are ordered.

2. A **Certified District Facilitator** delivering a workshop in his or her school district is not paid a fee by LDAA and is responsible for:
- Organizing the workshops (e.g., venue, day, times)
 - Covering any incidental expenses
 - Providing photocopies (not electronic copies) of the workshop materials to all participants
 - Arranging and/or paying for transportation of the workshop kits and activity packages, if ordered
 - Returning all kits and materials within one week in the same condition and organized in the same manner as they were received (The district will be invoiced for any materials lost or damaged)
 - Providing to LDAA a completed copy of the Workshop Sign-in Sheet from the Facilitator Access on the Right to Read website for each workshop
 - Paying the annual facilitator fee of \$500 to the LDAA
 - Paying \$25 per participant for the Student Activities package if ordered.

The facilitator is responsible for encouraging teachers to deliver the program in their classrooms. If possible, coaching the teachers in the use of the Interventions is highly desirable.

The facilitator will distribute the Session Evaluation Rubric to participants and return the completed evaluations to the LDAA within a week.

Each participant will electronically access the “Class Summary Sheets”, “Activities for Teachers to Build Reading Readiness Skills – Parts 1 & 2” and the “Activities for Parents to Build Reading Readiness Skills”.

French Workshops

The Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta has developed a French version of the Right to Read Program for use with French Immersion students in grades 1 and 2 and Interventions to address weaknesses. Some Francophone schools have been using this, as well.

The results from a pilot study done in Edmonton Catholic Schools in 2016-2017, showed significant improvement from pre-test to post-test scores in each of the subtests for grade 1 students.

The French version mirrors the English version but has been adapted for the French language. It has the same components – Recording Booklet, Stimulus Booklet, Teacher Manual, Class Summary Sheets, Activities for Teachers to Build Reading Readiness Skills – Parts 1 & 2, and Activities for Parents to Build Reading Readiness Skills.

The LDAA organizes workshops in various locations within the province for individuals to attend or can supply a French LDAA facilitator to come to a school or school district. There are also French Certified District facilitators in a number of school districts.

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