

# Communication Link

Vol. 8 No. 1

Project Read

Fall 1996

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### NEW!

**Web Site:** <http://www.projectread.com>

**E-mail:**  
[projread@mn.uswest.net](mailto:projread@mn.uswest.net)

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Enterprises

*HOUMA, LA • Editor's Note: See "Working Together to Make a Difference," an article about beginning Project Read in Houma, "Communication Link," Spring 1993.*

*We Tap, We Hammer, We Sweep and Yes! We Read.*



*Project Read Reading Room teacher Kathy Stewart and students at Southdown Elementary spell phonetically irregular Red Words on their arms.*

In 1991 the Louisiana Legislature passed a law requiring the education of students with dyslexia and related disorders in regular education classes. As a result of this legislation, our parish school system implemented the five-step process contained in the law, and designed a program to meet the state criteria.

In compliance with step four of the state law, Terrebonne Parish selected and implemented Project Read across all grade levels as the alternative reading program for the language impaired student.

Step four of the five-step process requires that identified students receive

instruction in reading through a systematic, cumulative linguistic, multisensory program. For Terrebonne Parish School System, the program of choice is Project Read.

Linda Musson was appointed the Project Read Coordinator and provides ongoing staff development to teachers in the Project Read methodology. For four years the program was funded through state funds and in the spring of 1996 the school board, with its Superintendent Dr. Frank D. Fudesco, provided funds to add five teachers, seven paraprofessionals and a secretary to the Dyslexia/504 effort.

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## *Maysville, KY Project Read Provides Necessary Tools for Kentucky Education Reform*

*Terri Wright's first article for "Communication Link" appeared in the Fall, 1992 issue. This article is a response to our question, "What's hot in Kentucky?"*

In 1990 Kentucky began a grand experiment: reforming our entire education system. The Kentucky Education Reform Act, KERA, is based on a legal decision that Kentucky's educational funding system was inequitable. Legislators springboarded from that to complete upheaval of the status quo in content, delivery, assessment, and accountability.

As you can imagine, educators statewide were a mite concerned. As experts-from-out-of-town began interpreting KERA and its ramifications to school systems, several themes emerged – whole language is THE delivery system for reading instruction; writing is emphasized; spelling doesn't matter; put all primary kids together in ungraded, multi-aged classrooms. We were inundated with new practices we'd had no training in!

In the early stages the pendulum swung *way* over to the left. Teachers abandoned textbooks for thematic instruction. Inventive spelling was accepted across all elementary grade levels. In fact, spelling as a subject or discipline ceased to be taught in some places. Little kids were piled willy-nilly into classrooms where the age span often was 5-6 years, never mind the developmental age span.

Teachers frantically searched for order, for curriculum alignment, for meaningful content, for *new*, sound educational practices. One of the biggest bogeymen of the new era was phonics instruction. It was considered too restrictive, too boring, and not creative.

During the beginning of KERA Carla McDowell and I were Chapter I teachers using Project Read at a primary school. We are both scarred and

bloody from our defense of what we insisted was a necessary mode of instruction for a significant group of students.

Now, six years after KERA's inception, educators across Kentucky are making some startling discoveries. They are acknowledging what they knew before the KERA hysteria: Whole language is ONE method – One tool – not THE tool. Multi-age grouping, with a two year range, can be effective.

Most importantly teachers are again focusing on what students need. Across the state teachers have rediscovered the necessity of direct instruction, sequential skills presentation, and multisensory strategies in instruction. They are also eagerly reinserting phonics as one of their modes of delivery.

From Barbourville to Prestonsburg teachers are calling for Project Read training. Each teacher we talk to says the same thing, "This is exactly what our students have needed! Thank you so much!"

Please understand. There were and continue to be good things that come from KERA. There is an increased focus and emphasis on the child, rather than just on the *system*. Our assessment of students is more authentic, and will, I believe, continue to improve.

In our opinion one of the greatest boons of KERA has been that, in search for alternative programs to aid instruction, Project Read is gaining credence and being more widely used across the state.

What's hot in Kentucky? Project Read is. As it is being spread with evangelical fervor to a hungry flock, Project Read is fast becoming the hottest thing in Kentucky since basketball! It took the searching and struggling of KERA's early years to bring teachers to the realization that it is ultimately *their* task to decide appropriate instructional practices. What teachers are deciding is that Project Read is a necessary and integral part of their curriculum.

***Author Terri Wright is a Regular Education teacher at Mason County Middle School. Terri teaches reading to seventh graders; she uses Project Read across the board, with all her students. Tel. (606) 564-6748.***



*Carla McDowell and Terri Wright*

## Hershey, Pennsylvania

### Derry Township Schools Envision Far Reaching Effects with Project Read Teaching

Derry Township School District in Hershey, Pennsylvania is not a school district known to rest on its laurels. In the spring of 1996, the administration was not content with achieving regional recognition for reading scores on the Pennsylvania Assessment for that year. Instead, the district recognized the need to address the needs of those students who scored in lower ranges on the test.



Suzanne Mutic, Director of Special Education, reported to the administrative team, the common, yet very specific needs of all children at-risk when learning to read. These children require a multisensory approach to reading not a "label of disabled." "Concepts, not skills, must be the foundation of instruction," according to Mutic. She shared the positive results Project Read had had with students across the United States. She had already introduced the program to her Special Education staff with the intention of making it available to all Derry Township teachers.

Keeping this vision in mind, during the summer of 1996 over 30 teachers attended an intensive one-week training in Project Read. This training was under the direction of Tori Greene and Dr. Mary Lee Enfield.

This program has been in existence since 1970 and has had results so impressive that it is currently recommended by the National Institute of Maternal and Child Health as a successful reading program, one that incorporates research based findings.

To date, over 30 teachers in Derry Township are implementing Project Read in their classrooms for those students that require direct, systematic, multisensory instruction in decoding, written language, and comprehension. Results of pre and post testings are impressive; teachers are enthusiastic and report success.

Instructional Support Teacher (IST) Gretchen Goodman has developed a push-in program, using Project Read. This Early Intervention Program targets at-risk first graders. She has initiated a parental support process that enables parents to be partners in Project Read on a nightly basis.

According to Suzanne Mutic, "Special Education has handed over to regular educators a reading program that has demonstrated its ability to provide success for any child at risk of reading failure. No child should have to be labeled *Special Education Eligible* in order to learn to read."

Principals Rita Lane and Donna Patrick realized the potential of Project Read for their entire student body. They have encouraged and supported teachers with training, materials, and on going staff development.

The benefits of Project Read are wide-reaching in Derry Township: Instructional Support Teacher Gretchen Goodman reports that IST referrals for reading assistance in first grade have declined since the implementation of Project Read. At this point first grade teachers using Project Read in their classrooms have not referred any students for Instructional Support. "That," says Suzanne Mutic, "is the best reflection of this program's far-reaching effect."

*Jewel Box*



*Students in Mary Taylor's room proudly display their Jewel Box which contains phonetically regular words for reading mastery.*

**Contact: Mrs. Suzanne Mutic, Director of Special Education in Derry Township, Tel. (717) 531-2312.**

## Louisiana District Conducts Ongoing Project Read Training



Linda Musson (left), Dyslexia/504 Coordinator for Terrebonne Parish Public Schools, presents fall, spring, and summer workshops for 38 schools in Houma, Louisiana. Linda reports that 900 teachers have received Project Read training.



Mary Lee Enfield, Ph.D.  
Coauthor of Project Read

## Sharing Information

by Mary Lee Enfield, Ph.D.

One of the hopes of Project Read/Language Circle is that we can create a communication network among those of us dedicated to teaching children, adolescents, and adults with language learning difficulties.

### **"Communication Link" Newsletter**

In its eighth year, the "Communication Link" newsletter emphasizes Project Read implementation models, curriculum and instruction updates, as well as data from replication site research.

### **We've added new links to promote more effective communications.**

We invite you to send us information about your Project Read program.

Toll-Free Number: ..... 800-450-0343

E-Mail: ..... [projread@mn.uswest.net](mailto:projread@mn.uswest.net)

Web Site: <http://www.projectread.com>

### **Compiling Project Read Data**

The call for data/support of program effectiveness is increasing. We are currently putting together data from various sites which will be available in January 1997.

### **Do you have data to share?**

I invite you to submit new or follow-up data you've collected in measuring the results of Project Read. An outline titled, "A Search for Solutions," was printed in "Communication Link," vol. 5, no. 2, Spring 1994. The outline gives a framework for your data. I will be glad to send you an outline and answer your questions about data collection. Contact us at the Language Circle.

### **Using grantwriting to fund Project Read replications**

We are extending a call for information about funding opportunities through grantwriting.

We are grateful for the information you have shared. We want to continue to include you in Project Read/Language Circle's communication network.

## Spanish Version of the Phonology Guide

### Audio Tape Accompanies Guía de Fonología

An audio tape of the Sounds of the Phoneme/Grapheme Chart is now available in Spanish and English. The tape accompanies the Spanish/English version of the Project Read Phonology Guide. Translators for the Guide and recorders of the audio tape are Celia and Mario Barragan of San Marcos, Texas.

Guía de Fonología and Audio Tape ..... \$105.00

## Project Read Puppets Animate Two Short Vowel Sounds



Mr. Ed



Ms. Odd

Classroom favorites Ms. Odd and Mr. Ed aid in teaching “short o” and “short e” sounds along with the Phonology Guide.

Two puppets completely assembled ..... \$35.00

Continued from page 1

The Project Read trained teachers and teaching assistants help classroom teachers with the Project Read curriculum as facilitators, tutors, and resource personnel.

- Project Read is taught as the total Language Arts program in grades 1, 2, and 3 through in-class grouping or in the Project Read Room as a pull out program.
- In grades 4 through 8, Project Read is integrated into the traditional Language Arts class through in-class grouping or whole class instruction.

- Junior High and Senior High School students receive Project Read instruction in Multisensory English classes.

Students in all grade levels are experiencing success. Project Read indeed honors the dignity of students who need an alternative way to learn.

**Author: Linda Musson, Dyslexia/504 Coordinator; Tel. (504) 876-8504.**

### Coming in May...

Teaching lessons for each unit of the primary Phonics Guide. Watch for more information.

Tori Greene is writing lessons for each unit in the Phonics Guide. The lessons will feature:

- Madeline Hunter lesson design
- Targeted teaching objectives
- VAKT input
- Practice strategies
- Active participation
- Teaching to mastery
- Mastery tests

## *St. Paul, Minnesota*

### *Tori Greene Demonstrates Project Read Program at Community of Peace Academy Charter School*

One of nineteen charter schools in Minnesota, Community of Peace Academy is in its second year of operation. A profile of the 212 students in grades K-6 includes 51 single parent families, 160 students who qualify for free meals; 18 qualify for reduced price meals. Fourteen



*Captivated students actively grasp vowel concepts with Tori Greene. Vowel letters are written on Tori's fingertips. Teachers Tim McGowan and Cheryl Roosa observe.*

students were referred by the district's Title I Homeless Program. The eight Eritrian and 124 Hmong children are from war refugee families. There are 50 African American, two East Indian, two Hispanic and twenty-one European American students.

Principal Karen Rusthoven comes with 30 years of experience in both public and parochial inner city schools. Her own children are African American.

Rusthoven's experiences led to her concern about the lack of success that children of color frequently experience in inner city schools. Her concern resulted in writing the charter for the Community of Peace Academy which is devoted to creating a school model or structure that is more effective for inner city children and families—one that is accessible for the child and family who cannot pay tuition.

The characteristics of this charter school are embodied in its name: Community of Peace Academy.

*Community* is at the heart of the charter. The school works hard to build trusting and

meaningful relationships with family and others through strategies such as home visits, mentors, materials printed in the Hmong language, and the availability of interpreters for all conferences and meetings. The small size of the school and its K-6 model also foster community.

*Peace* Education is taught every day. Staff tries to infuse Peace Education into everything they do.

*Academy* indicates that the school is serious about learning.

#### ***Special needs of the Academy's community:***

*Academic Deficits.* Because many of the children come from families with little or no academic experience, the families may not know what is necessary for school success.

There are also hidden academic deficits. For example, Rusthoven notes that, "Educators often assume that the Hmong students are fluent in English because they are verbal. In fact, they do not have academic proficiency. By the 7th or 8th grade, students become overwhelmed by the academic work and drop out. It is not for lack of intelligence. They just become discouraged and lack the academic skills to continue."

*Language Deficits.* Language deficits in this population have many causes in addition to the neurophysiologic differences which create visual and auditory processing and attentional difficulties for learners. In many of the homes of these children, no adults read or write any language. Thirty percent of the parents do not speak English. Even the English speaking students may have serious language deficiencies, Rusthoven observes.

During the first year of operation, the Academy taught Whole Language, supplementing with phonics. The students' language deficits were too great; teachers were discouraged. Therefore, the Academy looked for a more effective language arts program and they became aware of Project Read.

**Project Read meets special needs:**

Because Project Read is structured, diagnostic and prescriptive, from early on the students' language deficits are identified and addressed. Direct teaching prevents incorrect assumptions about what students know.

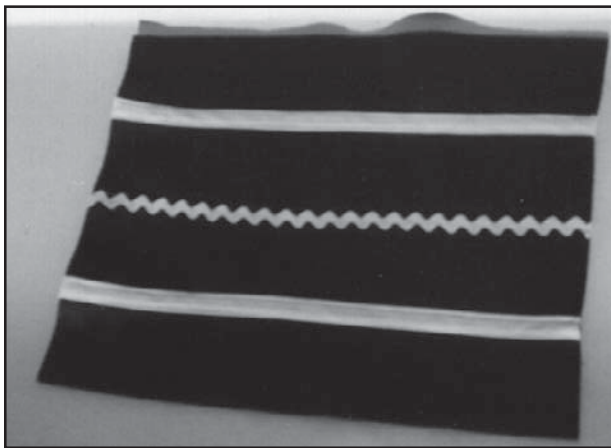
Four Community of Peace teachers attended Project Read courses in Detroit last summer. They shared that training with the staff

during the fall. As a follow-up, Tori Greene has met with the staff and provided classroom demonstrations. "These have been most helpful," reports Rusthoven.

Future plans include continuing Project Read staff development and documenting students' progress.

**Contact: Karen Rusthoven, Principal, Tel. (612) 776-5151.**

*Felt Paper Provides Sound/Symbol and Letter Formation Practice*



10 felt paper mats \$25.00

Felt paper represents primary writing paper. As a kinesthetic, tactile activity, students trace letters on felt paper, feeling letter formation boundaries at top and bottom and center guideline.



First grade teacher Ruth Knotz says the felt adheres to clothing which is good for demonstration. Ruth provides a visual model of the letter "f" for the students as they practice letter formation and letter sound.



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## 1997 Schedule

### Project Read/Language Circle Courses

Instructors: Tori Greene and Mary Lee Enfield, Ph.D.

January 23 – 25	Jemicy School, Baltimore, MD, <i>Linguistics</i> , Barbara Wolf (410) 653-2700
February 6 – 8	San Marcos, TX, <i>Written Expression</i> (Closed Session)
February 10 – 12	San Angelo, TX, <i>Phonology</i> (Closed Session)
February 13 – 15	Dallas, TX, SMU, <i>Report Form – Reading Comprehension</i> , Joyce Pike (214) 768-7323
February 18 – 19	Lubbock, TX, <i>Linguistics</i> , Julie Duncan (806) 766-1053
February 27 – March 1	Wayne County, MI, <i>Phonology</i> , Judy Alhamisi (313) 467-1502
June 10 – 13	San Marcos, TX, <i>Phonology</i> (Closed Session)
June 16 – 19	San Marcos, TX, <i>Report Form – Reading Comprehension</i> (Closed Session)
July 14 – 16	Traverse City, MI, <i>Written Expression</i> , Jim Williams (616) 922-6228
July 17 – 18	Traverse City, MI, <i>Report Form</i> , Jim Williams (616) 922-6228
July 21 – 24	Traverse City, MI, <i>Phonology</i> , Jim Williams (616) 922-6228
August 4 – 7	New Jersey ODS, <i>Phonology</i> , Susan Kemp (908) 781-6507
August 11 – 14	Williston, VT, <i>Written Expression</i> , Cathy Anderson (802) 482-3885
October 15 – 17	Boston, MA, <i>Report Form</i> , Joanne Reeves (617) 837-3697
October 20 – 21	Boston, MA, <i>Primary Comprehension</i> , Joanne Reeves (617) 837-3697

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