What Works When Teaching Young Children to Read: The Early Literacy and Learning Model (ELLM)

Atlanta, Georgia

April 8, 2005
Dr. Janice A. Wood
Crawford Early Literacy Faculty Fellow, Florida Institute of Education
PCER, Co-Investigator

The Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research (PCER) program funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education includes a national evaluation study conducted by RTI International and Mathematica Policy Research (MPR), and complementary research studies conducted by each grantee. The findings reported here are based on the complementary research activities carried out by the Florida Institute of Education at the University of North Florida under the PCER program. These findings may differ from the results reported for the PCER national evaluation study. The findings presented in the Poster Symposium at the Society for Research in Child Development 2005, Biennial Meeting are based on a larger sample size of children, classroom and teachers and sought to answer complementary research questions including program effectiveness. The content of this presentation does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the PCER Consortium including IES, RTI, and MPR, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education.
ELLM, a research- and standards-based early literacy curriculum and instructional support system for teachers and coaches, targets at-risk 3- and 4-year-old preschool and kindergarten children and their families served by subsidized, faith-based, Head Start, and school-based centers.
ELLM Goals

• Increase literacy achievement of 3- and 4-year-old preschool and kindergarten children from low-income families.

• Create researcher/practitioner partnerships to address academic and non-academic challenges to improving early literacy outcomes for young children.

• Increase policy- and decision-makers’ understanding and support for the actions needed for children to become eager and proficient readers.
ELLM Strategies

- Translate research findings into instructional practices and materials that help teachers change their instructional practices.
- Demonstrate effective literacy strategies for teachers aimed at helping children become eager and proficient readers.
- Create literacy-rich environment in classrooms.
- Extend literacy activities to the home.
- Assess the effectiveness of those strategies and use the results to guide future actions.
Early Literacy Curriculum and Instructional Support System
The ELLM curriculum consists of strategies and learning materials teachers use to help children acquire emergent literacy skills and to provide emergent literacy experiences.

Teachers spend 1 hour a day implementing ELLM Literacy Components.
9 Monthly Literacy Packets
54 Children’s Books
ABC Poem Booklet
Thematic Poem Booklet
Phonological Awareness Resource Guide
Word Wall Implementation Resource Guide
Alphabet Sound Song (Video, CD, and Cassette)
Alphabet Sound Song Flash Cards
ELLM Components Activity Poster

Alphabet Cluster Poster
Monthly Teacher Tips
Monthly Family Tips
Family Literacy Calendar
ELLM Performance Standards
ELLM Research Knowledge Base
ELLM Teacher Training Resource Manual
Family Involvement Manual
ELLM family experiences are designed to address three challenges to meaningful family involvement: lack of knowledge about what to do to help children learn to read; lack of skill in putting what is known to work into practice; and lack of opportunity to learn from others.
• 100-Book Classroom Lending Library
• 4 family/site literacy events each year
• ELLM Family Literacy Calendar for each family
• Weekly informational ELLM Story Take-Home Bracelets
• Monthly Family Tips
• ELLM Family Involvement Resource Manual
ELLM Family Involvement Resources

Take-Home Bracelets

Today we read Sight Eyes, Brown Skin. Tell me what makes me special to you.

Today we read the book The Bailey Beaker Birds. Ask me what the baby bird did all night to keep the animals in the zoo awake.

Today we read Bailey Goes Camping. Ask me how Bailey went camping inside.

Today we read Dear Zingers: Have a Mother, Too? Let me tell you who else has a mother.

Sharing Children's Books with Families

Family Tips
April 2005

Important Days to Remember

April 1: April Fool's Day
April 5: George Washington's Birthday
April 9: National Library Week
April 12: Easter Week
April 15: Earth Day
May 20: Native American Heritage Month

Nursery Rhyme Time

May 4: Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary
May 14: Jack and Jill
May 21: Hickory Dickory Dock
May 28: When the Billy Goats Gruff

Monthly Writing

April 18: Language a Young Writer: Day

Family Activity

April 25: National Read Across America Week

Encourage families to read aloud. This is a great week to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday and encourage reading. Read a book with your family and discuss the characters and plot.

Family Activity

April 25: National Wildflower Week

Family potpourri over the weekend. It's a great way to celebrate the beauty and diversity of flora in our region. Take a walk or hike together and enjoy the outdoors.

Family Activity
ELLM literacy coaches provide support as well as the tools and strategies needed to help ELLM teachers develop new skills and knowledge—impacting both curriculum content and classroom practice.
ELLM Support Through Coaching

• ELLM Coaches visit classrooms once a week for 1 hour.
• ELLM Coaches conduct demonstration literacy lessons.
• ELLM Coaches observe teachers implementing lessons.
• Coach-teacher conferences are conducted after each instructional episode to reflect on what happened and decide on next steps.
• Teachers participate in 4 teacher get-togethers each year.
• Monthly literacy team meetings help teachers, directors, and coaches work together to improve children’s literacy outcomes.
ELLM uses practice-focused research and evaluation to guide instruction, answer outcome questions, fuel continuous improvement, and contribute to ongoing knowledge building.

**Guiding Instruction**

The Alphabet Letter Recognition Inventory (ALRI) assesses children’s knowledge of all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

- Fall ALRI results are used to help teachers focus instruction and identify children for targeted phonological awareness training.
- ALRI results are used to identify letter clusters on which to focus and personalize instruction.

**Answering Outcome Questions**

- The emergent literacy skills of preschool children in ELLM classrooms is measured at the beginning and end of the school year using the *Test of Early Reading Ability-Third Edition* (TERA-3).
- Results over the past several years have demonstrated significant increases in the ELLM children’s emergent literacy skills.
Working Partnerships

2004-2005 ELLM Regional Partners

Bay County
Citrus County School System
Collier County
Duval County
Hillsborough County
Marion County School System
Miami-Dade County
ELLM

Early Literacy & Learning Model

For more information visit us at:
www.unf.edu/dept/fie/ellm