
be connected to other instructional activities, especially writing activities. Students must be reading for a purpose and, while reading, have an understanding that they will then work with this knowledge during follow-up activities such as a written reflection or a structured discussion with peers. Follow-up activities promote more student engagement with reading, increase awareness and monitoring of comprehension, and provide opportunities for repeated exposures to academic language in multiple contexts. The following is a list of considerations when planning for successful independent reading:

- Is there a match between the reader’s ability and the text characteristics? Is the reader able to read the text with 90 percent accuracy?
- Is there a ratio of known to unknown words that supports vocabulary knowledge development during independent reading?
- Is there a relationship between the content of the book(s) for independent reading and the content and material being covered in the class?
- Is there a follow-up activity or discussion planned to be held after independent reading?
- Do the teacher and the student have a shared understanding of the purpose or goal that guides that particular session of independent reading?

Conclusions

Supporting and promoting the reading development of the growing population of ELLs is both a challenge and a necessity for educators across the nation. In this section, we identify six recommendations to guide the planning and implementation of any instructional approach or academic intervention to promote ELLs’ reading ability:

1. ELLs need early, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonological awareness and phonics in order to build decoding skills.

2. K-12 classrooms across the nation must increase opportunities for ELLs to develop sophisticated vocabulary knowledge.

3. Reading instruction in K-12 classrooms must equip ELLs with strategies and knowledge to comprehend and analyze challenging narrative and expository texts.

4. Instruction and intervention to promote ELLs’ reading fluency must focus on vocabulary and increased exposure to print.



5. In all K-12 classrooms across the U.S., ELLs need significant opportunities to engage in structured, academic talk.

6. Independent reading is only beneficial when it is structured and purposeful, and there is a good reader-text match.

These recommendations apply whether the instruction serves a *preventive*, *augmentative*, or *remedial* function, and whether the domain of focus is for class-wide instruction or small-group intensive intervention. These are decisions that must be made locally by the educators supporting ELLs on the basis of characteristics of the population being served combined with feasibility and appropriateness, given the instructional goal and/or target skills of focus.

This report was written to serve a guiding function, rather than as a “how-to” manual. As such, it is intended to serve as one starting point or reference for planning instruction and academic interventions for ELLs. Enabling the nation’s ELLs to reach the highest standards of achievement demands sustained, consistent, and intensive delivery of high quality instruction and academic interventions that target the development of ELLs’ academic language and reading-related skills, such as fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Success in this endeavor will be most assured when all educators who have an influence on this population’s achievement participate in the planning and delivery of instruction and interventions.