Evidence-based programs focus on MATERIALS.

Evidence-based practices focus on TEACHING ACTIONS.

Quest for BEST PROGRAM has been elusive.

“Children learn to read by a variety of materials and methods... No one approach is so distinctly better in all situations and respects than the others that it should be considered the one best method and the one to be used exclusively.”

(Bond & Dykstra, 1997, p. 416)

Quest for BEST PRACTICES has been fruitful.

- The results of the First-Grade studies again provide a relevant starting place. Although findings failed to show superiority of any particular approach or program, evidence did indicate strong relationships between particular practices and high achievement.
Research-Based Practices

1. Engage children in purposeful, authentic reading tasks
2. Use high-quality literature
3. Provide intensive, explicit, word study instruction
4. Provide explicit, strategic comprehension instruction
5. Provide explicit, strategic writing instruction
6. Provide whole, small group, and individual instruction
7. Engage all children in the regular-education curriculum
8. Provide extensive, in-class reading time
9. Integrate instruction in reading and writing
10. Engage in continuous, multiple methods of assessment

Effective teachers create a learning environment that engages children in authentic and purposeful reading tasks.

To optimize children’s opportunities to read, effective teachers provide:

- Easy access to books and writing materials
- Purposeful wall displays
- Classroom routines that require purposeful reading, writing, listening, and speaking

Effective teachers are knowledgeable about the abilities that are foundational to successful reading.
Effective teachers know that becoming a successful reader/writer requires balanced attention to all aspects of successful reading, including:

- the ability to read words quickly and fluently,
- the knowledge of language and concepts necessary to understand and respond to reading, and
- the knowledge of comprehension strategies necessary to fully understand and respond to reading.

Effective teachers also know that different instructional experiences and a variety of texts support different literacies.

- Frequent practice with easy, readable text builds word knowledge and fluency.
- Experiences with stories that are rich and complex in both language and event structures support development of oral and written language.
- Opportunities to respond individually and in groups or pairs support reading comprehension.

Effective teachers provide systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics to children who have not yet acquired these abilities.

Effective word study instruction:

- Begins with phonemic awareness
- Encourages invented or temporary spellings
- Focuses on reading words, not learning rules
- Focuses on letter/sound relationships, including individual phonemes and phonograms as patterns
- Emphasizes transfer of word study strategies to in-context reading and writing
- Emphasizes fluency
Effective teachers provide students explicit and strategic instruction in comprehension.

EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION scaffolds learning by gradually releasing responsibility from the teacher to children.
- Demonstration
- Guided Practice
- Independent Practice

STRATEGIC INSTRUCTION prepares the child to perform independently.
- Explains what to do
- Shows how to do it
- Explains when and why the strategy is useful

Effective teachers provide opportunities for students to work in large and small groups and as individuals.
A Typical Day in an Effective Reading Classroom

- Community (Shared) Reading
  - Time each day when children read (or listen to) grade-appropriate text
- Just Right (Guided) Reading
  - Time each day when children receive instruction in text that will support the development of particular word level and comprehension strategies
- On Your Own Reading
  - Time each day when children read anything of their own choosing

Community (Shared) Reading

- Story Introduction (Whole Class)
  - Preview text, develop background knowledge, make predictions
- Reading the Selection (Needs-Based Groups)
  - No Help
  - Silent reading
  - Partner rereading
  - Partner response
  - Individual response
  - With Help (Teacher-led Group)
  - Read aloud by teacher
  - Rereading with teacher or partner
  - Group Response (oral)
  - Individual Response (Written)
- Responding to the Selection (Heterogeneous Groups)
  - Books Club (Raphael & McMahon, 1997)

Just Right (Guided) Reading

- Supporting Struggling Readers
  - Instruction in word level strategies using easy text
  - Reading and rereading of easy books
- Supporting Average and Above Average Readers
  - Instruction in word level and comprehension strategies using Community Reading Text
  - Reading beyond Community Reading Text
  - Serving as peer or cross-age tutor

On Your Own Reading

- Children read a book or text of their own choosing
- Children may read individually or in pairs
- Teacher may intervene if child consistently or repeatedly chooses books too easy or too difficult
Effective teachers integrate instruction in reading and writing.

Effective teachers provide children substantial classroom time to read authentic and meaningful text.

Teachers who make a difference in children’s reading achievement:

- have high expectations for all children
- include all children in “regular” curriculum
- provide instruction in contexts other than whole group
- provide substantial, in-class time for children to read and reread text
- provide struggling readers both extra help and extra time
- provide explicit instruction in word study AND comprehension strategies
- provide explicit instruction and time to write
- integrate instruction in reading and writing
- emphasize reading and writing as social activities
- continue to study the ways children learn to read and write