

OVERCOMING THE LITERACY DIVIDE: REMEDIAL STRATEGIES FOR STRUGGLING READERS

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Reading serves as the foundation of all learning, yet many Filipino learners in Grades 1 to 3 encounter significant challenges with literacy. To tackle this issue, the Department of Education (DepEd) has launched the Literacy Remediation Program (LRP), guided by DepEd Order No. 10, s. 2025. This initiative aims to identify and support struggling readers through targeted strategies customized to their unique needs.

The Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) categorizes learners into different reading profiles: Low Emerging, High Emerging, and At Grade Level. This classification is essential as it informs the necessary interventions for those in lower tiers (Vernon-Feagans et al., 2010). The CRLA emphasizes that pupils who fall behind early in their reading development are at risk of ongoing academic struggles, making timely interventions crucial.

Reading proficiency is essential for success in education and beyond; however, many learners face significant challenges developing these skills, especially in the early grades. To address literacy deficits among learners, educators can implement several key remedial strategies. These include assessment and placement, group learning sessions, phonics and decoding drills, progress tracking, and parental engagement. Each of these strategies is vital for enhancing reading outcomes for struggling learners.

Assessment and Placement

Tools like the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) or the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) are essential for identifying struggling

readers. These assessments help educators categorize pupils by reading profiles, enabling targeted instruction tailored to individual needs. Effective assessment ensures timely interventions, empowering teachers to develop strategies that enhance literacy skills. Without this step, the effectiveness of remedial strategies declines, underscoring the importance of data-driven decision-making in education (Yelland, 2011).

Group Learning Sessions

After assessment and placement, group learning sessions are crucial for effective literacy intervention. Grouping learners by reading levels allows educators to provide targeted, differentiated instruction, enhancing outcomes. Small groups facilitate interaction and personalized feedback, essential for building reading skills and learners' confidence (Thomas et al., 2011). Research shows this setup promotes engagement and collaboration, creating a supportive environment for practicing reading abilities through peer interactions and guidance from educators (Langford, 2010).

Phonics and Decoding Drills

A critical aspect of developing early reading skills is emphasizing phonics and decoding drills. Focusing on letter-sound recognition, blending, and sight word recognition allows educators to establish a strong foundation for reading proficiency (Langford, 2010). Phonics instruction enables learners to systematically build sound-symbol knowledge for smoother decoding of unfamiliar words (Edwards & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2011). Evidence supports the effectiveness of structured phonics programs in fostering word recognition and fluency, underscoring their vital role in enhancing learners' overall reading skills. Studies show that well-integrated phonics instruction improves reading accuracy and comprehension (Lestari et al., 2024).

Progress Tracking

An important part of effective remedial strategies is tracking learners' progress. Monitoring growth through assessments and reading logs helps educators adjust instruction as needed (Bird & Edwards, 2014). This evaluation ensures pupils progress and engage with the material, addressing any lapses in understanding. Teachers can adjust their approaches to meet individual needs by aligning assessment results with teaching methods, creating a responsive environment that promotes literacy growth (Thomas et al., 2011).

Parental Engagement

Engaging parents in their child's literacy journey reinforces school-learned skills. Initiatives like take-home reading kits and literacy workshops promote a supportive home reading environment that enhances literacy skills. Involvement significantly improves children's reading habits, encouraging regular practice at home. Strengthening the school-home connection benefits their learning and fosters a support community, boosting confidence and enthusiasm for reading.

Implementing structured support and evidence-based strategies while fostering a nurturing environment enables educators to close the literacy divide, empowering learners for lifelong success. Teachers can pave the way for improved educational outcomes and a brighter future by focusing on effective remediation strategies.

Bridging the literacy divide for struggling readers requires implementing these key remedial strategies. Educators can create a robust framework that empowers all learners in their reading journeys by adopting systematic assessment, providing focused small group learning sessions, emphasizing phonics, consistently monitoring progress, and fostering parental engagement. As educators continue to refine and implement these strategies, they uphold their commitment to ensuring that every learner has the potential to become a confident and capable reader.

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