

Exceptional Programs for Exceptional Learners Monthly Newsletter



Teacher goal for this month:

Treat students as you would want to be treated

BEST PRACTICE

Best Practices in writing - the Use of the Four Square Writing Model. **Best Practices in math** - Direct instruction with lots of modeling and practice, use of manipulatives and mnemonic phrases, and then independent practice with teacher support. **Best Practice in reading** - direct teaching and modeling of text types, text structures, reading strategies, use of graphic organizers. These all work—but they work even better in a safe and structured environment. *Brenda Powell* is using all of these best practices with her 6th grade students at Coffeyville Community Elementary. Brenda has created a very safe environment for her students to take risks - it's obvious they enjoy being in her class and learning! Brenda's classroom environment is relaxed yet there are boundaries that the students understand. Wonderful job Brenda!

Get the Most Bang for Your Buck—Part 4: Vocabulary

Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read describes the five big areas of reading. The KS State Standards are based off of these 5 big areas of reading. Phonemic Awareness, Phonics and Fluency were described in previous newsletters. The fourth big area of reading is vocabulary instruction.

Vocabulary is important because “beginning readers use their oral vocabulary to make sense of the words they see in print.” Also “readers must know what most of the words mean in a text before they can understand what they are reading.”

Best Practice for vocabulary instruction include:

- **Indirect Instruction** by engaging students in oral language on a daily basis, having students *listen to adults read*, and hav-

ing students read extensively on their own.

- **Direct Instruction** by providing students with *specific word instruction* and teaching students *word-learning strategies*.

Specific Word Instruction

1. words taught before reading
2. Active engagement with words over time
3. Repeated exposure to words in many contexts

Word Learning Strategies

1. How to use dictionaries and other reference tools
2. How to use word parts to figure out meanings of words
3. How to use context

clues to determine word meanings

Vocabulary Progress Monitoring tools are:

The San Diego Quick Assessment

Fry Phrases

Dolch Words

Read Aloud Accommodation

As most of you know, this year the state is requiring training for all teachers and paras/aides that will be providing the Read Aloud Accommodation.

The ultimate goal is that the integrity of the test is kept in tact and that all students receive the needed supports to be tested fairly.



Here are a few summarized KSDE Policies:

1. A student who needs a read-aloud accommodation is one whose ability to convey knowledge of the subject/content area is severely limited by his/her inability to read the assessment materials.
2. The need **MUST** be documented in a SIT plan, ELL plan, 504 plan or IEP. The need must be determined for each individual content area being as-

sessed.

3. The read-aloud accommodation is for a student who needs the entire assessment read to him/her.
4. In order to use this accommodation, it must be provided in the classroom on a regular basis for instructional material and tests.
5. All human readers must receive training on this accommodation.