

Powerful Teaching Interactions in Writing

Presented by

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Ask Questions

- How do children learn to print?
 - Draw pictures and watch the teacher write dictated captions
 - Trace over teacher's script
 - Copy captions
 - Remember word forms and write them independently
 - Invent word forms

M. Clay, *What Did I Write?*

Understandings

- What is said can be written down
 - Arbitrary conventions
 - Perception vs. execution
 - Progress noted

What to look for

- Gradual development of a perceptual awareness of customs used in written English.

Beginning Writing and Reading

- Reading stresses sentences and meaning
- Writing manipulates units of written language
- Writing provides some awareness of how to combine units to convey messages
- Fluent oral language may permit reader to depend on meaning

Instructional Questions

- What is the value of copying?
- Should grammatically incorrect sentences be corrected?
- Why do error-free words re-occur as errors in writing?
- Is the process taught or "caught"?
- Is there a sequence of skills to be developed?

How Writing Helps Reading

- Writing helps to build:
 - Sources of knowledge upon which the reader must draw
 - Processes needed to search for information in print
 - Strategies used to combine or check information
 - Awareness of how to construct messages

Clay, *Change Over Time*, p. 17

Making it Easy

- Create context from what the child knows
- Don't alter the task
- Don't simplify complexity...share the task
- Avoid long-winded explanations
- Be aware that each child is different

Clay, *Change Over Time*, p. 19

Learning Letters

First Journey

- from being new,
- to only just known,
- to working to get a solution,
- to easily produced but easily thrown,
- to a well-known old response in most contexts,
- and later, known in any variant form

Second Journey

- moving from very slow,
- to very fast production or recognition measured in milliseconds

Clay, M. *Change over time*, p. 20

Important Aspects

- Attending
- Monitoring
- Self-Correcting
- Shifting Attention
- New Learning
- Assembling Messages
- Giving Letters Minimal Attention

Clay, *Change Over Time*, p. 29

There is No Fixed Sequence

- As children explore writing, they will:
 - Attend closely to the features of letters and to learning letters
 - Construct their own words, letter by letter
 - Direct attention to spatial features like serial order and spaces between words
 - Work within the order and sequence rules of print, revealing these to themselves while constructing messages
 - Break down the task to its smallest segments while at the same time synthesizing them into words and sentences
 - Engage in their own form of segmenting sounds in words in order to write them.

Possible Errors Caused by Distinct English Sounds

Distinct English Sound	May be pronounced as:	Example error
D /den	<i>Then</i>	Dem (them)
J/ joke	<i>Choke</i>	Gob (job)
R/ rope	<i>Rope/wope</i>	Waipen (ripen)
V/van	<i>Ban</i>	Surbing (serving)
Z/ zipper	<i>Slipper</i>	Sivalais (civilized)
Sh/ shell	<i>Chell</i>	Ched (shed)
Th/ thick	<i>Tick</i>	Tenk (think)
Zh/ treasure	<i>Treachure</i>	Chesher (treasure)

Luria

- One region of brain is responsible for first step of analyzing words into individual sounds.
- Another region of brain is responsible for speech sounds.
- To write a word, the sounds units must be coded into units of writing and calls another part of the brain into play.
- Mental process of writing a word entails putting letters in proper sequence and involves a large area of brain as a whole.

Clay, What Did I Write? P. 72

Luria

“ Luria poetically describes a skilled movement as a kinetic melody of interchangeable links, likening it to the complexity of a musical composition.”

Clay, What Did I Write? P. 72

In Closing

“Before correcting a child’s perception of the world, understand what that perception is.”

We all have our own monsters. When you understand the child’s, you will begin to understand yours.

From 365 Meditations for Teachers, Greg Henry Quinn