

Case 2: Sarah, completed beginning of 4th grade

Analysis of Assessment Data

Assessment 1: Spelling Inventory

This inventory measures a student's spelling development and their knowledge of certain words. This measure will assist in identifying the best instructional approach to take as it relates to the student's specific spelling stage (e.g. middle within word pattern) and growth throughout the year (McKenna & Stahl, 2009, p110). So this measure ascertains that Sarah would be in the beginning of the derivational relations stage-middle syllables and affixes as she can spell most vowel patterns (i.e. **spoil**, **chewed**) and inflectional endings to core words (i.e. **chewed**, **shower**) correctly (McKenna & Stahl, 2009, p. 145). According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3a, Sarah should be able to accurately read multisyllabic words that she is unfamiliar with both in and out of context by using her knowledge of letter-sound relationships, syllable patterns and knowledge of roots and affixes. Sarah needs to work on her derivations of words (i.e. **pleasure**, **opposition**). Sarah is meeting her grade level expectations as identified by this measure and the CCSS standard. The spelling stage for a fourth grade student is within word pattern-syllables (i.e. **sled**, **dream** are spelled correctly) and affixes and Sarah is meeting this goal.

Assessment 2: Qualitative Reading Inventory, Expository Informational Passage

Overall informal reading inventories measures a student's ability to read by assessing comprehension, word recognition, prior knowledge and their ability to recall specifics regarding the reading (McKenna & Stahl, 2009, p. 43). This specific inventory measures comprehension, ability to recall specific concepts within the reading and word recognition as it uses the text to explain a topic that the student may lack prior knowledge. This measure informs the teacher of the specific instructional demands that the student will need in order to strengthen their reading skills including the student's current reading level. Sarah is able to read fluently however, she is lacking prior knowledge as it relates to this text. This skill along with the difficulty in understanding some of the vocabulary words affected her ability to comprehend the text and perform at her grade level. According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Sarah should be able to recognize and understand words by confirming or self-correcting through the text context (i.e. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4c) which she was unable to do.

Assessment 3: Qualitative Reading Inventory, Narrative Informational Passage

Overall informal reading inventories measures a student's ability to read by assessing comprehension, word recognition, prior knowledge and their ability to recall specifics regarding the reading (McKenna & Stahl, 2009, p. 43). This specific inventory measures comprehension and ability to recall specific concepts within the reading. This measure informs the teacher of the student's knowledge pertaining to the structure of the narrative writing style and the style of

instruction needed to assist the student in improving their reading skills. Sarah is able to utilize her prior knowledge in order to respond to some of the concept questions in addition to read fluently however, her prior knowledge is also limited as she is unable to identify states and directions. Similar to the previous assessment, Sarah should be able to recognize and understand words by confirming or self-correcting through the text context (i.e. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4c) in addition to reading the text and being able to understand it and read it with a purpose in mind (i.e. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a). Sarah is not meeting these standards as evidence by her inability to appropriately retell the story (i.e. comprehend).

Goals for Instruction:

Based on the aforementioned assessments, there are two goals that would be beneficial in enhancing the areas that need improvement: background knowledge and vocabulary.

Goal 1:

Sarah needs to improve her background knowledge. By improving this skill, she will be able to enhance her comprehension as background knowledge helps to bring meaning to the text (Pardo, 2004, p. 73). This goal is important to Sarah's reading development as it is a key component to comprehension as identified in the modified cognitive model (McKenna and Stahl, 2009, p23). McKenna and Stahl (2009) use background knowledge as one of three techniques to help determine whether a student understands the text they are reading (p.16).

Sarah's Qualitative Reading Inventories identify that she is deficient in the area of background knowledge as she was unable to identify states and countries (i.e. Massachusetts and Europe), she identified years in terms of amounts (i.e. 1830; one thousand, eight hundred and thirty) and she was unable to identify directions vs. geographic locations (i.e. west side vs. Westward). In addition, her reply to the texts questions and her retelling of the stories ascertain her lack of background knowledge. As previously mentioned, Common Core State Standard, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a identifies that students should be able to read text at their grade level with purpose and understanding. The aforementioned assessment of the inventory identifies how Sarah is not meeting the specified CCSS. Both the assessment and CCSS demonstrate the importance of assisting Sarah in increasing her background knowledge.

Goal 2:

Sarah needs to improve her vocabulary by focusing on this skill she will also be accompanying the other area of improvement (i.e. background knowledge) and will be able to increase her comprehension (McKenna and Stahl, 2009, p. 16, 23). This goal is important to Sarah's reading development as it is another component that is key to increasing her understanding of the texts she reads. As described in McKenna and Stahl (2009), Stahl (1999) states that the understanding of what words mean is the best way to indict a student's comprehension (p.16).

Sarah's Qualitative Reading Inventories identify that she is struggling with vocabulary that she should be inclusive of a fourth graders lexicon. This is evidence by her misuse of the word frontier (i.e. she identified it as fronter) and her pronunciation of words: locomotive and valve; these things demonstrate her inability to understand the meaning of the words though she was able to decode them. In addition, her reply to the texts questions (i.e. what is steam, what are railroads) and her retelling of the stories (i.e. main idea of the passage was missed) demonstrate her insufficient vocabulary. As previously mentioned, Sarah should be able to recognize and understand words by confirming or self-correcting through the text context (i.e. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4c). The aforementioned assessment of the inventory identifies how Sarah is not meeting the specified CCSS.

Instructional Strategies:

Instructional Strategy 1-background knowledge:

One of the instructional strategies that I would use for helping to increase the background knowledge of Sarah would be from Almasi and Fullerton's (2012) *Teaching Strategic Processes in Reading*. In Almasi and Fullerton's book, they identify a lesson where the student would create a K-W-L chart that is inclusive of three parts: K-what I know, W-what I want to find out and L-what I learned and still need to learn (2012, p. 157). This chart helps with investigating what prior knowledge the student may have, goes on to track what the student has learned and helps the student identify the purpose of reading the text.

I chose this strategy because it helps to bring together the core concept of CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a: purpose and understanding of the text. This strategy identifies that the student would start learning how to identify purposes within the text and identifies what the student learned which helps distinguish how the student managed the text and understood it (i.e. *W* from the K-W-L chart) (Almasi & Fullerton, p. 161). This chart will help Sarah meet her goal by helping her have a tool/resource that she can use in order to help her recall prior knowledge. This will help Sarah put concepts that she is unfamiliar with into a context that she understands. In order to utilize this chart, the teacher would give each student the chart and then walk them through each column to help them focus on those questions as they read the text. Prior to reviewing the columns with the students, the teacher would have the students verbally share what they know about the text based on the title of the text and/or the picture, if applicable.

Instructional Strategy 2-background knowledge:

The other instructional strategy for background knowledge is from Thinkport.org called "Preview Guides". I chose the following strategy because it not only helps with identifying background knowledge but also helps the students with understanding the purpose of the text. The strategy includes having students read statements derived from the reading, selected by the teacher, in order to have them utilize their prior knowledge. As the students read the statements, they must identify whether they agree or disagree with the statement, why they decided on their

answer and record what page/paragraph they found their answer. This strategy will be beneficial to Sarah as she will be able to work on both identifying the purpose of the text and increasing her background knowledge. Beyond these things, Sarah will learn to process how she is going about choosing her responses by having the ability to review them (i.e. the recording of the responses with the page number/paragraph).

Instructional Strategy 1-vocabulary:

One of the instructional strategies I would use for helping to increase Sarah's vocabulary would be from Mandel-Morrow and Gambrell's (2011) *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*. As described in Mandel-Morrow and Gambrell's book, Blachowicz and Fisher (2011) identify a strategy where the student can create a graphic organizer or semantic feature analysis (p.233). This strategy was chosen because it fits well with the other area that Sarah was struggling with background knowledge as well as vocabulary (Pardo, 2004, p. 274). This will give her the opportunity to work on building her vocabulary while thinking about how those terms can be put into a context that she knows. In order to use this tool, the teacher would select a topic as it relates to the text then list out 4-5 words found in the text and that relate to the topic. Students would then chart out other words that relate to the word that was outlined by the teacher. The teacher will assist the students in processing the words and their connections.

Instructional Strategy 2-vocabulary:

The other instructional strategy for vocabulary is from Florida Center for Reading Research. I chose the following strategy because it offers the students the ability to connect multiple word meanings at one time thus, helping them use prior knowledge and building several words into their vocabulary at one time. When connecting these two skills, teachers can best assist students with enhancing their comprehension which is the end goal of building vocabulary (McKenna and Stahl, 2009, p.172). The strategy is called All for One and two students will have several words that share the same meaning, student one will select a card with a word on it then write down a one word meaning to the word they just selected from the deck of cards and then student two writes down another word that shares the same meaning (using a reference tool, i.e. dictionary, if needed) and then the students switch roles. The students continue until they run out of cards in the deck then they must write a sentence for each of the words they have written down. Following this, the teacher will evaluate their work. This tool will help the students learn how to link different words to the same meaning thus enhancing their vocabulary as well it will assist in improving their written work. Sarah would benefit from this strategy because she will be able to enhance her vocabulary and connect prior knowledge to assist her in putting words into context.

References

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