Submission - SPE 515 Literacy for Students with Disabilities: Literacy Program Analysis

Candidates participate in a “Reading clinic” twice a week, providing intensive, individualized one-on-one tutoring for a young reader who is making limited progress in literacy. Multiple initial and ongoing assessments inform planning and instructional decisions. Between the middle and end of the semester, each candidate observes her/his tutee in his or her public school program to observe and gather information about the student’s school-based literacy program, including both the classroom program and any extra services from a special educator or literacy specialist. This assignment includes candidate’s descriptive “field notes” from the observation, with a focus on the tutee; followed by an analysis of the strengths and limitations of the program for this learner and professional recommendations. Analysis and recommendations are based on the candidate’s understanding of how to implement effective research-based practices for readers who struggle within the realities of an actual public school context. Recommendations must fit the possibilities, limitations and resources of the context that is observed, as well as the needs of the range of learners who are served. (R. Schnorr)

Lauren Fox
SPE 515

Literacy Program Analysis for “Sam”

FIELD NOTES

(Note: All names are pseudonyms.)

General Education Classroom Observation

The students arrived in the room at 12:13. Sam noticed me sitting towards the back of the room and said hello and told his other classmates who I was. As the students settled onto the rug in front of the Smart Board, Ms. Bear introduced the two other tutors and me to the students and explained to them that we were there to observe what they do every day in the classroom.

At 12:15 everyone was settled on the carpet and literacy instruction began. Ms. Bear asked the students to turn and talk to their neighbor and share what they know about synonyms. She ensures students that it is ok if they do not know anything. As Sam is talking to his partner, Ms. Bear listens to his responses and tries to lead them in the right direction. After a minute of
sharing with their partners, Ms. Bear brings up a Brain pop video on the smart board. She tells the students to listen to what the characters in the Brain pop video say about synonyms. During the few minutes of the video the characters explain what a synonym is and list a few examples. Ms. Bear stops the video and asks children what they think synonyms are. Sam, along with many other students, raised their hands to answer. Ms. Bear calls on Sam and he responds “words that mean the same thing”. Ms. Bear tells him that is right and continues to call on other students to give them a chance to respond. If student responses were not on track, he tried to bring them back to what was being discussed. A teacher popped in the door at this time to say hello to the class. She asked the children what they were learning and allowed many to raise their hands and tell her. She then tells them “Wow, you guys have learned a lot about synonyms already”. After giving them a compliment she says goodbye and leaves the classroom. Ms. Bear then tells the students, “If synonyms are words that have the same meaning, what do you think an antonym is. Just think about this in your head we will talk about this tomorrow.” Sam was very confused by this question and turned to the girl next to him and said I don’t know what that means. Ms. Bear pulls up a Smart Board activity about synonyms and uses Popsicle sticks to call on students. The activity gives students a word and has them think of another word that means the same thing. Multiple students gave an answer for one word and Ms. Bear responded to each answer telling them if that word was a synonym or not. Sam’s name was pulled and he was not sure what the answer was. Ms. Bear told him to call on a friend to help him. Sam called on a girl to help him and she provided a correct answer. Ms. Bear gave both students a high-five for the response. Ms. Bear explained that synonyms help to make their writing more interesting. She explains that many students use the same words over and over in their writing when they could use synonyms to think of different words. She gives them an example, “Today was a good day, what other words could I use to mean the same as good?” Students give responses such as awesome, cool, and exciting. Sam is smiling during this brainstorm and raises his hand many times.

Ms. Bear then tells the students they will be breaking up into their literacy groups. She lists the centers that they will be shifting through. They include: guided reading, listening, computer center (Razkids), ABC word work (synonym worksheet), and independent reading. She explains what the students are to do today at each station. Guided reading station will take place at the round table in the back of the classroom. The listening station will be next to the guided reading table and students will have to use the stereo because the headphones are broken.
She explains to students that when they are at the listening station they will have to turn the stereo down low and listen quietly so that they do not distract other students. The ABC word work station is split between two folders: red/yellow and blue/green. Both of these folders have a synonym worksheet in which students are to cut out words and match them to the correct word that has the same meaning. When students are finished with their worksheet, they are to put it in the done bin. At the computer station, students are to log on to Razkids. Ms. Bear asks the students to then repeat to him what is done at each station. At the independent reading station, students are to take books out of their bin and read quietly. She points at each station location and the students say out loud together what is done at each. Ms. Bear then directs the students to rotate to station one.

Sam’s first station is the guided reading station in the back of the room with Ms. Bear. The first rotation began at 12:30. There are only three students in this group since one child is absent today. Ms. Bear explains that yesterday, this group read a non-fiction text (Level E). She explained that in a non-fiction text the pictures are real. She asks students if they remember what the labels were called underneath the pictures and models to them this feature in the book. Ms. Bear started with the c sound to see if anyone could remember but the students could not recall the answer. Ms. Bear told them that these were called captions. She then asked them what the words in bold mean. Sam answered this right away and told her this meant the words were in the back of the book and you could see what the words mean. Ms. Bear tells him he was right and hands each student a worksheet. She explains to the students that on the worksheet there were pictures from the non-fiction book they had read together. She tells them that they are going to label the parts the arrows are pointing to in the picture. Ms. Bear explains to them that there is a glossary on the bottom of the worksheet that gives them the words they are going to use. She then told them that they were going to look at the first example together. She asks the students what the first picture shows an example of. Students do not seem to know so Ms. Bear reads the words from the glossary. Students are still not sure so she tells them that this example is the table of contents. The next example is also done as a group and this time Ms. Bear gives them right away answers from the glossary to choose from. Sam turned to the girl next to him and talked with her about what the answer could be. Ms. Bear turned to the students next to her and talked about what the answer could be. They then share their answers together. Ms. Bear tells them to do the last two examples on the worksheet and tells them they can help each other. Sam turns
and continues to work with the student next to him while the other boy in the group gets support from Ms. Bear. When Sam and his partner completed their worksheet, they had Ms. Bear check it and stamp it and they went and put their worksheets in their mailbox. Ms. Bear instructs that the first rotation is finished (15 minutes) and it was time for them to move to their second rotation.

Sam moves to his second station at 12:45. His second station is ABC work and he walks to the red/yellow folder and takes out a synonym worksheet. He returns to his desk and sits down in his seat. He starts going through his desk looking for scissors and glue. At this time, a reading teacher walks in the room and helped Sam find what he needed to get started. She leaves Sam and moves around to other students in the room. Sam looks at the worksheet for a minute and is not sure what to do. The reading teacher is busy assisting another student so I go over to help Sam. Sam’s worksheet has different words than the blue/green folder. These words are words that Sam would most likely see in his instructional level texts. After I explain to Sam what he is supposed to do, he begins cutting out and matching words. He looks at me to make sure when he matches a word they are correct. If I noticed Sam made a mismatch I would explain to Sam what each word means and ask them if they meant the same thing. This helped him to correct his mistakes. When he finished the worksheet, he placed it in the finished bin by the door. Ms. Bear tells students that their second rotation is over (15 minutes) and to move to their third rotation.

Sam moves to his third rotation and it is 1:00. Sam goes over to the book bins which have a colored circle on them. Each student in the class has a circle color from which to pick books that are related to their reading level. Sam picked out a book called “Cave Boy” and read it to me. Sam needed to word solve about five times while reading. After reading this book (15 minutes), Mr. Bear told students to move to their fourth rotation. Sam’s fourth rotation was the listening station which began at 1:15. Each student at the listening station had their own trophies book and followed along as the cd played an oral recording of the story. Sam followed along throughout the story and was not distracted by other students in different rotations. After 15 minutes, Sam’s reading teacher Ms. Dalton came to the classroom to get him and another girl in his class. They walked down along with 3 students from other classes to Ms. Dalton’s room.

After Sam returned from Ms. Dalton’s room around 2:00, students went outside to play. They returned around 2:30 and sat down on the rug for a reading lesson. Ms. Bear asked them to turn and talk to a friend next to them about one thing they learned about Eleanor Roosevelt. Sam
shared with his partner next to him what he remembered about Eleanor Roosevelt. After about 2 minutes, Ms. Bear asked students to raise their hand and share what they learned. After sharing a few facts about Eleanor, Ms. Bear explained that Eleanor wanted to help minorities gain rights. She explained that minorities were not allowed to do things we do everyday like ride in any seat they wanted to on the bus or to sing. She then showed the students the book they would be listening to her read today called, *When Marian Sang* by Pam Munoz Ryan. This was a non-fiction narrative about a woman who was African that was not given the chance to sing. Before she began reading, Ms. Bear told students that they were going to go over some vocabulary that would be in the book. These words included: harmony, humiliation, prejudices, and segregated. Ms. Bear asked each student first if they knew what the word meant and then explained to them what it meant. She asked students if they thought Susan B. Anthony was humiliated (a person they learned about in a previous lesson). Students were puzzled by this question so Ms. Bear told them the answer. Ms. Bear asked the students to turn and talk to their partner about why they thought Eleanor Roosevelt would choose to help Marian Anderson. Sam turned and talked to his partner and after a short wait time, Ms. Bear called on Sam to answer the question. Sam responded, “She wanted to help her because she liked helping people”. Ms. Bear told him he was on the right track and called on other students to further the thought. She extended this question asking students, “What kind of a person does this make Eleanor?” She then prompted students to give responses that were synonyms for nice. Sam raised his hand and offered “awesome” as a response.

At 2:44, Ms. Bear began reading the book. She had the classroom helper for the day pull up a slideshow on the SMART Board. The slideshow contained scanned pictures from the book. Ms. Bear stopped after the second page and posed a comprehension question directly to Sam. She asked “How can you tell this character is Marian?” Sam told her that he could tell because Ms. Bear read her name and there was a picture of her on the page. On certain pictures in the slideshow, Ms. Bear would have the classroom helper click to reveal a comprehension question. Another time she had the classroom helper click on the picture to reveal first a definition explaining what narrow-minded meant and asked a question using that vocabulary word e.g. “why were the people in the music school narrow-minded?” At 2:55, Ms. Bear stopped reading the book and told students that with a partner, they were to take a post it not and write one fact. She gave them a sentence starter to use (I learned…). When they were finished writing one fact,
they could post their facts on the board. Sam and his partner went over to his desk and she wrote the fact for him. After about 2 minutes, the time to write ended and students returned to their desks to get ready to pack up to go home.

**Special Education/AIS Classroom Observation**

Sam and four other students entered the reading classroom at 1:30. Students went to the back circle table to sit. Ms. Dalton sat opposite the students and pointed out a b and d chart behind her that is easily seen by all students. Many of the students in this group confuse b and d and need a reminder to help them. She explains that she uses the Sonday System with the second grade students. There are five steps to this program: phonics cards, workbook practice, word cards, word lists, and spelling.

Ms. Dalton begins by showing all students phonics cards. On these cards are letters that students must be able to identify by name and sound. She shows all students one card at a time and students must identify the name and sound together. This activity moves very quickly. Sam is able to keep up with the rest of the students and identifies all letter names and sounds correctly. When a student gets one wrong, Ms. Dalton asks all students to trace on the table the letter and say its sound together. In this way, a single student is not identified for being wrong. The second part of the system is writing in the Sonday workbook. Ms. Dalton dictates sounds to the students and the students write the letter in their workbook. As the students are writing, she looks at each child’s workbook to see if they need support. Sam works independently on this activity and does not need any support. Ms. Dalton then moves on to the third step in the system, reading word cards. The word cards she uses today contain short u sounds. First, the students read the deck of cards together. Then she goes around the table with the same word cards and has each student read one independently. When it became Sam’s turn, he did not remember how to say the word so Ms. Dalton had all students trace the word with their finger and say the word together. After each student has read two cards, they move on to the fourth step of the system where partners read word lists together. Ms. Dalton gave each pair word lists and worked with the student without a partner. Each list contained words with short a, i, o, and u sounds. The students took turns reading the words down the list until each person had read every word. Sam worked with the girl from his class reading the word lists. When Sam would read a word wrong,
she would correct him. When they finished reading their word lists they came back to the circle table. Ms. Dalton then began the last step of the system which has students spell words dictated by the teacher. She had everyone open their Sunday workbooks and said a word aloud. She then repeated the word and had students type the syllables with their fingers as a group and then students wrote the word on paper. Ms. Dalton was facing the students during this time modeling to them how to type out the syllables when needed. Sam and other students struggled when they had to type out words that needed more than one finger to type such as the sound /ay/. For one vowel sound students type with one finger and for two vowels that make a sound, students have to type with two fingers. While students wrote the word, Ms. Dalton checked their books to make sure they were spelling the words correctly. After giving them a few words, she then dictated a sentence for each student to write. The sentence was “the cup is in the box”. Sam was able to write this sentence successfully without support. He only needed to be reminded to put a period at the end of the sentence. After students’ sentences were checked they gave their workbooks back to Ms. Dalton.

When everyone finished their sentences Ms. Dalton passed out a Heineman leveled book for guided reading called, *Bear’s Birthday* (Level I). She gave a brief book introduction asking students “If you are having a birthday party, what would you need?” Students raise their hands and offer a few answers such as: balloons, cake, and presents. Ms. Dalton then gave students a purpose for reading telling them to read to find out what bear does for his birthday. She instructs students to pick a partner to work with or they could work by themselves. Sam picks to work with the girl from his class. They go sit by the window in chairs next to each other. They decide that they are going to take turns reading, each reading one page before they switch. Sam begins reading slowly word for word and struggles on words containing multi-syllables. His partner tries to help him to solve words and they are sometimes successful. Ms. Dalton is walking around the classroom during this time offering support and stops to help Sam read a word. She gives Sam both parts of the word and has him put them together. She then moves on to the next group. Ms. Dalton come back over to me and explains that Sam is having a hard time because the book is above his reading level. She tells me that they switch between reading easier and harder books since students are on all different reading levels in the class. She says that the focus for students like Sam reading a book above their level would be comprehension. Students who finished reading early during this time came back to the table to work on a comprehension based
worksheet. Sam and his partner continued reading the book during this time. Sam was able to bring little stress and intonation to this text and read at a slow rate.

Ms. Dalton announced that their lesson time was ending (2:00) and that students need to return their book and line up at the door. Sam and his partner did not finish reading the book but gave it back to Ms. Dalton and lined up at the door. She explained to students that today’s ticket out the door would be to answer her comprehension question. The students before Sam answered their questions correctly. Sam was asked to recall a detail from the story about what rabbit brought to bear’s birthday. Sam was unable to recall this information so Ms. Dalton showed him the page in the book the question was from and had him read the sentence that would give him the answer. After reading the sentence Sam was able to answer the question and walked back to his classroom.

**LITERACY PROGRAM ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**General Education Analysis**

**Overview**

Ms. Bear’s literacy block begins at 12:15 with whole group instruction on the rug. This instruction consists of word work. Ms. Bear first introduces the new topic and then has students practice this skill on the smart board with an activity. At 12:28, Ms. Bear reviews routines for each literacy center and has students repeat aloud the activities for each center. At 12:30 rotations begin between guided reading center, listening center, computer center, ABC word work center, and independent reading center. Each center last for 15 minutes before the next rotation. Sam began with guided reading center, moved to ABC word, went to independent reading, and then the listening center. At 1:30, Sam would have made his last rotation to computer station but was pulled out for reading intervention for 30 minutes. Later in the day at 2:30, all students gathered together on the rug for read aloud instruction which lasts for approximately 25 minutes.
Strengths
During whole group word work on the rug, Ms. Bear was actively involving all students when teaching about synonyms. She not only supported students’ understanding, but she had students discuss together to boost their understanding. This lesson was beneficial for students when using descriptive words in their writing and was brief (15 minutes) since this lesson did not involve students actually engaged in reading. Allington (2012) noted that “virtually any reading intervention that reliably increases time engaged in reading should be expected to lead to achievement gains” (p.55). During guided reading instruction, Sam was in a group with two other students working with a non-fiction text at level E. This text is at an appropriate level for Sam and would allow him to focus on comprehension and fluency. Fountas and Pinnell (2009) noted that “you cannot provide intensive and powerful instruction unless the text is appropriate to support learning” (p.89). His comprehension was supported in this non-fiction text by discussing the features of the text such as the index, table of contents, and captions. Understanding these parts of a non-fiction text will help Sam to read texts like this in the future. Independent reading time involved Sam picking a text from a leveled bin which increased the time during this literacy block that he was engaged in reading. During the listening station, Sam was able to hear an audio recording of a story from his Trophies text. At this station, Sam is able to hear a model of what a fluent reader should sound like. This strategy also gives Sam access to this higher level text to ensure he is able to understand the meaning in the story.

Ms. Bear promoted understanding of the text she read aloud at the end of the day by explaining difficult vocabulary. The words that she selected to explain to students were pertinent to comprehension during the read aloud. This is beneficial to students because it is not only facilitating their understanding of the text but also developing or extending word meanings (Allington, 2012, p.141). Ms. Bear’s introduction to each vocabulary word was brief and to the point so that students would have more time to listen to the text. It is important for students like Sam who benefit from modeled fluent reading to have multiple opportunities to hear fluent reading throughout the day.

Limitations
During independent reading time, Sam picked from a selection of books that were not specifically related to his interests or instructional needs. For five minutes, Sam searched for a
book and when he finally chose one, he read slowly and was not engaged in the text. Engaged reading, especially during independent reading time, is critical for students who are struggling with reading. Campbell, Voelkl, and Donahue (1997) found that “highly engaged readers demonstrated higher levels of reading achievement than students who were less engaged” (as cited in Kelley and Clausen-Grace, 2009, p.313). Having Sam choose a book from a bin that is generalized for a few students at close reading levels decreases the chance Sam will choose a book at his own independent reading level that he is interested in.

Ms. Bear focused on explaining components of a non-fiction during guided reading and there was no actual reading in continuous text taking place. Although students in this group had read the book the day before and the activity was based on the book, re-reading texts is important for students like Sam to increase fluency. Repeated readings of a text have been shown to help students “break down word-by-word reading that too many struggling readers have learned as a result of too much teacher interruption” (Allington, 2012, p.109). Repeated reading of the text would help to connect his need for continued fluency development while also increasing Sam’s comprehension of the text.

During this observation, the only writing I saw during the day was after the read aloud component. Students were asked to work with a partner to write one fact they had learned on a post it. Sam’s partner did the writing so Sam did not actually write in the classroom that day. Fountas and Pinnell (2009) explained “children learn a great deal about letters, sounds, and how print works when they attempt their own writing” (p. 225). Students need practice manipulating sounds in their writing and expressing their ideas on paper. Writing allows students another way of connecting their thoughts with what was read and aids in their comprehension of a text. Having students practice these strategies daily is important in order to make sure learned writing strategies continue to develop and are not forgotten.

**Special Education Analysis**

**Overview**

Sam is pulled out of the general education classroom every day during his literacy block to receive 30 minutes of reading intervention. Due to this, he misses one station of the literacy
block. This week he missed the computer station. During this time he is with four other students, one student being from his class. Instruction is based on the Sunday Reading System and guided reading instruction. The Sunday System includes: letter flash cards, dictated writing, word flash cards, and reading word lists with a partner. Guided reading consisted of reading a level I text with a partner of the student’s choice. The lesson time ended with a comprehension question.

**Strengths**

The first half of reading intervention was based on phonics skills. “According to the National Reading Panel, children who cannot hear and manipulate sounds of spoken words will have a hard time relating these sounds to the letters in the written words” (as cited in Fountas and Pinnell p.178). Therefore, the practice Sam is getting identifying the names of letter sounds and manipulating sounds in writing benefits the reading process. By manipulating sounds, Sam is also learning how to recognize these sounds in words. Mesmer and Griffith (2005) stated:

> The use of phonics as a word-recognition tool not only provides readers with a temporary strategy for recognizing words, but the process of word recognition in this manner also focuses a beginning readers’ attention on the configurations of letters that make up individual words. (p.368)

By drawing Sam’s attention to the individual letters in words, he will become a more successful word solver and in turn a stronger reader. Phonics practice in the small group setting is also beneficial as it allowed Ms. Dalton to support members of the group as needed.

It is also a benefit that Ms. Dalton led the students in a structured writing activity. Dictating a sentence for students to write allows children to “learn how to turn oral language into written language, solve words in the context of a meaningful sentence, and reread and check their work” (Fountas and Pinnell p.193). By using sounds that students had worked on in earlier steps of the Sunday System, students could apply their knowledge of these sounds to whole words. Dictating a sentence as Fountas and Pinnell stated also allows for children to reread and check their work because the sentence can only be written in one specific way to be correct. Giving Sam the opportunity to manipulate sounds in an explicit supportive activity will allow him to also be able to manipulate these sounds while reading.
Limitations

In one step of the Sunday system, it requires students to work with a partner to read word lists. For students like Sam who need interventions that help to increase their fluency, this would not be beneficial. According to a study by Dahl (1979), “struggling second graders made significant gains in reading rate (and comprehension) only when training involved reading running text compared to conditions that involved studying lists of words” (as cited in Ari, 2011, p.6). Although practice reading words in isolation is an important component of phonemic awareness and phonics practice, it is not the only component that is important. Since Sam was reading this word list with a partner who is also a struggling reader close to his level, they were often not able to correct each other if they read a word wrong. Sam was also not getting any practice reading fluently with this exercise.

During guided reading instruction, the book was at a level I. Although this may have been at the instructional level for a few students in the group, it was a frustration text for Sam who reads at a level E. Since the focus of this lesson was comprehension, an instructional level text would be necessary for Sam to not only understand the meaning of the text but to demonstrate fluent reading behaviors. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) in its Report of the National Reading Panel “identified fluency as one of the five critical components necessary for becoming a proficient reader. These components include a) phonics b) phonemic awareness c) fluency d) vocabulary and e) comprehension” (as cited in Ming and Dukes, 2008, p.4). Singular focus on just one of these aspects does not allow a struggling reader to develop. In order for Sam to be able to comprehend a text, implement self-monitoring behaviors, and demonstrate fluency behaviors a text used for guided reading must be at his instructional level. If Sam is reading a text at the frustration level, he is reading slowly word by word unable to demonstrate intonation, phrasing, or stress and also cannot understand the meaning of the text. Allington (2012) states that in order for instruction to be successful, “all students need appropriate texts all day long” (p.71). So although Sam is reading at his instructional reading level in the general education classroom, it is equally important that he reads at this instructional level during supplemental reading instruction.
General Education Recommendations

If I were the general education teacher, I would continue using the five literacy stations during the literacy block. I believe that guided reading, listening, computer, independent reading, and ABC word work are important stations to implement during this time. Ms. Bear has implemented these stations effectively and has established routines at each station so students know what is expected of them. At the guided reading station, I would continue to use books on Sam’s instructional level E. I would implement during independent reading time re-reading familiar texts for Sam. This could be done by giving Sam his own book basket filled with books he has read during guided reading. I would also put a timer and post it notes in his book bin. When re-reading a text Sam can start and stop the timer to record how long it takes him to read the book. On the post it, he could write how long it took him to read the book and give it to me when he is done. Using this I could then record during my planning time his progress on each book in his bin. As Kelly and Clausen-Grace explained (2009) “if we want to support readers during independent reading and help them with engagement, it is critical for the teacher to identify the various types of readers in the classroom” (p.313). Engaging students during this station could also include implementing book baskets for every student so that the books in their basket are not only based on their level but individual interests.

Implementing writing time in this class would also be important. Students seemed to finish really quickly during the ABC word work station so I would add an extra writing component here. I would give two different worksheets, one for the red/yellow folder students and one for the blue/green folder. On one side of the worksheet would be pictures and on the other side, writing lines to write words. Students would look at a picture card, say the word slowly, and then write a letter for each sound they hear. This would not only help students to practice writing words but would help them practice hearing and working with sounds. Providing this practice at two different levels (red/yellow and blue/green) would allow all students to practice writing words that they may see in their instructional level texts. Since during this time I would be teaching at the guided reading station, I would not implement an independent writing activity since I could not give support to students who might need it.

As the general education teacher I would continue to conduct read aloud time by introducing important vocabulary first. This was beneficial to Sam and many other students since
the book being read was not on their level but with previewing, they were still able to gain meaning from the text. What I would do differently is how children responded on post it notes. I would have each student write their own post it note giving them the sentence starter “I learned..” I would then have students walk around the classroom to share what they learned with each other and give each other support if needed. This would allow me as the teacher to make sure that each student has understood something about what was read while giving them more experience writing.

**Special Education Recommendations**

If I were the special education teacher the first thing I would do is set up a time to meet with the general education teacher in Sam’s classroom. If a common free period during the day was not possible or after school time was also taken, I would set up a time to either call or video chat. It is important for a special educator and general educator to collaborate in order for literacy instruction to be successful and consistent. As stated in the article by Schnorr and Davern (2005) “Effective team practices can transform a situation of fragmented student schedules and disparate instructional approaches into a coherent and comprehensive classroom program” (p.505). Although Sam’s supplemental instruction does not occur in the classroom, it is still important that the instruction that occurs in the general education classroom and special education classroom correlate. If I were the special educator I would ask the general education what level of books he has been using during guided reading lesson and how Sam was doing on these. Doing this I could gain insight on Sam’s instructional level if it is different from my own and areas where the general education teacher thought Sam needed improvement. Making my teaching supplemental to what is being taught in the general education classroom would be the goal.

I would continue to use the Sonday System since it is being pushed by the school district to use. However, I would not use the section of the system where it requires students to read word lists. I would use this time instead to have students make words on the sound board (pocket chart) in the small group (Blachman & Tangel, 2008). Each student would have their own separate sound board to use during this portion of the lesson. This part of the lesson would only take about 4 minutes just as reading the word lists had. I could choose words for students to build
on the soundboard from the word lists since they contain words with the sounds that were practiced in the previous steps of the Sonday System. I would give the word aloud to students and they then would use their own word cards to build the word on the sound board. Providing students with a hands-on tool to manipulate sounds will help them to further develop phonemic awareness. According to Fountas and Pinnell (2009) “children whose training focused on one or two phoneme/letter relationships at a time made better and faster progress than children who were taught three or more” (p.178). The sound board allows a teacher to implement one or two phoneme-letter relationships at a time in a systematic way to allow students to completely master each sound relationship being taught.

In order for Sam to further develop fluency behaviors such as phrasing, intonation, stress and rate I would use his instructional level for guided reading lessons. Using his instructional level would also allow me to focus on teaching comprehension strategies as well. Since other students in the group are not on the same instructional level I would have to form two small groups. One group would be for students who are close to Level I texts and the other would be for students who are reading close to a Level E. In this way, students in the group are not reading significantly below their level or significantly above their level. Having only two groups would also allow me to easily move between each group to give them support if needed. In order for struggling readers to develop fluency behaviors, they need to be reading at instructional level texts. Reading fluently not only helps with developing behaviors such as phrasing but also allows a reader to practice word solving on the fly. As explained by Allington (2012), some readers do not develop adequate fluency or rate of reading because of “limited reading practice in appropriately leveled materials”(p.107). In order for students like Sam to continue to develop as a reader they need to not only receive expert literacy instruction using appropriate leveled texts in the classroom but also in reading intervention.

Overall, both the general education classroom and the supplemental literacy program contained important components of a comprehensive literacy program. By adding instructional focus on fluency in both classrooms, Sam will be able to continue to develop important fluency behaviors such as phrasing, intonation, stress, and rate. As educators, it is important that we support each student’s individual literacy needs through our instruction. By increasing communication between the general education teacher and the supplemental literacy teacher,
Sam will be able to benefit from a comprehensive literacy program that is on his level and supports his current strengths and needs.
References


Attached is a submission for the writing award committee. This was completed by Lauren Fox, an MSED Sp Ed candidate. The work was an assignment from Fall 12 for the Literacy block, which includes a reading clinic experience.

Submitted by Bobbie Schnorr