

# WSRA Position Statement

## *Literacy Intervention in the Early Years*

The Wisconsin State Reading Association believes that every school has children whose academic success depends on early literacy intervention. These children need specialized teaching in addition to classroom instruction to accelerate their learning in reading and writing. The goal of early literacy intervention is to close the achievement gap before children reach third grade.

The Wisconsin State Reading Association believes that early literacy intervention should be provided in all elementary schools by experienced and knowledgeable teachers. Early literacy intervention should include:

- Continuous specialized teacher training and study of instructional practices that accelerate learning in early literacy
- Ongoing use of reliable student assessment practices and measures, and skilled teacher observation to guide intervention in a manner that is congruent with classroom instruction
- A daily lesson format structured to include:
  - oral language interactions to expand phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and language structures
  - student reading of connected texts and books
  - student writing based on teacher/child conversation and book experiences
  - instruction in phonics that is applied to connected texts and books
  - instruction in reading fluency and comprehension
  - teaching for strategic processing which develops a reader's flexibility with processes as opposed to an accumulation of skills
  - teacher teaching through modeling, coaching, and guided practice for strategies
- A varied book collection to meet the assessed instructional level and interest of any child
- The combined effort of classroom teacher, reading specialist, and family

The Wisconsin State Reading Association believes that one of the most powerful ways to address the early literacy needs of the lowest achieving children is early literacy intervention. This is not only necessary for school success, but is a fiscal and moral responsibility. Research demonstrates that children who make minimal progress in first grade continue to make minimal progress throughout elementary school and beyond. In the early school experiences, literacy intervention can reverse this cycle. Children who receive powerful teaching through strong literacy intervention are less likely to be retained or referred for Special Education services. The Wisconsin State Reading Association believes that early literacy intervention provides a stronger foundation for children to grow and to become productive citizens.

