

The Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking

Welcome to the Riggs Institute's Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking parent/teacher training seminar or self-study. You are about to embark on learning to teach what we believe to be one of the most comprehensive and effective language arts methods in the English-speaking world.

A staggering number of children in our nation and across the world now confront reading difficulties. According to the 1994 *National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners*, 90 million American adults now read and write at the two lowest levels of proficiency. This statistic and the reading, writing and spelling deficiencies of almost 40% of our enrolled students need not exist to the extent that they do.

Though the *content* to be taught and the order of such instruction to make successful readers of all of our children has not been *proven* through scientific research, there *is* an impressive body of empirical evidence to support our method's content and sequencing. The efficacy of the instructional methodologies we use – direct, multi-sensory, and Socratic instruction, and explicitly taught phonics – *are* well documented. With this primary level (but widely used for remedial) curricular design. The Riggs Institute is striving to chart a course for a return to teaching a completely integrated English language arts *before* any beginning *learning style* weakness can develop into full-blown learning disorders. Early instruction further provides an optimal educational opportunity for all students. Though we recognize that teaching English can be a complicated task, it need not be an unmanageable one. There are tools available, such as the phonetic structure of correct English spelling – with the rules of spelling, plurals, syllabication, grammar, and syntax – that can greatly simplify and streamline the process.

To enable you to teach reading, writing and spelling effectively and easily, we will give you reliable content information to encompass 1) how written symbols represent spoken sounds, 2) the structure and rules of English, 3) effective, time-saving sequencing and integration, and 4) effective teaching techniques to establish the cognitive development necessary for your students to become skilled readers.

Required Materials

For best results, whether you are training yourself and/or are involved in a formal training seminar, you should have all the materials you need to complete this course: (this Training Manual, Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking Level I Teacher's Manual, Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking Phonogram Cards, Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking Phonogram CD, one 3/8" notebook, 3/8" paper, red pencil, black pencils and a ruler). Highly recommended supplements to the above materials are the *McCall-Crabbs Standard Test Lessons in Reading* (comprehension), ruler. the Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking Student Audio CD w/ blackline master, Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking Basic Spelling & Usage Dictionary, Margaret Bishop's *ABC's and All Their Tricks*, or many of the other excellent supplementary materials we carry to enhance and enrich this method.

The Purpose of Training

The purpose of training is to make you comfortable with the materials, to learn their organization, their use, and the exact teaching techniques they employ. We hope this training will serve you, the teacher and/or parent with an easy-to-use and effective method of teaching.

The Training Manual

This manual is designed to facilitate your training experience and study of the Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking. This manual works as a guide, helping you to organize and to set and master the objectives of your training experience. For your optimal mastery of the method, it is important to assure that the lesson objectives, assignments and assessments provide for each study session are accomplished. The reflection pages are to record any questions, concerns, or additional information you desire. Throughout the manual you will find research and other helpful articles in addition to our full K-7 Language Arts and Cognitive Development Course of Study. The latter are the goals to be accomplished with students as this method is taught.

Pre-Study Requirements

To get the most out of the time spent in our training class and to prevent you from feeling overwhelmed by the method itself, you are asked to complete a pre-study reading and study/assessment assignment. This is designed to provide you with much of the history, theory and rationale behind this method, the teacher preparation necessary to implement this curriculum, and to cover the first few days of student instruction. In addition to the reading/study assignment, you are asked to study the first 55 phonograms and to become familiar with the techniques for teaching letter formation. A quiz of the 55 phonograms will be given as the formal training seminar begins. If this preliminary work cannot be done for some serious reason, an extra day of formal training is normally required. [Page 12 / Pre-Study Assignments]

A Research Compilation of Effective Training

Changing the way teachers are trained to teach reading is the primary objective of our non-profit agency. Fundamental to this objective is the meticulous use of the five proven components essential to effective teacher preparation – ***theory, demonstration, guided practice, application*** and ***constructive feedback***. Use of this validated training model has consistently produced teachers who can replicate the method in their classroom. Our five-part training classes begin with a comprehensive overview of the ***theory*** behind our method and materials. This is followed by the trainer's careful ***demonstration*** or modeling of the instructional processes (along with content) and by providing an opportunity for ***guided practice*** by all participants. The participant then ***applies the skills*** in real classroom teaching situations. Recommended follow-up Riggs training is a reliable means of completing the training with constructive feedback. If this isn't practical due to location or monetary constraints, the district or school might consider sending one or two candidates to learn and take the information back to the school.