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LOCAL NEWS

Read Right name of the game at Dillingham

by emilee ellis
herald democrat

“A frog came along and sat down beside me. ‘Nice boat,’” he said.

This sentence is from the book “The Puddle,” a book that one Dillingham Intermediate School student began reading on Jan. 9 as a part of the Read Right program.

The student, who speaks English as a second language, is currently reading a book with sentences like, “Edwards later said, ‘His ship answered for him. A terrific roar deafened us. The middle of his ship had blown up. I knew a dreadful experience lay ahead.’”

This student, along with several other Dillingham 5th and 6th graders have improved their reading skills thanks to a new program called “Read Right.”

The program, which was implemented at Dillingham in November, was discovered by people in the central office of the school.

“I have been asking for something for my students who are not reading at grade level, because it’s real difficult to teach a child to pass the 5th grade TAKS if they are reading at a 1st or 2nd grade level,” said Lisa Sterling, a Read Right tutor. “Some people at central office started to look for a program, and they found this program.”

Read Right was developed by Dr. Dee Tadlock after her son, who was in first grade, began having trouble reading in school. Along with school teachers, Tadlock, who has a Ph.D. in reading, began working hard to try and solve her son’s problem, but he didn’t seem to be improving.

After their attempts to help failed, school personnel asked Tadlock if she



Chris Jennings
Herald Democrat
From left, Yanet Garcia, Masey McAllister, and Damian Matta participate in the Read Right program at Dillingham Intermediate school in Sherman.



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wanted to have her son tested and placed in a special program at another school. Because of all of the hard work that had already been done to no avail, Tadlock respectfully refused the program, knowing her son needed an alternative method for learning to read.

The methodology of the program she came up with centers around three key components which include excellent reading, coached reading and independent reading. Tadlock said she feels this methodology unleashes the power of each student's brain to build neural networks and focus power on the task of remodeling the neural network that is guiding reading inappropriately.

Currently, the Read Right program has been implemented at several schools and businesses, and has been successfully used with students in Title 1 programs, students classified as dyslexic, ADD or learning disabled, and with students who speak English as a second language.

At Dillingham, Sterling, along with other Read Right tutors Cindy Rosson, Leigh Anne Goff and Callena Fitzpatrick work with the students in stations that implement the components of the program.

During excellent reading exercises, Sterling said students listen to passages of text on tape while reading along silently, in what is called cycles. When students think they are ready to read that passage "excellently," they read the passage out loud to a tutor, who either agrees and tells them they can move on, or disagrees and tells them they still need to work on that passage.

"If students are achieving excellence in cycling three or fewer times then that's an indicator for us that they are ready to move to the next level," Sterling said.

Eventually, after students reach the highest reading range, they can graduate from the program after taking a graduation test. Sterling said they currently have five or six students who are getting close to being ready to take their test.

Coached reading exercises involve students reading out loud unfamiliar text to the tutors, who in turn read silently along with them and stop them if they aren't reading something correctly.

Independent reading involves students taking books from the Read Right library home to practice reading "excellently."

Once a week, Sterling said students also work on a critical thinking component in which they read books and answer critical thinking questions.

The program has been successful for students involved, some saying that the program has helped them stop reading so fast, pause at punctuation and pronounce more words correctly.

Christy Whitaker said the program helps her understand what she is reading, and Kelly Rolen said she can understand more of a story, which helps her with reading on the TAKS test.

Several students also said the program was fun and exciting.

One student, Alex Veasley, showed his excitement after being told he could move up a level through shining eyes and a huge smile.

“Did you put something in these headphones?” he asked. “Because they make me laugh.”

The students weren't the only ones to praise the program. Read Right tutors, other teachers and a parent were among several others who said they have seen success from the program.

“It's just wonderful when you watch students improving,” Read Right tutor Cindy Rosson said. “Something about it is definitely working, and it starts with self-confidence and goes from there.”

Sandra Schultz, a 6th grade reading teacher, said she has noticed that the students have a lot more pride in themselves and confidence. She said they have increased their participation in class and are getting assignments done on time.

“They even smile more, they seem happier. I think it's the confidence,” Schultz said.

Jayna Hearn, a 5th grade social studies teacher and parent of an autistic student participating in Read Right, said the program is unbelievable.

Her son, she said, has very limited language ability and doesn't speak a lot. He has read silently for a long time, but doesn't like to verbalize it. After participating in the Read Right program, Hearn said her son now reads out loud, and it has improved his speech ability, reading ability and socialization.

“I have kids coming up to me and telling me that they see him in their class, and they like him and he is doing well,” Hearn said. “This is something I have never ever experienced in his whole school career. It's changed his life, he's a part of Dillingham because of this program.”

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