

Tobago Workshop on Gender Achievement

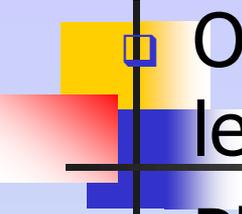


Helping Tobago Boys Read & Write Better

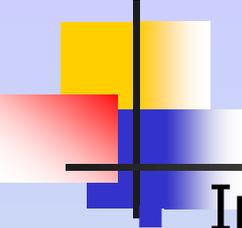
Boys and Reading

- ❖ Literacy gender gap has existed for as long as 60 years.
- ❖ Recent study by Marinak & Gambrell, 2010, indicate that boys' experience less personal enjoyment in reading – led to the deterioration of boys' attitudes towards reading overtime (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004).
- ❖ Boys tend to prefer - reading text messages; reading text with positive male characters (Brozo, 2002; Smith, 2004; Sullivan, 2004); reading for practical information and directional purposes.
- ❖ Boys are less motivated to engage with the narrative text structures
- ❖ Neurological gender differences – girls tend to have more neurons in the brain devoted to language (Gurian & Stevens, 2005).

Understanding the Reading Process

- 
- Oral Language – provides the foundation for learning to read
 - Phonemic Awareness – Ability to focus on the sounds of speech as opposed to its meaning; and the fact that syllables are made up of separate single sounds
 - Phonics/Alphabetic Principle – the letter-sound relationship
 - Vocabulary – key component of reading for meaning
 - Fluency – includes appropriate phonics and intonation

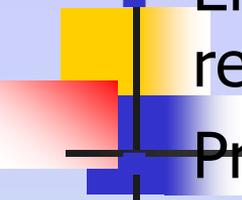
Reading Instruction



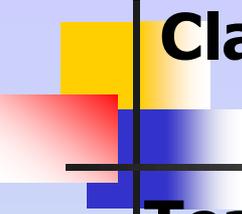
Instruction should address the components of Reading which differ in importance across classes

- *Infants* – Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Listening Vocabulary
- *2nd Year to Standard 1* – Alphabetic Principle, Vocabulary, Word Study, Fluency
- *Stds. 1&2* – Multisyllabic word reading approaches, Comprehension strategies
- *Stds. 3-5* – Comprehension, Vocabulary, Fluency

Actions of an Effective Teacher of Reading

- 
- Encourage male parents to let their sons see them reading
 - Provide examples of successful men who have struggled with reading
 - Leave books and other reading materials lying around
 - Expose students to on-line reading at school.
 - Use visuals, graphic organizers, books on CDs/tape, speech to text software.
 - Let boys choose reading material regardless of the reading level if they are interested in the material.
 - Class libraries may include books with facts, action, humour, sciences and information (gross, violent and silly)
 - Seek recommendations from other boys or men/librarians/local bookstores

Factors that affect Boys' Reading



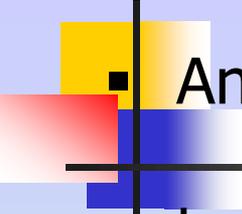
Classroom & School Factors

- **Teaching styles**
(Morgan, 2010)
- Ways in which texts are read
- Regular suspension of boys (Brown, 2005) – strong relationship between suspension rates and reading achievement in African American males (Anderson, Howard & Graham, 2007)

Curriculum Factors

- Texts not socially and culturally consistent and authentic – withdrawal from reading and disengagement
- Link between reading engagement and reading achievement (Logan & Johnson, 2009);
- Negative attitudes can be increased by peer pressure

An Effective Boy Teacher



■ An effective teacher should:

have an up-to-date knowledge of reading materials that will appeal to disengaged boys (visual appeal & conciseness).

have access up-to-date information about reading materials which will engage and excite boys and girls;

utilise up-to-date research on the reading interests and preferences of boys;

partner with parents (especially the male) and libraries in supporting the early literacy of children (share data and strategies)

An Effective Boy Teacher – cont'd.

- Promote high expectations for academic performance
- Model good anger management and help them wrestle with issues of anger management
- Be 'fair' in the eyes of boys
- Understand boy energy and boy humour; create and employ opportunities for boys to move and engage in active, hands-on activities (taking classes outdoors & having flexible seating options)
- Guide boys to move beyond stereotypes
- Help boys find their spoken and written words through activities such as brainstorming and drawing
- Engage boys in reading through activities such as book talks conducted by adult males (preferably parents)

Strategies for Raising Boys' Achievement

(a) Organization

PRIMARY

- Friendly, caring and disciplined environment with high expectations
- Reward and praise strategies
- Encourage responsibility
- Stimulating, physical environment
- Homework Clubs – boys not allowed to opt out of homework in favour of sporting activities

SECONDARY

- Prefect System
- Enforced school uniform policy
- "Success Days"
- Offering targeted support – lunchtime, evening and holidays
- Wider-ranging merit system – for improvement
- **Implementing single-sex groups**

Implementing Single-Sex Groups

Educational Possibilities

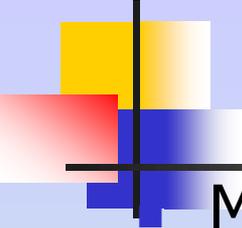
- Eliminate certain distractions
- Allow for non-traditional teaching methods
- Help boys learn self-management through working together
- Increase boys willingness to try new things
- Allow girls to receive more attention
- Create a comfortable environment for learning

Key Outcomes for Single-sex classrooms in co-ed schools

- Stronger mentoring relationships
- A greater understanding of how boys and girls learn differently
- More direct ways to deal with students' social and emotional pressures
- More creativity and reflection
- Quality classroom instruction

Strategies for Raising Boys' Achievement

(b) Individual



Primary

- Mentoring approach
- Detailed analysis of baseline performance data
- Using data to get short-term targets in consultation with parents and students
- Setting child-friendly "challenges targets" in reading, writing, spelling and maths
- Channelling resources to provide extra help at an early stage to support literacy and numeracy

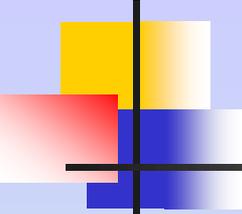
Secondary

- Same as for primary
- Monitoring schemes to enhance self-esteem

Reference: McLellan, 2003

Strategies for Raising Boys' Achievement

(c) Pedagogic



Primary

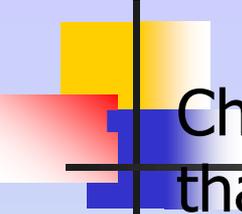
- Use of a wide range of texts
- Resources that appeal to boys (hobby books and non-fiction)
- Collaborative learning
- Displaying lesson's objectives
- Use of ICT to motivate boys in particular
- Shared reading – less confident readers tutor younger children

Secondary

- Whole school literacy policy
- Studying texts that appeal to boys
- Classroom management policies, seating students (opposite sex pairs); questioning techniques to ensure a gender balance; interactive activities

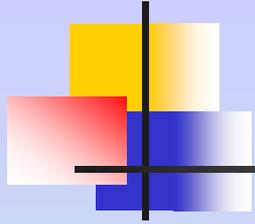
Strategies for Raising Boys' Achievement

(d) Sociocultural

- 
- Changing images of masculinities and develop an ethos that helps to eradicate the “it’s not cool to learn” attitude held by some boys.
- Modify the ‘macho’ role model and channel the anti-social behaviour to create more positive role models for other boys.
 - Working with parents of difficult boys – setting agreed parameters
 - Exposing boys to male role models
 - Needs of difficult boys are recognised and initiatives are targeted

Reference: McLellan, 2003

The Adolescent Male

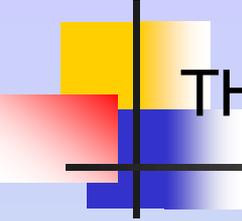


Classrooms
that promote
literacy
development

“Nesting grounds” for
male students

- Theoretical strands (used in planning instruction)
- Instructional Strands (for classroom practice)
- Professional Development Strands (to continually strengthen teachers' performance)

NESTING GROUND FRAMEWORK



THEORETICAL STRANDS

- ❑ Empowering curriculum orientations
- ❑ Reconceptualising the role of literacy instruction for black males
- ❑ Use a culturally responsive approach to literacy teaching

INSTRUCTIONAL STRANDS

- ❑ Mediate literature
- ❑ Use a comprehensive framework for teaching reading
- ❑ Strengthen assessment profile

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRANDS

- ❑ Establish professional communities
- ❑ Conduct teacher inquiry

Screening for Reading Problems

GOOD READERS read with a purpose.

GOOD READERS draw conclusions about what they read.

GOOD READERS make sure they understand what they read.

GOOD READERS connect with what they already know.

GOOD READERS form pictures in their minds.

GOOD READERS practise, practise, practise.

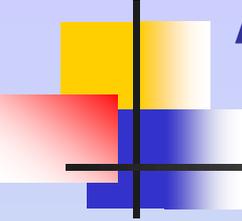
GOOD READERS try to figure out new words.

NOUNS

MALE OR

e.g. doctor





Reading Assessment Tool

A Primary and
Secondary School
Tool

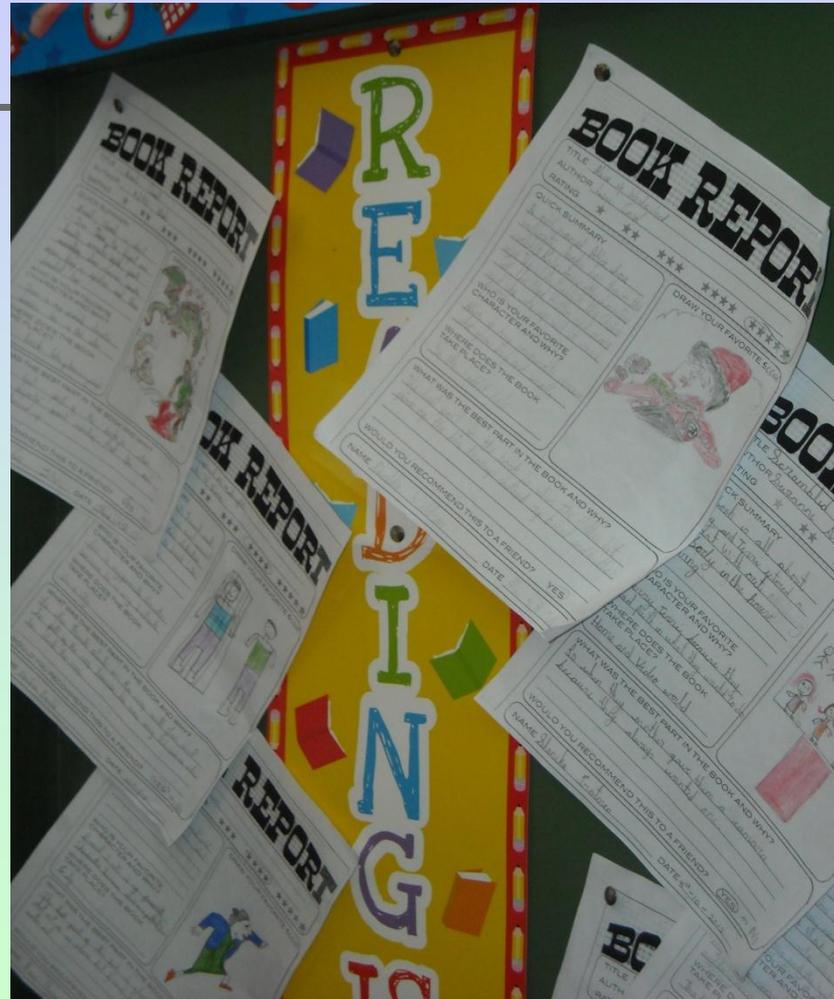
MS-PAS

Mountain Shadows

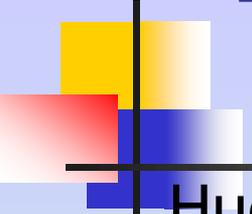
Phonemic Awareness Scale

- This scale is used to identify students in need of explicit instruction in phonological awareness.
- It is designed to be administered to an entire Infant 2 class, however, it can be administered to Infant 1 students but in small groups of 4-6 students.
- However, it is beneficial if the teacher moves about the room during administration of the MS-PAS to monitor and assist students.

Reading and Writing Connection



Is Writing Important?

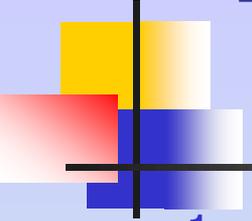


Hudson, Lane & Mercer (2005) tells us that

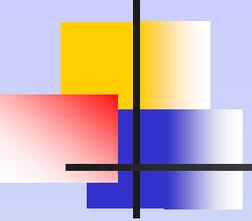
fluent and proficient written communication :-

- Is necessary for functioning in an increasingly technical and literate society.
- Is a common form of personal communication
- Can be a source of enjoyment
- Helps people understand a topic better
- Helps people display knowledge of a topic
- Is needed for written assessments

Is Teaching Writing a Challenge?



1. What does writing instruction look like?
2. How much time do you spend teaching writing?
3. How much time do your students spend writing?
4. What adaptations do you make for weaker writers?
5. Do you feel prepared to teach writing?

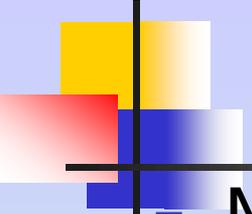


The Writing Process

- Prewriting
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing

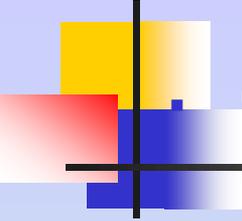
Reference: Tompkins, 2010

Boys' Perspectives about Writing

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- Many boys consistently said they did not enjoy writing and nearly half of those surveyed, reported that they did not enjoy writing and were not very good writers (Myhill,).
 - Negative attitudes to writing were particularly marked in the 11-14 range (Clark & Dugdale, 2009).
 - **HOWEVER**, both primary and secondary school students indicate that they value and enjoy writing when they have autonomy and choice.

Getting Boys Interested

Components of Motivation for Writing



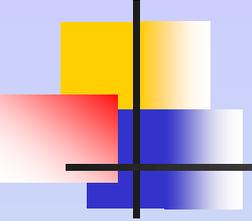
Outcome expectations (actions will lead to desired outcomes)

- Strong personal interest in a topic & genre facilitates writing performance – establish authentic purpose for reading and writing
- Mastery of Skills lead to self-efficacy – good writers write frequently while poor/average writers write less
- Type of writing activity leads to quality of the stories – be open minded
- Drawing, violence and humour are forms of motivation for reading and writing – but place “common sense limitations” on the amount and type of violence
- Show boys that men read and write too

Writing Intentions

Form of Text	Audience	Purpose	Medium
Emails	To colleagues	Share views on Tobago Workshop	Computer
Texts	To my friend	To confirm a luncheon date	Mobile phone
Note	Myself	To record an address	Address book/mobile phone
Letter in a card	To my niece	To send birthday greetings	Pen, card, envelope
Form	University of the West Indies	To apply for admittance	Computer

Helping Boys Write



Using
Visual Literacy
&
Drama

- Activity:
Use of a You-tube video

Feedback on Today's Experience

- Insights gained
- Recommendations

