READING RECOVERY FOR SPANISH LITERACY
DESCUBRIENDO LA LECTURA (DLL)

GOAL
The goal of Descubriendo La Lectura (DLL) is to dramatically reduce the number of bilingual first-grade students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write in bilingual classrooms and to reduce the cost of these learners to educational systems.

WHAT
DLL is a reconstruction of Reading Recovery for Spanish-speaking children. DLL is a highly effective short-term intervention of one-to-one tutoring for low-achieving first graders.

WHO
DLL serves the lowest-achieving first graders who are receiving their classroom instruction in Spanish. In 1998–1999, 3,015 children were served by DLL.

HOW
Individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained DLL teacher. As soon as students can read within the average reading performance of their class and demonstrate that they can continue to achieve, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction.

OUTCOMES
There are two positive outcomes for DLL students:

- Outcomes for DLL students are comparable to outcomes for Reading Recovery students. About 8 of 10 students who receive the full series of lessons are able to read and write with the average range of performance of their class.

- The few students who are still having difficulty after a full series of lessons are referred for further evaluation. They may be candidates for longer-term programs.

WHERE
DLL began 10 years ago in Tucson. DLL sites now operate in Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Texas, and Washington.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and teacher leaders must be certified bilingual educators with experience in a primary bilingual education classroom. Although the theoretical principles that underlie Reading Recovery are the same for DLL, procedural and training issues differ because English and Spanish function differently as languages. Therefore, if candidates initially are trained in Reading Recovery in English, they must receive an additional year of training to serve Spanish-speaking students. If the teachers or teacher leaders are trained in Spanish, they must receive an additional year of training to serve English-speaking students.

A FOLLOW UP STUDY

In 1997, a national study of former DLL students in second and third grade revealed that Descubriendo La Lectura had positive impact on Spanish-speaking students.¹

- 92% of second graders and 93% of third graders who completed their series of lessons met or exceeded the average band on Spanish Text Reading.

- 75% of second graders who completed their series of lessons, and 79% of third graders who completed their lessons, met or exceeded the average band on the standardized Spanish reading measure (SABE-2 and SABE-3).

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