INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES TO LITERACY INSTRUCTION

There are several approaches to literacy instruction. These approaches to reading represent general instructional plans for achieving goals and objectives in a literacy curriculum. The varied approaches relate to content, methods, and materials in the teaching of literacy. The approaches have dominated classroom literacy practice at various times in history and are still prevalent today (Vacca, Vacca, et al., 2006). These approaches include Basal Approach, Language Experience Approach (LEA), Literature-based Approach, Individualized Approach, Integrated Approach, Technology Approach and the Eclectic Approach. Below is a description of two of the approaches.

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<th>Description</th>
<th>BASAL</th>
<th>LITERATURE-BASED APPROACH</th>
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<td><strong>Teacher materials include</strong></td>
<td>- teacher’s edition for each level with detailed lesson plans for stories, a complete listing of strategies and skills for developing reading, writing, listening and speaking and assessment procedures; - detailed descriptions of supplementary materials - prepared materials (e.g. charts, posters, word cards) -teacher’s edition of student workbooks -pre and post-tests at each level</td>
<td>- Children learn best with literature as the main vehicle for reading instruction - Children acquire and develop literacy by reading and responding to literary works of high quality - children read and respond to literature that interests them even when the text is difficulty -children do not need to understand every word of text in order to construct full, rich meaning for that text - children acquired all the requisite language and literacy skills for competent reading and writing as they progress through literature that interest them</td>
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<td><strong>Student materials include</strong></td>
<td>- student workbook at each level - levelled high interest/low vocabulary books</td>
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<td><strong>Beliefs and Assumptions</strong></td>
<td>- Children learn best through a scope and sequence set of instructions i.e., by mastering skills arranged and sequenced in a hierarchy according to their level of difficulty.</td>
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This approach operates on a level system designed in a scope and sequence format to bring children to a high degree of reading proficiency. Each level functions as a prerequisite for success at the next level. The focus of the basal approach is to develop children’s competence in vocabulary, word identification, word meaning, comprehension and study skills through narrative and expository literature. This approach has preselected materials for both teacher and students.

This approach accommodates individual student differences in reading abilities and at the same time focus on meaning, interest and enjoyment. In this approach, a core selection of children’s books of high quality and a wide variety, are identified and placed in the classroom. At least five to ten copies of each title should be available for each grade. The major instructional goals and objectives of the literature-based approach is to foster high motivation to read and to reinforce the development of reading skills and strategies. Children’s literature are used as springboards for writing e.g. children can write different endings for stories.
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<th><strong>Organization and Management</strong></th>
<th>Requires little teacher preparation because all the necessary objectives, skills and strategies are outlined. Scope and sequence activities are prepared and ready for teacher and student use.</th>
<th>Requires a reading centre to store the many books and other reading materials Flexible floor space to allow children to move in and out of reading groups Working areas are required for students to respond to literature (end-of-book productions)</th>
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| **Strengths**                 | - Skills and strand areas are pre-selected, prepared and well developed.  
- books and lessons are sequenced from simple to increasing levels of difficulty  
- provides systematic instruction (from emergent literacy through to upper grades)  
- graded materials permit teacher flexibility in dealing with individual differences  
- controlled vocabulary to prevent frustration for beginning readers  
- includes literature and expository selections in a student text  
- extended suggestions for teaching are provided through a teacher’s guide  
- workbooks and supplementary materials are available to support and reinforce skill areas  
- saves teacher’s time because materials are already prepared | - Gives teachers freedom in selecting children’s literature and strategies for carrying out instructional goals  
- exposes children to a wide variety of reading materials  
- the reading centre provides opportunities for children to develop reading interests and reading skills |
| **Limitations**               | - limited in terms of the range of literature and expository materials  
- heavy reliance on the DRA strategy  
- skill activities follow a uniform pattern and can become boring for children  
- promotes ability grouping | - high level of teacher commitment  
- takes time and energy to establish instructional goals, identify appropriate literature  
- requires in-depth knowledge of children’s literature, children’s interests  
- assumes that word identification and other skills will be developed through literature  
- requires sufficient funds to purchase wide variety of children’s literature and in sufficient quantities |