CAMaL: Building early foundations of language

For all Std 1 and 2 children for a whole year

&

First step (2-3 months), for Std 3, 4, 5 children who are not reading simple text fluently as yet

Pratham Resource Centre
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Key elements of Pratham’s technique with examples and comments.

CAMaL : Combined Activities for Maximized Learning
Problem

- Textbooks and curriculum assume that by Std 2 children will be reading simple text fluently.

- However, available evidence (ASER) indicates that even by Std 5 only 50% of children are able to read simple text.

- ~200 million children in elementary school age group. At least 80-100 million need immediate help to enable them to read.

- Without being able to read, a child cannot make progress in the education system.

- Similar issues in basic arithmetic as well.

CHALLENGE: HOW TO EFFECTIVELY & QUICKLY ENABLE MILLIONS OF CHILDREN TO READ?
Basic Assessment

Simple easy to use assessment tool. Each child assessed one on one.

5 levels:
- “Beginner”
- Letter
- Word
- Para – Std 1 level
- Story – Std 2 level

VERY IMPORTANT: MUST KNOW WHAT EACH CHILD CAN DO BEFORE DECIDING HOW TO HELP. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO MOVE CHILDREN FROM ONE LEVEL TO THE NEXT...

Std 1 level text

“Sonu bag mein khel raha tha.
Vaha aam ke bahut pedh the.
Sonu ne ek aam todi.
Aam bahut meetha the.”

Std 2 level text

“Main aur meri bohun chhat par khel rhi thi.
Achanak aasman mein badal gare na laghe.
Bijli khadkane lagi.
Badi-badi bhoodi padne lagi.
Ham jaldhe se bhagakeh niyeche a ga.
Tabhi baitha garm-garm samose aur pakode le aaya.
Hamne khidkii ke pafos badak samose-pakode khaye aur baarish ka maa liya.”

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“Sonu bag mein khel raha tha.
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Tabhi baitha garm-garm samose aur pakode le aaya.
Hamne khidkii ke pafos badak samose-pakode khaye aur baarish ka maa liya.”
How can the reading level of this class be “accelerated”?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading level</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Mid Point</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Story&quot; (Grade 2 level text)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Para” (Grade 1 level text)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Mallika, Balvinder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>Ashish, Ajit, Sanjay, Salim, Nuzhat, Sanjib, Farida, Meera, Madhuri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not even letters</td>
<td>Usha, Madhav, Ron, Balaji, Chandra, Sunita, Vivek, Brij, Pushpa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher listens to each child read one by one using the simple tool. She knows where each child is beginning and also the distribution of the class. How effectively can she help to make all children to become “readers”?

Show clip

Organize the class according to the distribution of reading abilities of children...
Learning to Read : Target children

The CAMaL method outlined here can be used with:

- Children in the early grades (Std 1 & 2) as whole year program.

- For children in higher grades like Std 3, 4 or 5 who are not yet reading fluently, the “package” can be used as the first step in accelerating learning, building reading fluency skills and linking reading, writing and understanding. For this group, a 45-60 day intensive period reaps good outcomes and prepares children for the subsequent steps of learning and develops their capacity to begin to deal with grade level material.
Learning to Read: Ingredients for teaching-learning

- 20-25 children
- At least two hours a day (reading & math)
- Reading materials: cards/books with each child
- Teacher’s materials: barahkhadi (phonetic) chart
- Black board and lots of chalk
- Paper and pencil for all children
Learning to Read: Key activities

- Reading aloud with finger under each word
- Talking about the story and beyond
- Using “barakhadi” (phonetic) chart
- Oral word games – rhyming words
- “Writing” - thinking, saying, “writing”

Each of these activities is described in more detail in the next set of slides.
Learning to Read: Reading aloud

Reading a story aloud:

- Teacher reads out a story loudly several times.
- Teacher & children discuss the story to understand it. Discussion is very important.
- Now when the teacher reads, she puts her finger under each word. Children watch.
- Next time she reads, children follow her in their story with their finger under each word listening to her read. No repeating after her.
- Finally teacher says “who will read like me?”
- Children come up one at a time and “read”.

(See later slide on how to have a good discussion or “gapshap”)
Learning to Read : Phonetic “barakhadi” chart

Using the barakhadi chart : 10 minutes daily

- With loud and clear pronunciation, the teacher reads out one line of the chart putting her finger under each barakhadi (vowel+consonant sound) on the big barakhadi wall chart.
- Children watch and listen. No repeating after the teacher.
- Next, teacher reads out aloud and children use their own chart and follow with their fingers.
- Teacher says, “who will read like me?”
- Children come up one at a time and “read” the barakhadi.
- Chart can be used for variety of other games like reading vertically, finding words etc.
Learning to Read: Word games

Playing with words: 10 minutes daily

- Teacher says a string of rhyming words out aloud.
- Children have to continue the string. The words have to sound similar.
- Then they all play the same game with a different set of words.
- Teacher can also start writing the words on the black board so that children begin to see the pattern in the words.
- Soon children play this game by themselves.

WHY

This kind of word game makes children hear sound patterns and see the visual patterns on the “barakhadi” chart.

Used with the barakhadi chart, this game is very useful in building early reading skills.

Everyday children can play this game for 10 minutes with different sets of words.
Example: Playing with words: Create your own print rich world

This is a Std 2 class in a school in Maal block of Lucknow district. Children are enjoying the use of the wall “green board” after playing lot of oral word games. In the game, children had to think of rhyming words and say them. The teachers then invited the children to use the board and this is what the class began to do...

Most children don’t live in a print rich world. With a little help, they can create their own.
“Writing” on your own... think, say, and “write”

After reading a story aloud...

Think something – kuch socho
Say something – kuch bolo
Write something – kuch banao

- Children have to think of something to say about the story. Each child has to say something of her own.
- Next, one by one, they say it aloud.
- Then, they attempt to “write” or “make” what they have just said.

Child must first say what s/he is going to “make” or “write”.

The teacher asks the child “kya banaya” and writes word or words next to the drawing or scribbling.

Saying “kuch bhi banao” may be better than “chitra banao” or “likho”.

For young children in Std 1 and 2.

This activity can be linked to the story that has been read and discussed or it can be anything they want.
Comment: Early reading, writing and talking skills seem to be linked.

**WHY**

- Early expressions are graphical accompanied by scribbling “letter-like” shapes.
- Children explore with shapes, giving them names or contexts if they feel like.
- Early writing skills seem to reinforce early reading skills. Both seem to be linked strongly to early “talking” skills.

Children sometimes need help getting started, both in terms of what to think and what to say.

Once they “make something” (scribbling) it is important to ask what they have made.

Each child must “write” on his/her own.

**Independent talking and “writing” is key.**
Most children in this Std 2 class could not read words or sentences. However after a good discussion, every child could express on paper the key elements of what they discussed on the content of the story. For more (See link to Siddharth file)
Example: Reading & writing with Sabila

Sabila was nine years old. She had never been to school. She was in a Pratham class in Delhi. I met her when she had been coming to class for about 10 days. She was familiar with many letters and was beginning to get familiar with the barakhadi.

Combining activities maximizes learning.

In Sabila’s case, in ten days she had a sense of what “reading” sounds like and what text “looks” like.

Once she could “sound out” what she was saying, the barakhadi chart helped her find what she was looking for.

Reading and writing can go together. Thinking on your own propels them both.

I asked Sabila to think of something. She struggled. “What shall I say? In any case I cannot write”. With a lot of coaxing she wrote.

“This is wrong” she said immediately. “Why” I asked? Because my finger is not moving.

I asked her to tell me what she had written and to say it slowly. She did.. And then I asked her to find what she was saying in the barakhadi chart.

Slowly she was able to write....

Then she said “What shall I write next?”
Gapshap is discussion around a story.

- Teacher helps children to talk about their ideas, reactions, feelings and observations about the story that has been read aloud. After the reading exercises, each day a different aspect of the story can be discussed.

- Often gapshap is very stilted and one way at first: mainly question answer & factual retrieval from story in single word responses. Being able to listen, react and talk about and around the story is key for getting everyone to think and absorb.

- Best way to get everyone to “talk” is to make instructors themselves do “gapshap” around the story. Ask children to pick out words they liked and talk about them for a bit. Select characters and events from the story and bring them out – develop them on their own. Think of more “handles” within the story to turn in different directions.
Comments: “Gapshap” and Books

- Effective and meaningful “talk” or “gapshap” around a story ensures immersion into reading and writing activity.
  - Children learn to handle book or story card carefully and slowly and become aware that print has a meaning.

- Even before learning to “read”, children begin to realize that printed text has a particular direction, letters and vowel signs form words, spaces separate words, illustrations play a role in the story.
  - On their own, they begin to display “reading-like” behaviour when they read to themselves and “writing-like” behaviour on paper.

- Children learn to recognize and point to words in a context.
  - You can see the immediate impact of gapshap on “kuch bhi banao” or on children’s visual expressions like drawing, scribbling and “writing”.
Comment: Things to read

For learning to read there must be material to read for children.

Books or story cards with illustrations are needed.

If textbook has sufficient number of simple 4-6 line paragraphs or stories with illustrations that can be used as well.

Stories must be short, simple and in a large font with clear pictures.

Child must have a copy of the story with her or share with 1 or 2 other children.

When teacher reads aloud, child must be able to listen and see the words clearly so that she starts building the connections between shapes and sounds.

New stories needed every week.

EXAMPLE: CIRCULATION of STORY CARDS

Group of 10 classes in a cluster.

25 copies of each story card for each cluster.

A total of different 15 titles/story cards

Stories with large font, many illustrations, simple text

Classes in the cluster exchanged cards each week – so that there was new material to look at, discuss and “read” every week.

Children were allowed to take books home during the week.

DONE IN MANY RURAL BLOCKS IN U.P. AND BIHAR WITH CHILDREN IN STD 1 & 2.
The CAMaL technique for building early foundations for language can be used by anyone – a teacher or a village volunteer.

The difference comes in the way the program is organized and how people are identified as instructors. When working with the school system, the system may select the teacher. When working in the village, the community may select the volunteer or the volunteer may come forward herself.

Regardless of who the instructor is, the method for assessment and teaching learning is the same. There is the same need for a constant supply of reading material that is appropriate at the level of the child.

The best way to absorb the basic elements of CAMaL is to “practice” during training. Often during training, teams will go to a nearby school or community and find an appropriate group of children and “practice” the activities with them.
To summarize...

CAMaL stands for Combined Activities for Maximized Learning.

Doing activities together builds ability to speak, understand, read and write.

Key activities are:
- Reading story aloud with finger under each word
- Talking and discussing the story
- Using the phonetic barakhadi chart
- Oral word games
- “Writing” on your own

Every child or a small group of children must have a copy of the story.

Stories must change every few days.
“Now I can read and understand. Now I can speak and write on my own...”

मेरा भाई बहुत छोटा है. वो अभी चलना सीख रहा है. आज में उसके सामने खड़ा हो गया. फिर मैंने उसको बुलाया.

धीरे धीरे उसने एक कदम लिया. फिर एक और कदम. फिर एक और. देखो देखो. मेरे भाई चल रहा है. मैंने उसको चलना सीखा दिया है. आब तो मैं उसे दौड़ना सीखाऊँगा.