The Lotta Lara® Strategy

A Literacy Squared® Strategy for Fluency, Comprehension, and Oracy

Lotta Lara® is an instructional literacy strategy within the Literacy Squared® framework that supports biliteracy development through explicit vocabulary instruction, repeated readings, and structured oracy practice. Designed to promote fluency, comprehension, and oral language development simultaneously, the strategy provides students with multiple opportunities to engage meaningfully with rich and authentic text.

Why the Lotta Lara® Matters

Rather than treating fluency as isolated speed practice, Lotta Lara® integrates fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and oral language development through repeated interaction with meaningful and connected text. Explicit vocabulary instruction and scaffolded repeated readings provide multilingual learners with repeated opportunities to hear, process, and internalize language in meaningful contexts.

A defining feature of the strategy is its emphasis on structured oracy—the oral language students need to successfully express their understanding of text. Through purposeful oral rehearsal and collaborative interaction, students develop the expressive language needed to engage successfully in reading and writing tasks.

Lotta Lara® Structure

-**Introduce** text & vocabulary	-**Review** vocabulary	-**Review** vocabulary
-**Teacher** reads through text -**Echo** read -**Choral** read -**Partner** read -**Oracy** structure **#1**	 -**Echo** read -**Choral** read -**Partner** read -**Oracy** structure **#2**	 -**Echo** read -**Choral** read -**Partner** read -**Oracy** structure **#3**

Instructional Notes

- Students interact with the **same text all week**.
- Repeated readings and oracy practice should occur together during each lesson.

- The strategy is typically implemented **3 times during the week** and generally lasts **20–40 minutes** each day.
- Across the week, students engage in approximately **10 total exposures** to the text, including **9 fluent student reads**.
- In bilingual classrooms, Lotta Lara® is typically implemented **1 week per unit in the partner language and 1 week per unit in English**. In English-medium classrooms, the strategy is typically implemented **1 week per unit in English**.

Components of Lotta Lara®

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Teachers explicitly introduce and revisit vocabulary connected to the text and literacy objectives. Vocabulary instruction may include visuals, gestures, comprehensible input, student-friendly explanations, and repeated oral use of key words and phrases.

Repeated Readings

Students repeatedly engage with the same text through:

- Teacher read-aloud
- Echo reading
- Choral reading
- Partner reading

Repeated readings support fluency, comprehension, confidence, and language development while providing multilingual learners with scaffolded opportunities to hear and internalize language patterns and connected discourse.

Structured Oracy Practice

A defining feature of Lotta Lara® is its emphasis on structured oracy. Each day of the strategy includes a different oracy structure that is carefully planned to support the unit's literacy goals through purposeful use of vocabulary, language structures, and dialogue.

For multilingual learners, structured oracy provides repeated opportunities to hear, rehearse, and use language in meaningful contexts connected to reading and writing.

Text Selection Considerations

Texts selected for Lotta Lara® should:

- Be high-interest, language-rich, and culturally relevant
- Reinforce a literacy and/or oracy objective
- Include meaningful connected text
- Be grade-appropriate and accessible with support (generally target the middle-to-upper range of students' reading abilities)
- Be short enough to be reread multiple times (entire strategy, including vocabulary, repeated readings, and oracy practice, should be 20-40 minutes)

Texts may include:

- Narrative texts
- Informational texts
- Poetry
- Adapted excerpts or teacher-created texts (Ensure enough context to engage in meaningful oracy)

For additional information on the Lotta Lara® strategy, see Chapter 2 of *Biliteracy From the Start: Literacy Squared in Action* (Escamilla et al., 2014) and sample lesson plans available through the BUENO Center and Literacy Squared®.

Scaffolding and Adaptations

Lotta Lara® can be adapted across grade levels and instructional contexts.

PK and Beginning Kindergarten

Teachers may:

- Use shorter and more repetitive texts
- Add visuals, gestures, and comprehensible input
- Replace partner reading with two-group choral reading
- Focus on one oracy objective across several days
- Gradually increase student independence over time

Upper Grades

For students who are already fluent readers, teachers may divide longer texts into sections across the week while maintaining the repeated reading and structured oracy routine. Students engage in repeated readings and oracy practice with one section of the text each day before moving to a new section during the next lesson.