

**A 3-YEAR INTERACTIVE RADIO PROGRAMME
FOR TEACHING INTEGRATED ENGLISH SKILLS
TO RURAL SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUNE DISTRICT**

2005 - 2008

**Project Report
2009**



**CENTRE FOR LEARNING RESOURCES
PUNE**

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A 3-Year Interactive Radio Programme For Teaching Integrated English Skills To Rural School Students In Pune District

2005-2008

Project Rationale and Goals

The rationale and goals of the above project for teaching all 4 skills of English - listening, speaking, reading and writing - are based on a number of factors. They are grounded in various experiences and understandings of the CLR, since it began work in the teaching of English in 1996. These include an analysis of the role of English in India; the standards of instruction and learning in English in our regional medium schools; the experience of the CLR 3-year radio programme for teaching spoken English, 2001-04; the lessons learnt from the CLR 2004 pilot audio action research project for teaching reading and writing English skills, etc. In other words, the project rationale and goals is based on understanding in broad terms the standards of English in our government schools and its consequences, as well as an empirical understanding of what has worked to improve the acquisition of all 4 skills of English in government regional medium schools. These understandings and experiences are summarised below.

Standards of English and its Consequences

Most teachers in government regional medium schools have a very limited knowledge of English, and furthermore do not know how to teach English. Consequently many students, even after 5 or 6 years of studying English as a second language, are unable to communicate in simple English. This language handicap considerably reduces opportunities for higher education, employment and for meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

Understandings Emerging from the CLR Radio Programme for Spoken English

The CLR developed and broadcast on AIR a 3-year interactive radio programme for developing basic listening and speaking skills in elementary school students in Pune district between 2001-04. This programme was later extended to Mumbai, Delhi, Jharkhand, Uttaranchal and Rajasthan. This experience, in Maharashtra and elsewhere, has indicated that:

- Children studying in elementary regional medium schools have extremely poor listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in English.
- Listening and speaking skills improved significantly in students listening to the CLR radio programme.
- The interactive and bilingual pedagogy that was utilised in the radio lessons was very effective in the enhancement of the English skills of students, as it kept them interested and actively involved.
- Many teachers and headmasters were conscious, and extremely appreciative of the benefits of the radio programme.
- A radio, equipped with batteries, is a useful and relevant distance education technology, specially given the constraints imposed by intermittent and erratic electric supply.

The above learnings suggested that the content, pedagogy and technology that was used for teaching spoken English could also be used to teach reading and writing. In other words, a specific interactive radio programme for teaching reading and writing skills to middle school students could be effective. This view was reinforced by our classroom observations indicating that teachers were following very ineffective methods of teaching reading and writing English. In this connection, it should be pointed out that we were being constantly requested by English teachers and headmasters for specific inputs in these two areas.

2004- 05 : Pilot Audio Project for Teaching Reading and Writing in English

We undertook an 8-week pilot project for Class 5, for teaching reading and writing in English. Using the information gathered earlier on children's day-to-day lives, interests and preoccupations, and some previous workbooks designed by us; we formulated and illustrated reading texts and activities for 32 lessons.

We drafted separate booklets of 8 lessons at a time; so that the feedback receive from piloting one booklet in the classroom could be used to modify the next one, and so on.

Four schools of the Pune Municipal Corporation were selected for the pilot project. A base-line test specifically for the pilot was designed and administered to 10 randomly selected children in each of the selected schools – children who had completed Class 4 and were currently at the beginning of Class 5. The test was also administered to 10 randomly selected children in 2 other similar PMC schools, who would not be listening to the audio lessons.

Audio lessons were recorded after the completion of each of the 4 booklets. Each lesson was put on audio cassettes and used in the four schools. Each lesson was observed in the schools. Feedback from the observations helped to modify various elements in the print lessons and recordings as we went along. In addition to this, the project schools also listened to the radio broadcasts of our existing lessons for spoken English for Class 5.

At the end of 32 lessons, a post-test was administered to the same students as in the baseline. The table shows a comparison of the baseline and post-test. The lessons learned from this pilot project were invaluable for our subsequent work in producing the radio lessons for reading and writing for Class 5.

Pilot Project : Proportion of Students Mastering English Reading Skills

Test	4 Project Schools (40 Students)		2 Control Schools (20 Students)	
	<i>Baseline Test July 2004</i>	<i>Post-Test Sept. 2004</i>	<i>Baseline Test July 2004</i>	<i>Post-Test Sept. 2004</i>
Matching 4-5 word sentence with picture	18 %	46 %	10 %	10 %
Reading with understanding a simple paragraph	0 %	20 %	0 %	0 %

Note: Mastery level indicated by correct answers to 3 or all 4 test items

Understandings Emerging from the 2004 Audio Pilot Project for Teaching Reading and Writing

In addition to the testing, each audio lesson was observed in the project schools. The monitoring of the project schools and the test results indicated that :

- The initial testing of students, prior to their exposure to the audio lessons, indicated that their reading and writing skills were extremely poor. They knew the alphabet and only recognised some simple English words, despite having started English in Class 1 and being exposed to 5 years of English.
- The textbook for Class 5 was far too difficult for them to understand
- The interactive and bilingual pedagogy, used in our radio programme for teaching spoken English, was also appropriate for reading and writing.
- Both the monitoring and test results indicated significant improvements in reading
- Teachers were very positive in their assessment of the use and effectiveness of the audio lessons.
- Students were very positive in their attitudes to the content of the audio lessons.

First Year of Project, 2005-06 - Pre-Broadcast Activities for the Reading and Writing Component

1. *Formulating the Curriculum*

The pilot project reinforced our understanding that it was possible to design a radio programme that was appropriate for improving reading and writing. It also provided us with a firmer understanding of how the Class 5 English curriculum should be formulated and sequenced. We realised that the pacing or reading skills, especially silent reading, had to be far slower ; consequently the scope of the Class 5 skills had to be considerably modified. The instructions for the activities also needed various revisions. Based on these understandings, we formulated a more realistic scope and sequence for a 60-lesson radio programme for improving reading skills in English.

From our past experience in working with government schools, we realised that it would be difficult to ask teachers to stop using the textbook. We therefore understood that at best whatever we could provide would be used as supplementary materials, and would not be used by students and teachers as a step-by-step reading guide. (*For more details, see “Let’s Read and Write English: Pedagogical Approach and Scope and Sequence of Lesson Content and Reading Skills” in Appendix 1.*)

2. *Developing a Reader-cum-Activity Book*

The project envisaged a reader-cum-activity book which would be provided to each class 5 student studying in the Pune Zilla Parishad schools. CLR staff developed the text and design of the book. This book contained approximately 60 lessons correlated with the interactive radio lessons, which could be used by each listener while listening to the radio in the classroom. This reader-cum-activity book provided the reading text of the radio lessons, with practice exercises to be completed during the 15-minute radio programme, as well as afterwards. The book was illustrated in full colour, and contained simple short texts, using child-centred themes and graded structural and vocabulary practice. (*For more details, see “Let’s Read and Write English: Pedagogical Approach and Scope and Sequence of Lesson Content and Reading Skills” in Appendix 1.*)

In developing this reader, the level of English to be used posed a particular challenge. As indicated earlier, our preliminary research had indicated that despite prior years of exposure to English at the primary level, many children had little understanding of the language beyond alphabet recognition. We therefore started with very simple short texts, and gradually increased the length and complexity of the content. The text and illustrations of the Class 5 reader-cum-activity book were completed by mid-May 05. It contained 144 pages, with 60 theme-based lessons carefully graded according to language structure and vocabulary. Periodic assessment tests were also included in this publication. 28,000 copies of the books were printed in June. Copies were also distributed to 896 Zilla Parishad primary schools of Pune District through the 13 Block Education Offices. We also included 5 Pune municipal schools in the project and provided books to Class 5 students in these schools.

3. *Scripting and Recording the Radio Lessons*

Based on the graded lessons in the reader-cum-activity book, 60 radio lessons of 15-minutes duration were scripted and recorded by CLR staff. Our experience in developing interactive radio lessons for spoken English, as well as the pilot project, provided us with considerable insights into the content and structure of the new 60 radio lessons for reading and writing. The main thrust of the interactive audio pedagogy is the emphasis placed by the radio teacher on 'reading with understanding.

4. *Developing a Guidebook for Teachers*

The radio lessons contain all the instructions required to conduct the radio lessons. However, to empower teachers further, a guidebook for teachers was prepared. This contained guidelines for conducting both the spoken language lessons, as well as those for reading and writing. Additional resources provided in the guidebook were the details of the grammatical items covered, the words of songs that feature in the radio lessons, and the vocabulary and structures introduced through the integrated programme.

5. *Training Resource Persons / Teachers*

During the summer vacations, the Zilla Parishad Education Department conducted training sessions for resource persons who would train English teachers in all government and government aided schools. In the course of this training, the CLR conducted 7 orientation workshops regarding the conducting of radio lessons in the classroom. In turn, these resource persons were to pass on these skills to teachers. However, our monitoring of the radio programme and other feedback indicated that this training of teachers by resource persons was not satisfactory. We plan to do the orientation of teachers differently this year.

6. *Revision of Existing Evaluation Tools*

We felt the need for an outside expert to critique the English tests that we had developed internally for English language testing. Valuable interaction with an expert on English language testing enabled us to complete the following:

- Revision of our existing tools for evaluating spoken English of Class 5 students
- Formulation and subsequent revision based on feedback, of items for evaluation of reading and writing skills in English for Class 5 students.

Broadcasting of Radio Lessons

In 2005, we began the broadcast of the radio programme using the Vividh Bharati (FM) channel of All India Radio. Every week 5 radio lessons of 15-minutes duration were broadcast between Monday and Friday. 3 of the radio lessons were devoted to listening and speaking English, while 2 of the radio lessons were devoted to reading and writing. The English programme for speaking and listening entitled "We Learn English" contained 90 lessons. There were 60 radio lessons for teaching reading and writing entitled "Let's Read and Write English". In all a total of 150 radio lessons spread over 30 weeks of the academic year 2005-06 for improving all 4 English skills of Class 5 students in Zilla Parishad schools of Pune District.

Monitoring of Radio Lessons

It was important to understand how the radio lessons actually functioned in the classroom. We needed to know whether children understood and enjoyed the radio lessons; whether they were able to follow the instructions of the radio teacher, whether the time given for various activities was adequate, etc. We identified 20 schools for monitoring and testing – 15 Zilla Parishad schools and Pune Municipal Corporation schools. These 5 schools were included so that we could compare the functioning and impact of the radio programme in rural and urban government schools.

Each of the reading-writing lessons broadcast was observed in one of the 20 project schools by CLR staff, at least once a month. The monitoring indicated that :

- The radio lessons for teaching reading and writing were being understood and enjoyed by the Class 5 students.
- The content and pacing, instructions and activities, of the radio lessons were appropriate in large part due to the incorporation of lessons learnt from the pilot audio project.

- Some teachers were extremely enthusiastic and regularly switched on the radio to enable their students to listen to the radio programme.
- Generally schools that were better administered, and where the overall attendance of teachers was satisfactory and instruction was systematic, were also schools where the radio programme was listened to regularly.
- Since the municipal schools were not implementing the programme regularly, it was decided to exclude them from the programme in the second and third year. 5 new rural schools were added to the project schools instead of the 5 municipal schools that were excluded.

Other Allied Activities

CLR Radio Club

The idea of forming a listeners' club was tried out last year, and the CLR Radio Club was formed, consisting of schools who wrote in to confirm that they were listening regularly to the spoken language programmes during 04-05. The Club activities were continued in the current year. These were:

- 4 issues of a newsletter entitled, 'Club News', were published and distributed, containing ideas for teachers, puzzles and learning games for children, and news about implementation of the radio project in various ZP schools.
- Each newsletter also contained a contest that children could enter and win a prize of a set of storybooks for their school.
- In addition, the spoken language radio lessons also contained a monthly quiz contest, where children had to answer a quiz question about the content of the radio programme in the previous month. The idea of the contest was to increase teachers' interest in putting on the radio lessons regularly – there was never any concern about increasing children's interest, as that was apparent in our monitoring visits and in the hundreds of postcards we received appreciating the programme.

The Radio Club elicited a good response, with many ZP schools writing in and participating in the contests.

Meeting of Project School Teachers

In November, a meeting of all the teachers involved in the 20 project schools was called at CLR. The meeting was well attended and we received valuable feedback from teachers on the usefulness of the lessons, problems they faced in implementing the project, and suggestions for the following year.

Impact of Radio Project on English Skills – What the Baseline and Post-Test Reveals

A baseline test was administered to 200 Class 5 students in the 20 project schools – 15 Zilla Parishad schools and 5 Municipal Corporation schools. 10 students were selected randomly from each school and were tested for their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Some of the tests needed to be administered individually. A team of two trained investigators spent a day in each school administering the test. This baseline test was administered in March 2005 prior to the launching of the radio project.

The same test was administered to a random sample of 10 Class 5 students in each of the same 20 project schools in March 2006. These students had been exposed to the first year of the CLR integrated radio programme. The results indicated that :

1. The radio programme had a significant impact on all 4 English skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Table 1: Comparison of Baseline Test and Post-Test Results of 200 Students in 20 Project Schools after One Year of the Integrated CLR Radio Programme

Tests	Listening (Out of 30)		Speaking (Out of 110)		Reading (Out of 20)		Writing (Out of 57)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Baseline	17.7	7.8	34.3	20.5	7.6	5.0	18.6	13.2
Post-Test	19.4	7.5	42.4	26.5	9.2	5.6	21.9	15.5
t-test for equality of means (Sig.)	.032		.001		.004		.023	
Equality (2-tailed)	(Statistically significant)		(Statistically significant)		(Statistically significant)		(Statistically significant)	

2. The radio programme had a significant impact on more complex tests of reading comprehension. There was no significant difference in the tests measuring reading comprehension where students had to read sentences with understanding, and select the appropriate picture. However, in the more complex reading comprehension test of reading and understanding simple unseen paragraphs, the radio programme had a significant impact.

Table 2: Reading Comprehension Skills - Baseline Test and Post-Test Comparison

Tests	No. of Students	Reading Sentences with Understanding		Reading Paragraphs with Understanding	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Baseline	200	24.8	6.95	4.9	4.6
Post-Test	200	24.8	8.1	6.4	4.9
t-test for equality of means (Sig.)		.979		.001	
Equality (2-tailed)		(Not significant)		(Statistically significant)	

3. *The radio programme had a significant impact on the more complex writing skills of students. There was no significant difference in the tests measuring the writing of single English words. However, in the test measuring their ability to write sentences about themselves, the family and what they like to do and play, etc., the radio programme had a significant impact.*

Table 3: Writing Skills - Baseline Test and Post-Test Comparison

Tests	No. of Students	Writing Words		Writing Sentences about Oneself	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Baseline	200	4.2	3.0	14.4	10.98
Post-Test	200	4.8	3.6	20.7	14.8
t-test for equality of means (Sig.)		.102		.000	
Equality (2-tailed)		(Not significant)		(Statistically significant)	

Conclusion - Looking Ahead after the First Year of Project, 2005-06

. The monitoring of the classrooms during the radio lessons, the informal feedback by teachers and students, the large number of letters received on the CLR radio programme, and the results of the testing of the acquisition of English skills clearly indicated that the first year of the radio programme had been extremely successful. Many teachers wrote or came personally to the CLR to express their appreciation of the radio programme, and to ask for further support in terms of training and materials. It has reinforced our conviction that a well designed interactive radio programme can be used effectively to improve significantly the listening, speaking, reading and writing English skills of students studying in government regional medium schools.

. We have learnt quite a few things as to what worked, and aspects that were not quite as successful. We realised that where literacy skills were concerned, the main focus of the radio lessons had to be on reading skills. Only some writing skills involving spelling and grammar lent themselves to the radio medium, in as much they could reinforce fluency in speaking and reading. It also reinforced our initial understanding that the main goal and thrust of the interactive audio pedagogy should continue to be 'reading English with understanding'. We have incorporated these understandings; and have made some changes in the design and content of the new reader-cum-activity book, as well as in the recording of the radio lessons.

Second Year Of Radio Project, 2006-07

Pre-broadcast Activities for Class 6 : Second Year of the Radio Programme for Teaching Integrated English Skills

For the listening and speaking skills component of the integrated programme, we already had the Class 6 radio lessons developed by us a few years ago. The Class 6 reader-cum-activity book was published in May 06. A CLR staff team undertook the writing, illustrations and design of the entire book. The book contains lessons based on themes that are of interest to upper primary students, and is attractively illustrated. Fifty-two bilingual radio lessons correlated with the book were scripted, recorded and edited, using our own recording studio facilities. With a few exceptions, this entire process was undertaken by CLR staff. 27,000 copies of the reader-cum-activity book were distributed to 896 Pune Zilla Parishad elementary schools through the respective Block Education

Offices. Teachers of Class 6 were given an accompanying guidebook to help plan and facilitate the lessons of the reader-cum-activity book. A series of orientation sessions were held in different talukas of Pune District to familiarise cluster coordinators with the radio programme, and to involve them in monitoring its implementation in schools.

Broadcasting the Integrated Radio Programme for Class 6

The broadcasts of the 15-minute radio programme for Class 6, “Let's Read and Write English”, and “We Learn English” for spoken English, commenced in July 06. In all, 133 radio lessons were broadcast over 30 weeks - 52 for reading and writing twice a week, and 81 lessons for improving listening and speaking skills thrice a week. All Pune Zilla Parishad elementary schools were covered by the broadcasts.

Classroom Monitoring of the Radio Lessons

The new lessons broadcast were closely monitored by our staff. Continuous feedback was obtained from the classroom observations as to the comprehension levels of the students and the difficulties they faced while doing the activities. Lessons that had yet to be recorded were suitably modified based on this feedback. Video documentation was also carried out, with footage shot in various schools.

Impact of the Integrated Radio Programme on English Skills

A test devised for baseline assessment of English skills of Class 6 students was conducted in July 06. This test included components for listening, speaking, reading and writing, and was administered to 200 randomly selected Class 7 students in 20 schools in Pune District - 10 students from each school - at the beginning of the academic year. The same test was administered at the end of the year to an equal number of Class 6 students from the same schools, who had listened to the Class 6 radio programme.

In the second year of the programme, the tests indicated that there were no significant differences in any of the skills. As the following table indicates, the students exposed to the radio programme showed no appreciable differences in their acquisition of English in comparison to students from the same schools not exposed to the radio lessons.

Table : Comparison of Baseline Test and Post-Test Results of 200 Students in 20 Project Schools after Second Year of the Integrated CLR Radio Programme

Tests	Listening (Out of 10)		Speaking (Out of 110)		Reading (Out of 24)		Writing (Out of 39)	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Baseline	3.0	2.3	26.9	17.3	9.0	5.6	8.7	7.2
Post-Test	3.0	2.5	26.1	17.6	9.7	5.9	8.3	6.1
t-test for equality of means (Sig.)	.49		.31		.09		.26	
Equality (2-tailed)	(Not significant)		(Not significant)		(Not significant)		(Not significant)	

The results came as a surprise. While we were not surprised by the fact that the writing skills had not improved, since teaching of writing skills has limited potential through radio, we did not quite expect to see the lack of differences in reading, speaking and listening.

A possible explanation for the lack of differences in the speaking and listening programme lay in the implementation that we did not anticipate, and which possibly impinged on the results. Feedback from monitoring revealed that many teachers concentrated exclusively on the new reading and writing component. They were not as interested in the speaking component and most of them do not understand the influence of oracy on literacy learning. Hence they were not tuning in to the broadcasts for spoken English. This probably explains the lack of progress in students' listening and speaking scores this year.

In the second year of the programme, the past tense was introduced in the reading texts and tested for at the end of the year. This is a difficult skill for most students learning English. As far as the lack of any improvement in the reading tests was concerned, this was perhaps due to the expectation that the tests would reveal a significant difference by the end of the year. We now realise that students need to be read more texts, and that students need longer exposure to the past tense and more complex skills before any significant acquisition of skills. We will be reinforcing these skills in the third year, and we will be making appropriate changes in some aspects of the reader-cum-activity book and radio lessons for the third and final year of the programme. We believe that we will see a difference at the end of the third year.

Third Year of Radio Programme, 2007-08

As in the first two years of the radio programme, similar steps were followed in the third and final year of the radio programme-development and distribution of a reader-cum activity book to all rural Class 7 students in Pune District, the orientation of teachers, the broadcasting of the radio programme for teaching listening and speaking skills entitled "We Learn English, and the shorter related programme for teaching reading and writing skills entitled "Let's Read and Write English", monitoring and video documentation of the radio programme in selected schools and testing of English skills of students.

Impact of Third Year of Radio Programme on English Skills of Std. 7 Students, 2007-08

We decided to raise the bar substantially for evaluating the cumulative impact of three years of our radio programme. We tested a random sample of Class 7 students from 10 schools that our monitoring staff had indicated were generally regularly listening to the radio programme. The same English test was administered to Class 10 students, who were about to sit for the school-leaving board examinations in 8 rural and 2 urban schools. The vast majority of these students were selected by their teachers as the 'best' in English. The table on the following page provides this comparison.

The following table indicates that a random sample of Class 7 students who had been exposed to the 3-year CLR integrated radio programme were performing as well (listening and reading), and significantly better (speaking and writing) than the 'best' Class 10 students.

Table : Cumulative Impact of Three Years of the CLR Radio Programme on English Skills of Class 7 Students Compared to 'Best' Class 10 Students

Tests	Listening (Out of 40)		Speaking (Out of 150)		Writing (Out of 42)		Reading (Out of 36)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Class 7	30.4	9.0	88.1	31.3	28.6	9.3	28.7	6.7
Class 10	29.9	6.9	75.2	25.9	25.0	7.9	29.2	5.2
t-test for equality of means (Sig.)	.66		.002		.004		.57	
Equality (2-tailed)	(Not significant)		(Statistically significant)		(Statistically significant)		(Not significant)	

Looking Back, Looking Forward

The following table summarises in quantitative terms the number of radio lessons that were broadcast on AIR, and the number of students that they reached.

Reach of CLR Radio Programme for Teaching English Skills in Rural Government Schools in Pune District

Year	Class	No. of Students	Listening and Speaking (No. of Radio Lessons)	Reading and Writing (No. of Radio Lessons)
2005-06	Class 5	28000	84	60
2006-07	Class 6	27000	81	53
2007-08	Class 7	19800	80	52
Total		74800	245	165

While our monitoring indicated that not all students were listening to all the broadcasts, the evidence clearly indicates that the integrated radio programme for teaching English was very successful in improving basic English skills of large numbers of middle school students in regional medium government schools. Many teachers have written or come personally to the CLR to express their appreciation of the radio programme, and to ask for further support in terms of training and materials.

After years of establishing both quantitatively and qualitatively that the radio programme is effective, we feel that we need to increase its outreach. While most teachers are clear that the programme works, there are many teachers who turn on the radio irregularly or not at all. However, this is a problem that affects all teaching, especially educational innovations in our government schools, and significant improvements require the system to be far more accountable. But we will in future broadcasts plan to work far more closely with the education authorities to ensure that they 'own' the programme, and feel more responsible for its monitoring and implementation.

While the 3-year pilot of the reading and writing radio programme was successful, we are not likely to rebroadcast it unless a state government is specifically interested in funding the printing of the readers for students. However, many schools and individuals have expressed an interest in having the programme, and we are exploring the possibility of converting the reading and writing component into CDs.

Appendix 1

Let's Read And Write English : Pedagogical Approach and Scope and Sequence of Lesson Content and Reading Skills

Introduction

The radio lessons and accompanying readers-cum-activity books comprising the 3 levels of “Let’s Read And Write English” were originally formulated for Classes 5, 6 and 7 of Marathi medium schools. As the teaching of English in Maharashtra starts in Class 1, Level 1 of this radio series, meant for Class 5, presupposes a knowledge of the English alphabet and letter-sound association. All 3 levels were conceptualised as part of a larger integrated English curriculum, whereby the understanding of sentence structure and vocabulary is developed and continuously reinforced through the corresponding 3 levels of the CLR radio series for spoken English entitled “We Learn English”.

Overall Design and Pedagogical Approach

Each student uses a reader-cum-activity-book which is correlated with the radio lessons. The texts are presented in relevant and age-appropriate theme-based clusters. Level 1 presents a step-by-step sequence of **decoding skills**. The main focus throughout the series is on **reading with meaning**. The radio teacher helps students to acquire comprehension skills such as understanding the main idea and supporting details, using context clues, predicting outcomes, making inferences, etc. At the start of each lesson, she sets a purpose for students to read the selection. This is followed by guided reading by the students. The interactive and constructivist approach that is adopted lays emphasis on eliciting the personal response of learners to a given text through some open-ended questioning and acceptance of multiple correct answers.

Post-reading activities focusing on comprehension, vocabulary development and basic grammar are included. Some of these are completed during the radio lessons, while some are to be done independently after each lesson, or guided by the classroom English teacher. Periodic review and evaluation is built into the sequence of the lessons.

It should be noted that there is no substantial focus on writing skills. Some basic spelling patterns, grammar and independent writing are included in the post-reading activities.

Scope and Sequence of Lesson Content and Reading Skills

Given below is an outline of the themes, together with the scope and sequence of reading skills and language elements that guided the formulation of the 3 levels of this radio series.

Level 1 – Grading of Decoding Skills (The dot (•) indicates at which point a given element is introduced)

		Theme : At The Tap	Theme : We Go To School	Theme : It Is Sunday	Theme : A Train Trip	Theme : My Family
Decoding skills and Spelling Patterns	Examples	Lesson 3-15	Lessons 16-27	Lessons 28-37	Lessons 38-46	Lessons 47-57
Sight Vocabulary	Theme-based words	•	•	•	•	•
Sight Vocabulary	are, the	•	•			
CVC words with - 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o'	cap, get, sit, pot	•				
CV and VC words	go, on, am, of, in	•	•			
Vowel digraphs	ea, ee,	•				
CVC words with 'u'	bus, run		•			
Double consonant endings	-all, -ill, -st		•			
CVCe - glided vowels	gate, pipe, make, like		•	•		
Soft c, g	nice, rice, page		•			
Vowel digraph	oo, ai, oa, ay			•	•	
Consonant clusters	pl, st, br, sm			•	•	•
Inflectional ending	clapping, stopping, reading			•	•	•
Consonant digraphs	sh, ch, -ck				•	•

Level 1 : Vocabulary

Some categories

- Family members
- Everyday objects
- Everyday activities
- Food & meals
- Clothes
- House, furniture
- School / Classroom
- Colours
- Time
- Animals
- Number words

Level 1 : Grammar

- Simple Present & Present Perfect Tense
- Word order in simple sentences
- Pronouns
- Possessives
- Prepositions

“Let’s Read And Write English” – Level 2

Themes

- We Are In Class 6 (Review of Level 1 skills)
- It’s Raining
- My Country, My People
- The Exciting Outdoors
- Young, Bright And Brave (Biographies)
- Let’s Read On Our Own (Stories, folktales)

Decoding Skills

The reading passages in Level 2 add further elements within the categories of decoding skills taught in Level 1, e.g. inflectional endings ‘ed’ and ‘es’, consonant digraph ‘ph’, etc.. Further categories are also added, e.g. silent consonants as in ‘knife’, diphthongs such as ‘ew’ (few), ‘oi’ (coin), etc.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary introduced is mostly theme-based (see above list). Common antonyms, homonyms, compound words, ordinal numbers, etc. are also introduced.

Grammar

Building on the previous level, Level 2 introduces the simple past, past perfect and future tenses. The structure of simple sentences is continuously reinforced, including the interrogative form. Irregular verbs, plural forms, comparative adjectives and contractions are also introduced.

“Let’s Read And Write English” – Level 3

Themes

- The Fearless Four
- Tigers, Tigers !
- Nature Lovers
- Travelling By Train
- Long, Long Ago
- At The Market
- Bollywood
- The World of Sports
- Everyone Enjoys Weddings
- Their Thoughts, Their Feelings (Diaries)

Decoding Skills, Vocabulary, Grammar

At this reading level, no new decoding skills or spelling patterns are introduced. The major grading is in sentence length and structures. Compound sentences, adverbial phrases and simple clauses are now included. The entire level has been designed to consolidate and reinforce the skills learned in Levels 1 and 2, and add to students’ sight vocabulary. Several strategies for deriving meaning from text are encouraged by the radio teacher.

Functional Reading in Levels 2 and 3

- Reading simple newspaper articles
- Interpreting advertisements
- Interpreting a map of India
- Interpreting bills
- Interpreting simple graphs, tables and charts
- Interpreting a railway ticket
- Interpreting a railway time-table

Functional Writing in Levels 2 and 3

- Writing a diary
- Writing a letter
- Filling simple forms
- Writing dates in correct form
- Labelling a picture / diagram
- Making lists
- Writing simple accounts