

# The Basics of Structured Literacy

*An Overview of Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction*

Tuesday, February 11, 2025  
7:00 pm CT

Brought to you by  
*Martin Luther College Continuing Education*

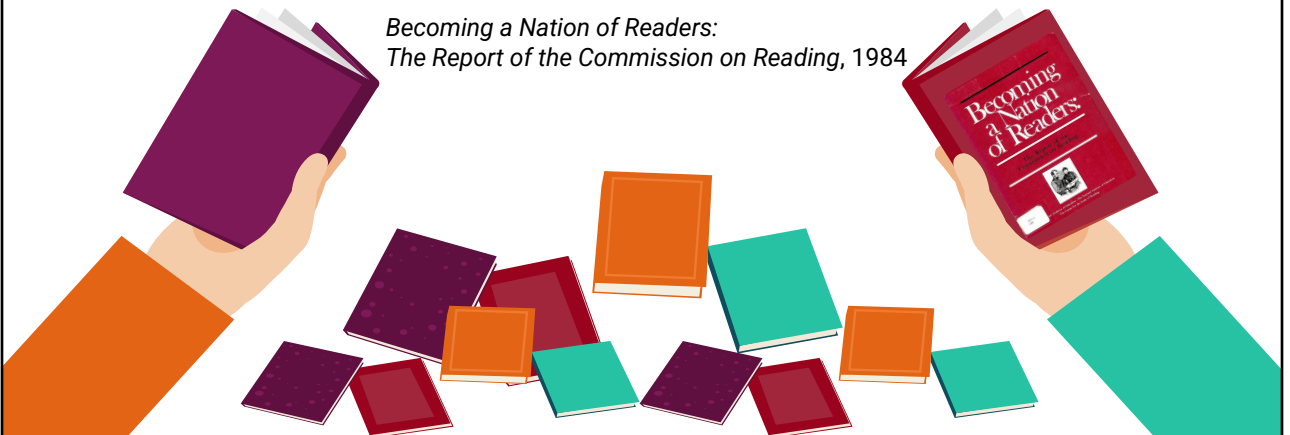
Presenters: Drs. Cindy Whaley & Jon Roux



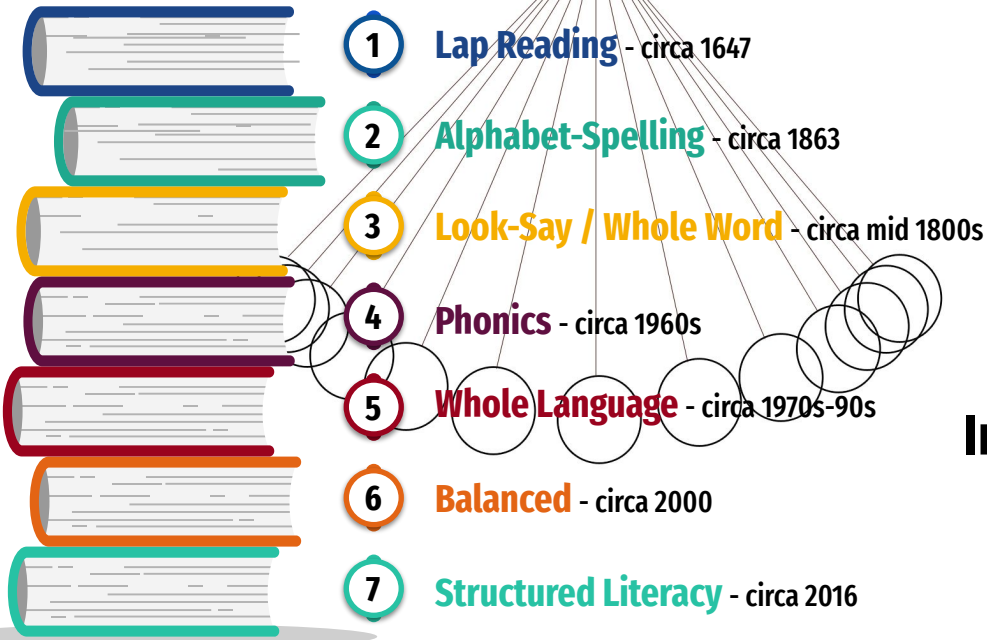
## Definition of Reading

“Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.”

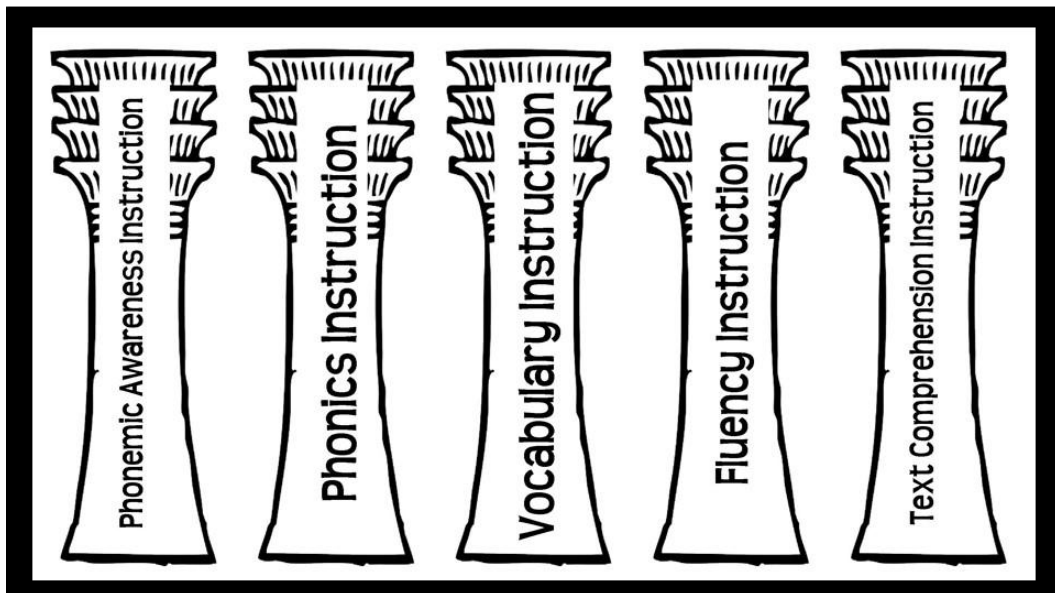
*Becoming a Nation of Readers:  
The Report of the Commission on Reading, 1984*



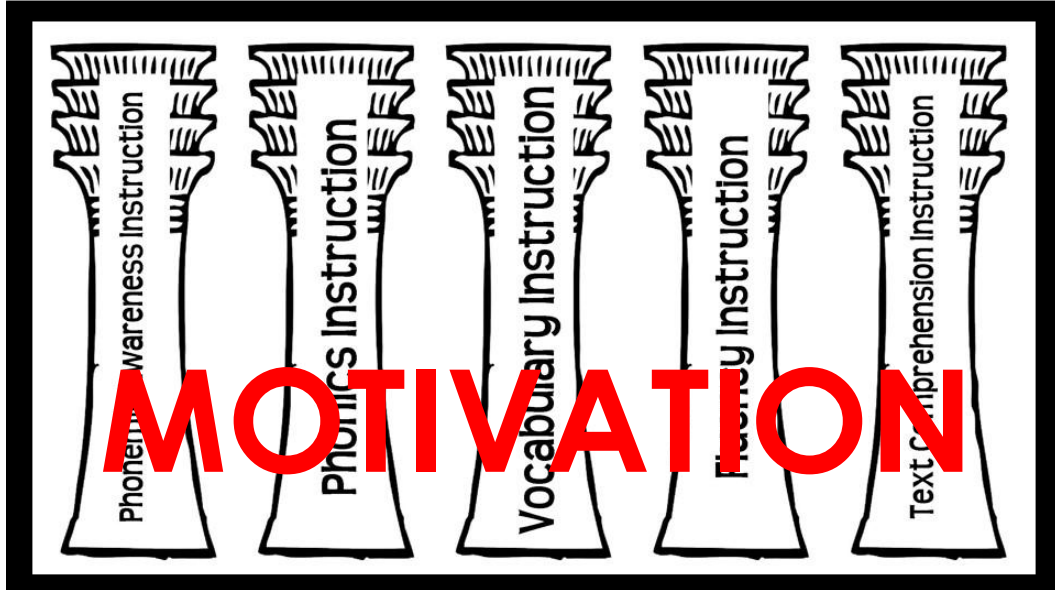
# A Brief History of Reading Instruction



## The 5+1 Pillars of Reading Instruction



## The 5+1 Pillars of Reading Instruction



## What Is Structured Literacy?

“A framework for how to apply pieces of *Science of Reading* research”

- Savvas

Not a program, but an instructional approach

“Structured literacy prepares students to decode words in an explicit and systematic manner. This approach not only helps students with dyslexia, but there is substantial evidence that it is effective for all readers.”

-International Dyslexia Association

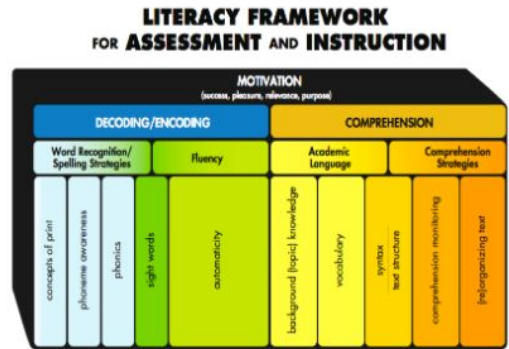


# A Shift in Instructional Framework

From Activities:



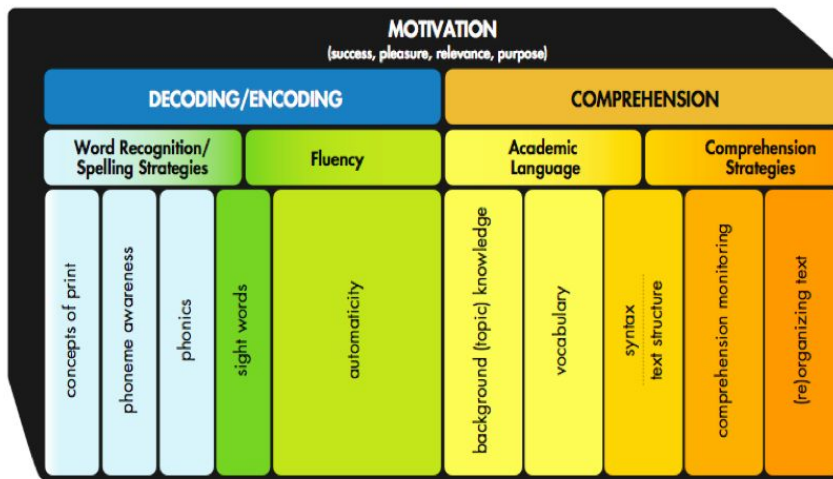
To Targeted Instruction:



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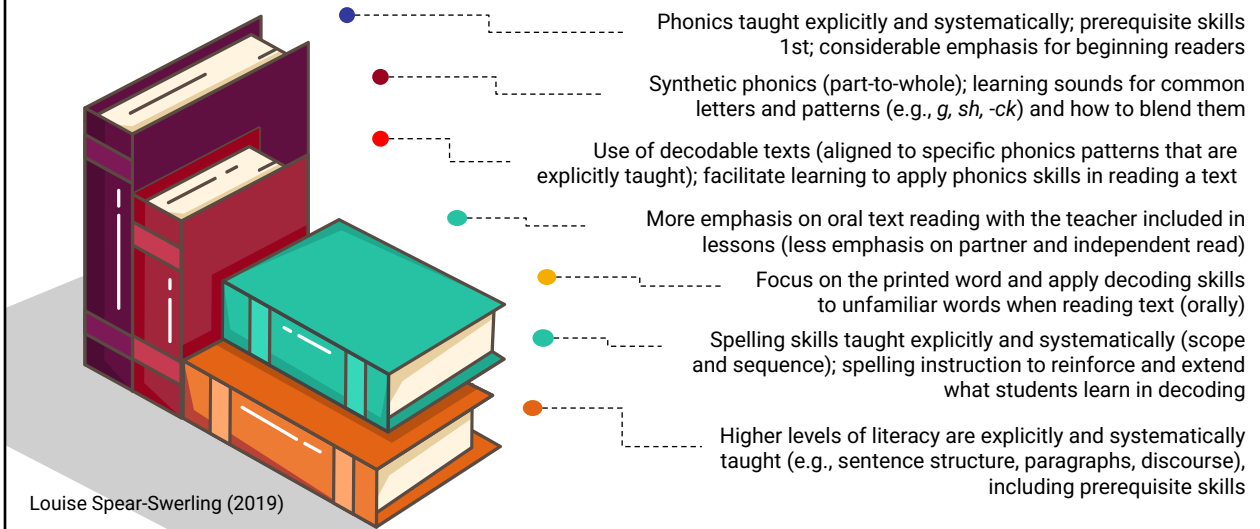
righttoreadproject.com (2019)

# Literacy Framework for Assessment and Instruction



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# Examples of Instructional Emphases in Structured Literacy



# Principles of Effective Instruction

## Direct and Systematic

Explicit

Sequential

Cumulative

Multimodal

## Mastery Oriented

Data Driven

Targeted Prompt Feedback

Highly Interactive

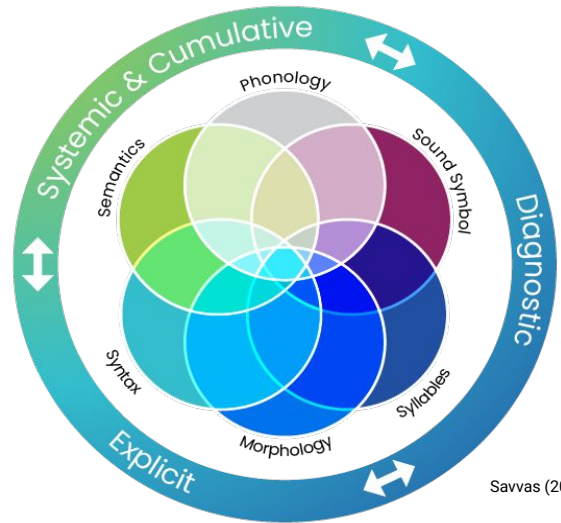
Scaffolded

**Planned, Purposeful Instructional Decisions for Tasks and Text**

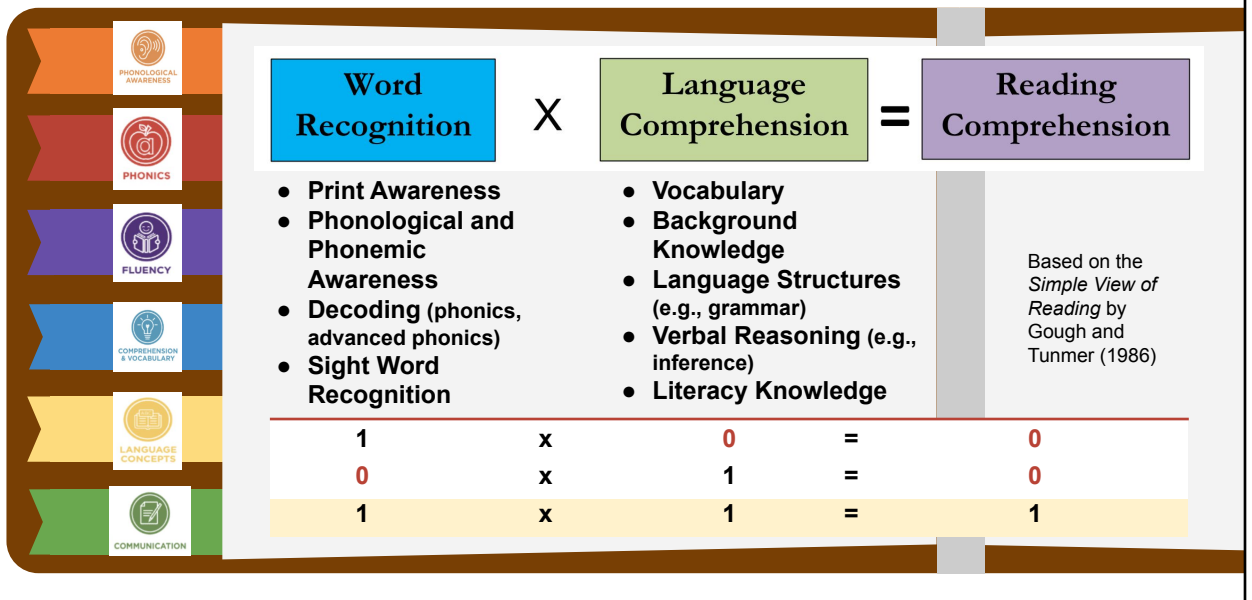


- **Phonology**
  - Sound patterns
- **Sound-symbol association**
  - Phonics instruction
  - Orthographic mapping (phonemes to graphemes)
  - Decoding-encoding
- **Syllables**
  - Closed (ending in a consonant)
  - Open (ending in a vowel)
  - VCe
  - Vowel teams
  - r-controlled
  - Consonant -le
- **Morphology**
  - Units; affixes
- **Syntax**
  - Sentence formation rules
  - **(Discourse** - organization of spoken and written communication, e.g., text structure)
- **Semantics**
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension strategies

## 6 Foundational Components of Literacy



## The Simple View of Reading (SVR)



# Scarborough's Rope (2001)

## Language Comprehension

**BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**  
(facts, concepts, etc.)

**VOCABULARY**  
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

**LANGUAGE STRUCTURE**  
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

**VERBAL REASONING**  
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

**LITERACY KNOWLEDGE**  
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

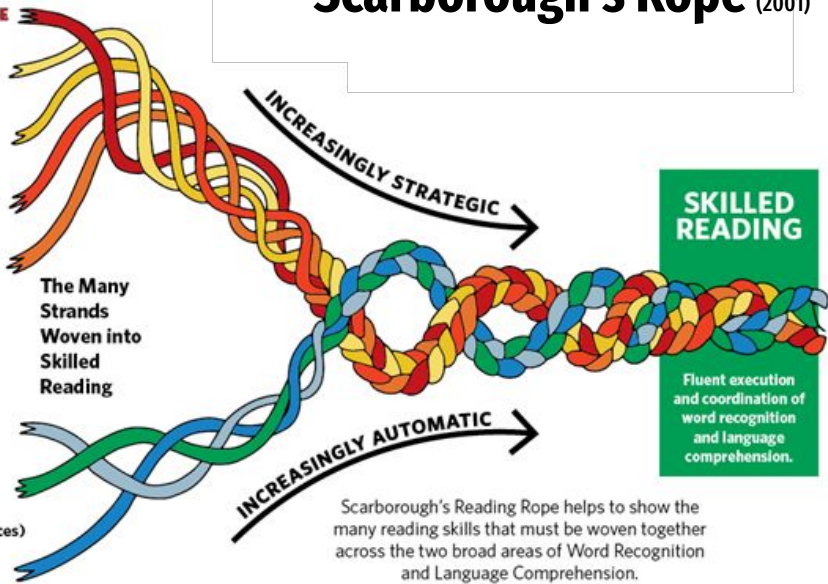
## Word Recognition

**PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**  
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

**DECODING**  
(alphabetic principle, spelling—sound correspondences)

**SIGHT RECOGNITION**  
(of familiar words)

The Many Strands Woven into Skilled Reading

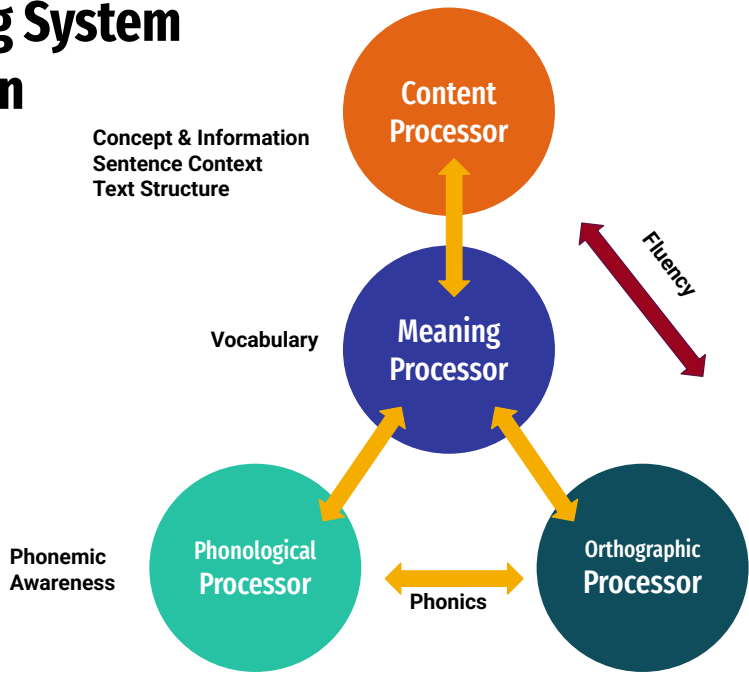
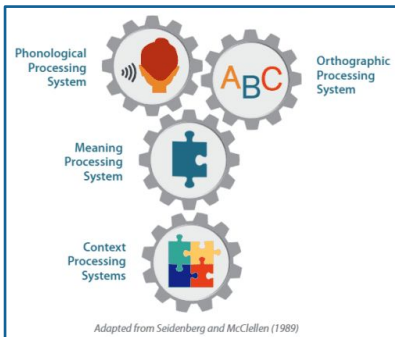


**SKILLED READING**  
Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and language comprehension.

Scarborough's Reading Rope helps to show the many reading skills that must be woven together across the two broad areas of Word Recognition and Language Comprehension.

\*What is the Reading Rope? (n.d.). Brainiac Tutor. March 16, 2023. <https://brainiac-tutors.com/what-is-the-reading-rope/>

# Four-Part Processing System for Word Recognition





## PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

- Emphasis on sounds
- Start with phoneme awareness

## PHONICS & SPELLING

- Explicit instruction in letter-sound combinations
- Sequenced from easier to harder

## VOCABULARY & ORAL LANGUAGE

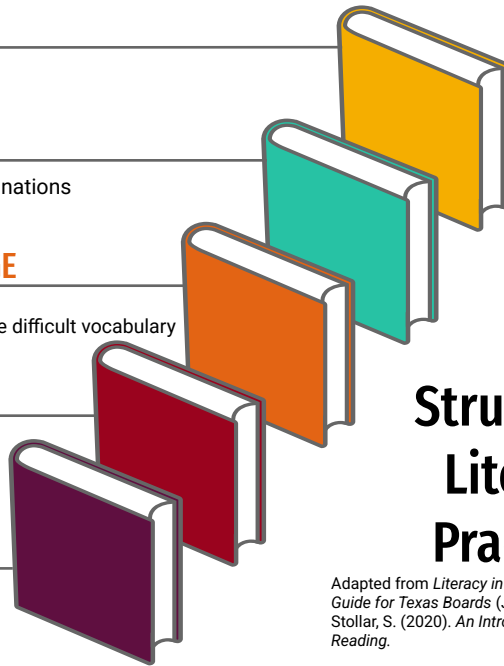
- Reference oral language for print
- Books used for read aloud may include more difficult vocabulary
- Scripted teacher dialogue

## TEXT READING FLUENCY

- Only read text using phonics patterns explicitly taught
- Building fluency after accuracy
- Immediate corrective feedback

## READING COMPREHENSION

- Modeling of background knowledge & text structure
- Strategies practiced in a planned progression



# Structured Literacy Practices

Adapted from *Literacy in Action - Science of Reading Guide for Texas Boards* (June 2024) quoting work of Stollar, S. (2020). *An Introduction to the Science of Reading*.

# Components of Explicit & Systematic Instruction

## Explicit

- New skills are modeled.
- Students are guided to the correct response.
- Immediate corrective feedback.
- Skills are practiced to mastery and automaticity.

## Sequential

- Skills taught in order from easier to harder. Pre-requisite skills taught first.
- Foundational skills taught directly to support higher-order skills.
- Sequence within & across lessons, as well as within & across grades.



Adapted from Stollar, S. (2020). *MTSS Mess Ups*. Cadence Learning. Original design by Literacy in Action.

## Systematic

- Use of consistent instructional routines to guide students to correct responses.
- Instructional time allocated to maximize time on task.
- Cumulative review.

## Differentiated

- Teacher-led instructional groups based on student data & observations.
- Students grouped with similar instructional needs.
- High-quality and consistent reinforcement of Tier 1 instruction.



# Multilingual Learners and Structured Literacy

- Effective reading teachers utilize all language domains for MLLs
- Allow MLLs to maintain and develop their home language
- Allow MLLs to share their backgrounds and cultures with the entire class



Fluency and vocabulary may be more difficult for multilingual learners

Adapted from MACTE: Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education: Reading Evaluation Tool 2-1-25

# Dyslexia and Structured Literacy



Students learn in various ways, and some difficulties do not have to be restrictions on what a person can achieve.



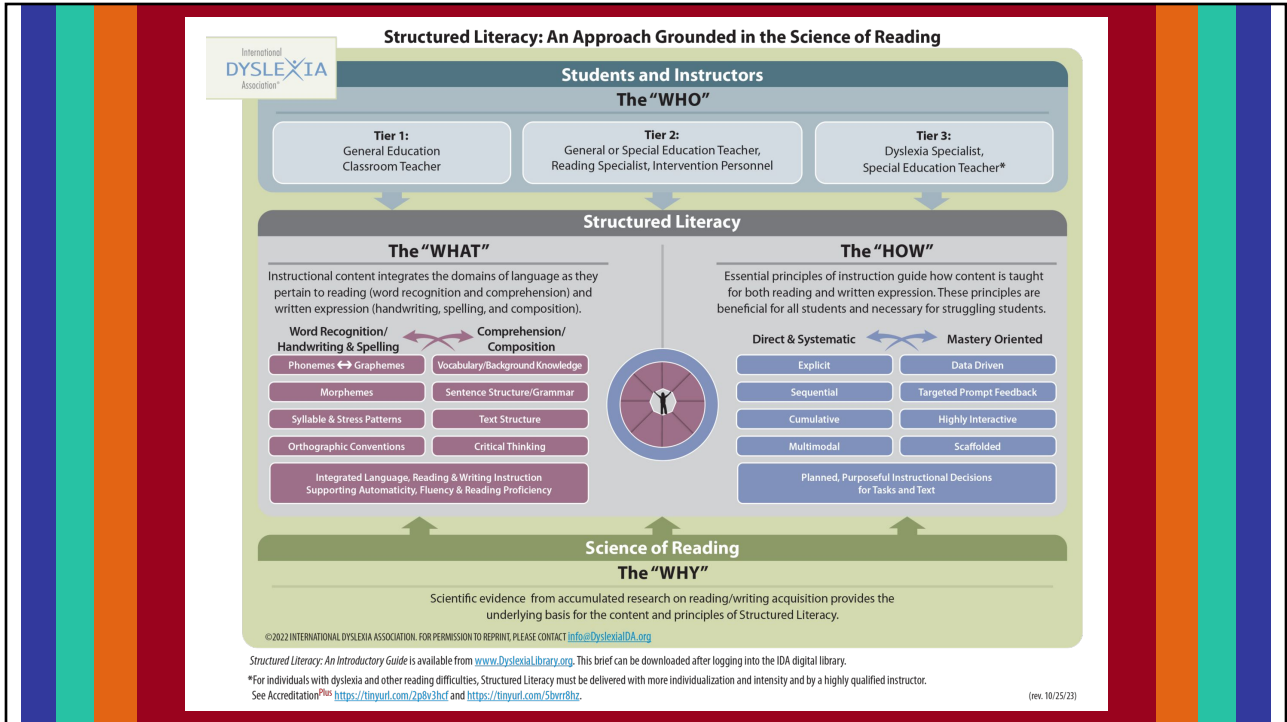
Effective reading teachers must continue to pursue professional development to be able to recognize and support students showing characteristics of dyslexia.



Explicit instruction must be planned, taught, assessed, and then adjusted based on students' needs in terms of intensity and the targeted skill/s.

TESOL: Trusted Global Community for Knowledge and Expertise in English Language Teaching-How the Science of Reading Applies to Multilingual Learners of English: Careful Consideration

<https://www.tesol.org/blog/posts/how-the-science-of-reading-applies-to-multilingual-learners-of-english-careful-consideration/>



**Teach with integrity!**

**Build your toolkit!**

**Teach with the best tools to reach each of your students!**



## Resources



- Afflerbach. (2021). *Teaching readers (not reading) - Moving beyond skills and strategies to reader-focused instruction*. Guilford.
- Blevins, W. (2023). *Phonics from A to Z - A practical guide* (4th e). Scholastic.
- Blevins, W. (2023). *Teaching phonics & word study in intermediate grades*. Scholastic.
- Burkins, J. & Yates, K. (2021). *Shifting the balance - Six ways to bring the Science of reading into the balanced literacy classroom (K-2)*. Routledge.
- Cárdenas-Hagan, E. (2020). *Literacy foundations for English learners - A comprehension guide to evidence-based instruction*. Brookes.
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- Honig, B., Diamond, L., Gutlohn, L. (eds. (2018). *Teaching reading sourcebook* (3rd e). CORE Learning.
- Geiger, A. (2024). *Reach all readers - Using the science of reading to transform your literacy instruction*. Jossey-Bass.
- Hennessy, N.L. (2020). *The reading comprehension blueprint - Helping students make meaning from text*. Brookes.
- Howell, M. (2023). *The science of reading in action - Brain-friendly strategies every teacher needs to know*. TeacherGoals Publishing.
- Kemeny, L. (2023). *Seven mighty moves - Research-based, classroom tested strategies to ensure K-3 reading success*. Scholastic.



## Resources



- Lems, K., Soro, T., & Charles, G. (2024). *Building literacy with multilingual learners - Insights from linguistics* (3rd e). Guilford.
- Moats, L. (2020). *Speech to print: Language essentials for teachers*. Brookes.
- Ryan, A. (2024). *The phonics playbook - How to differentiate instruction so student succeed*. Jossey-Bass.
- Spear-Swerling, L. (January/February 2019). Structured literacy and typical literacy practices - Understanding differences to create instructional opportunities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 201-211.
- Young, C., Paige, D., & Rasinski. (2022). *Artfully teaching the science of reading*. Routledge.
- <https://dyslexiaida.org/structured-literacy-effective-instruction-for-students-with-dyslexia-and-related-reading-difficulties/>
- <https://dyslexiaida.org/heres-why-schools-should-use-structured-literacy/>
- <https://www.tesol.org/blog/posts/how-the-science-of-reading-applies-to-multilingual-learners-of-english-careful-consideration/>



# Picture Book Resources



- Eide, Denise. (2022). *How your brain learns to read*. Logic of English.
- Esham, Babara. (2008). *If you're so smart, how come you can't spell mississippi - An extraordinary book about dyslexia and growth mindset for kids and resource for teachers and parents (The Adventures of Everyday Geniuses series)*.
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The not-so-spooky silent letters*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The overly controlling bossy r*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The very busy letter y*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The very clever consonant blends*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The very helpful floss rule*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2024). *The very talented silent e*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2023). *The very special heart words*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Manns, Yvette. (2022). *The not-so-lazy schwa*. (Phonics Read-Aloud series)
- Milne, Duncan. (2018). *How my brain learns to read*.

Template credit to [Slidesgo](#) and [Freepik](#).

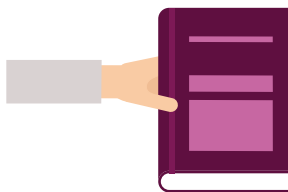
- [https://slidesgo.com/?utm\\_source=Slidesgo\\_template&utm\\_medium=referral-link&utm\\_campaign=SG\\_Credits&utm\\_content=slidesgo](https://slidesgo.com/?utm_source=Slidesgo_template&utm_medium=referral-link&utm_campaign=SG_Credits&utm_content=slidesgo)
- <https://www.freepik.com/>

## Looking Ahead...

June 12, 2025 with presentations at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 1:30 PM



<https://mlc-wels.edu/openlearning/>

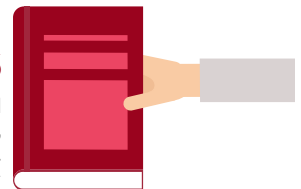


### WHOLE & SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION

Tune in and learn how both **whole group** and **small group instruction** are crucial in structured literacy instruction as they provide different but complementary benefits.  
- applicable for all grade levels

### THE PHONES

Tune in and learn more about instructional ideas for these critical elements of foundational instruction: **Phonological Awareness**, **Phonemic Awareness**, and **Phonics**.  
- applicable for all grades, but mainly focused on the primary grade levels



### VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

Tune in for ideas to engage students while developing vocabulary skills and strategies to support and improve reading comprehension.  
- applicable for all grade levels