

Using Existing Assets and Routines for Literacy Success

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According to research, children need

- To hear the sounds and syllables in spoken words
- To know letter names, how to write letters, and letter-sound relationships
- To know how to sound out words
- To know how words are used to build sentences (grammar)
- To know how ideas can be organized in paragraphs (including the ability to read and write for longer periods)
- To know word meanings using word parts (prefixes, bases, suffixes)
- To hear and know unfamiliar words to boost vocabulary

The Family Engagement Center at the Ohio State University

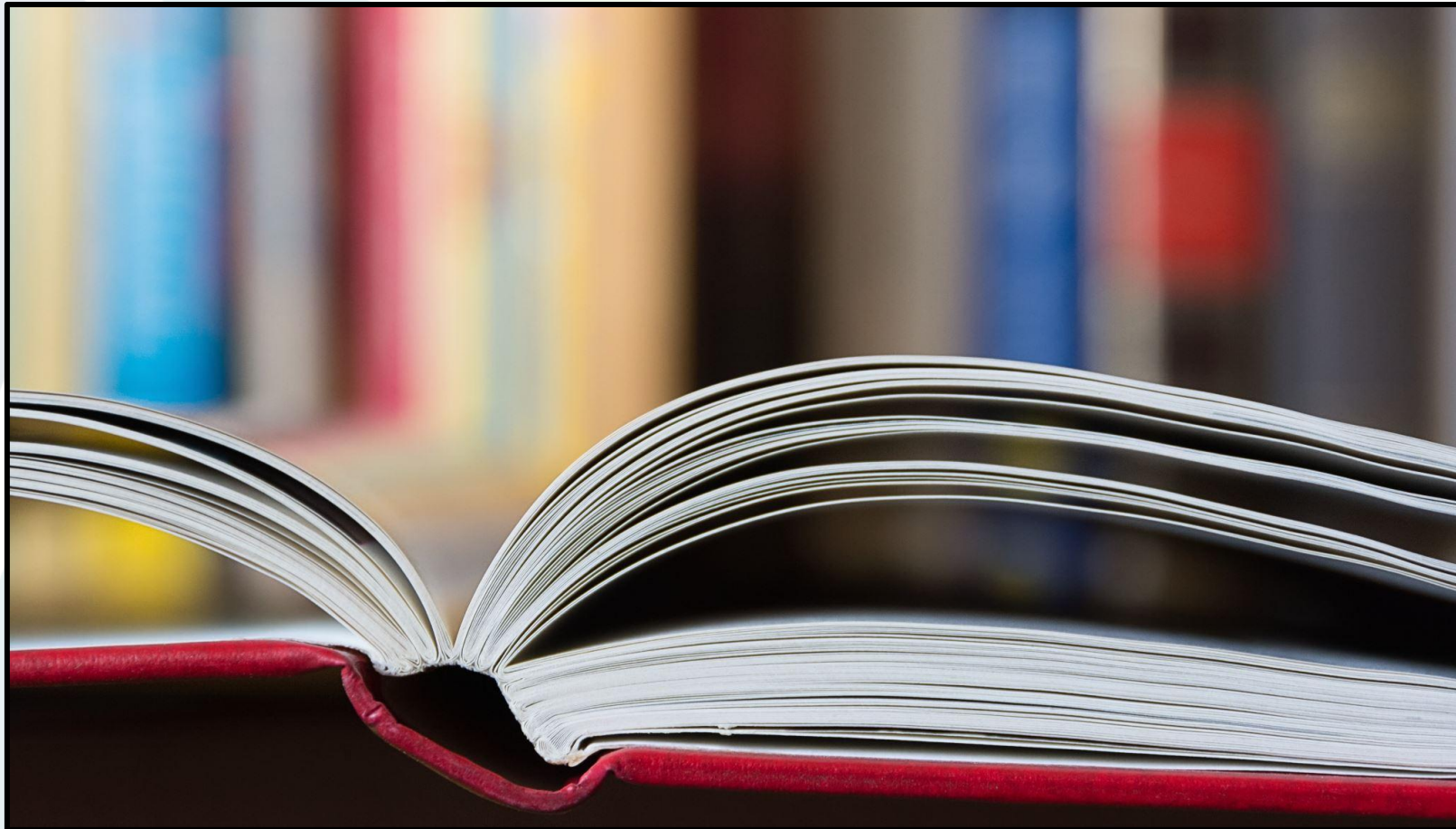
Why we should invest in early literacy

- Students who do not reach reading proficiency by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school
- Lower literacy ability has been associated with lower incomes as adults
- Children's language skills in preschool strongly predict their early reading success and their long-term outcomes
- Reading fiction correlates with higher ability for empathy

Engagement should be

- Developmentally appropriate
- Flexible (child-led)
- Systematic and embedded into routines
- Individualized

The Science of Reading



The Science of Reading Defined

What it explains

- How the brain learns to read
- The skills students need to become readers
- Why reading difficulties occur
- How to teach reading effectively – especially for struggling readers

The Science of Reading Continued

Key skill areas

- Phonological processing
- Phonics (sound-letter correspondences)
- Decoding and word recognition
- Spelling and written expression
- Language comprehension

Our shared goal

- Use evidence-based reading science to help all students become skilled, confident readers

Simple View of Reading

WR

Word
Reading
(decoding)

X

LC

Language
Comprehension
(oral language skills)

=

R

Reading
Comprehension
(reading with meaning)

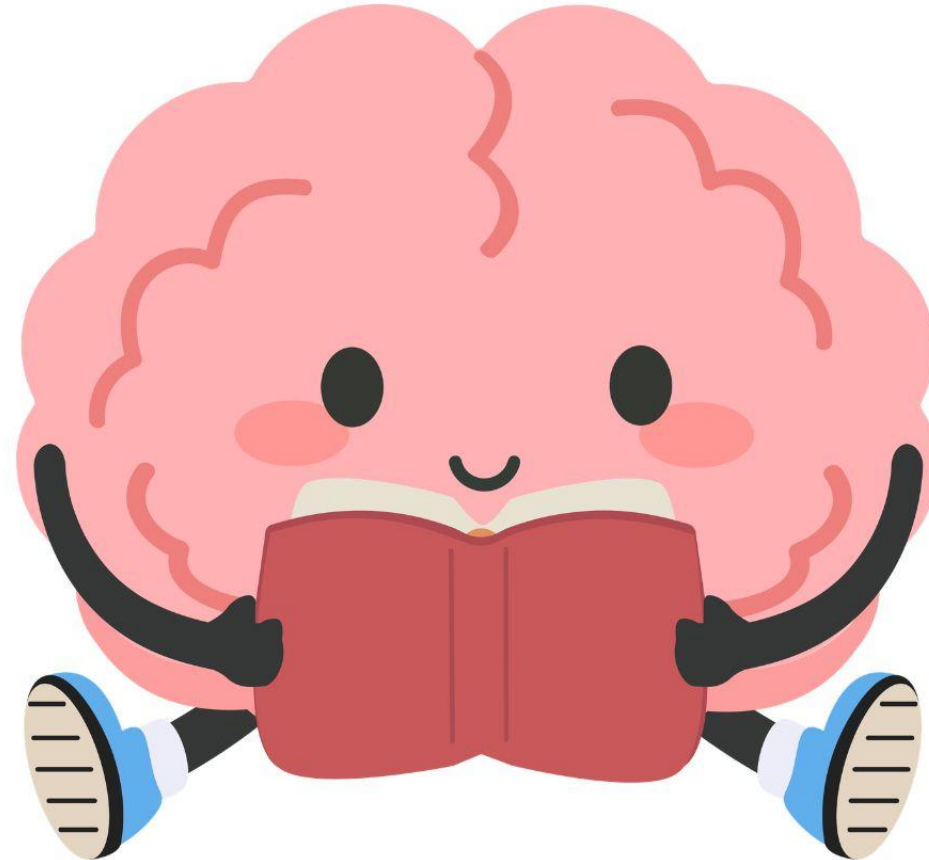
Simple View of Reading Continued

Reading difficulties may occur when students struggle with:

- Word recognition
- Language comprehension
- Both areas
- Co-existing conditions (e.g., attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))

Two Developmental Pathways to Reading Difficulty

The Phonological
Pathway to Dyslexia



The Language
Pathway to Reading
Comprehension
Difficulties

Dyslexia: A Specific Learning Disability

Students with dyslexia typically struggle in two key areas:

Word-level reading

- Recognizing words automatically (building sight vocabulary)
- Decoding words using letter-sound relationships
- Spelling sound-symbol patterns and word parts

Fluency: Accuracy, speed, or both

Some students:

- Misread words (accuracy)
- Reading accurately but painfully slow (speed)
- Struggle with both

Dyslexia: What Does it Mean Continued

Dyslexia exists on a continuum and persists despite effective instruction

- Severity can range from mild to moderate or severe
- Reading difficulties are not caused by poor instruction or missing instruction
- Early intervention matters

Dyslexia Causes

Dyslexia has complex causes

- Dyslexia is not caused by a single gene or dyslexia spot in the brain
- Neuroscience does not support using brain scans to diagnose dyslexia

Multiple factors can influence reading development

- Biological influences: Genetic and neurobiological factors, environmental influences

Early health and nutrition

- Exposure to oral language and books
- Stability, stress, and trauma
- Quality of reading instruction

Dyslexia and Oral Language

Early oral language weaknesses often show up before reading problems

Phonological Process

segmenting, blending, deleting, and substituting sounds

These skills make it possible to map letters to sounds and build words in print

Morphology Process

Word parts: prefixes, suffixes, roots (un-, -ed, struct)

Support both decoding and spelling

Oral Language Development Process

Delays or weakness in spoken language

Dyslexia's Potential Impact

Dyslexia can affect academic growth

- Challenges with **reading comprehension**
 - Avoiding reading limits vocabulary, exposure to complex sentences, and the building background knowledge
- Reduces reading and writing practice
 - Writing becomes difficult due to spelling, handwriting/typing, grammar, and generating ideas at the same time

Potential long-term impacts

- Lower academic performance
- Fewer opportunities for advanced coursework, graduation, and college and career choices
- Social and emotional impacts may include anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, and shame related to reading or school

Dyslexia and Interventions

- **Early identification and instruction matter**
 - Identification and targeted instruction are important at any age
 - Language and literacy support is most effective in the early years
- **Students do not "outgrow" dyslexia**
 - Screening and support should begin early
 - Difficulties often continue into upper grades
- **Supports must be ongoing**
 - Targeted and intensive instruction should be provided **across all grade levels when needed**
- **Accommodations provide access**
 - Audiobooks, extra time, and reduced decoding demands
 - Accommodations are not cheating – they are access tools

Component Areas of Effective Literacy Instruction

Essential Seven

- Phonological Awareness (Phonemic Awareness)
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Reading Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Oral Language (receptive and expressive)
- Writing

Word Level Reading (Word Recognition)

Word-level Reading includes

- **Phonological awareness:** Awareness of syllables and phonemes
- **Decoding (Phonics Skills):** Alphabetic principle, sound-spelling correspondence
- **Sight Recognition:** Reading familiar words automatically

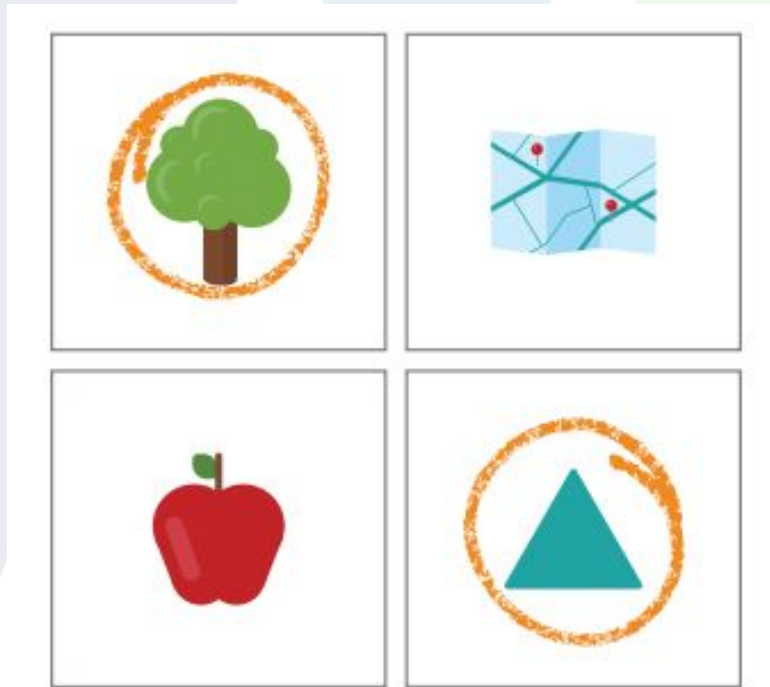
Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is made up of a group of skills, including:



- Identifying words that rhyme (bat, mat, cat)
- Counting the number of syllables in a name (No/ah)
- Recognizing alliteration (The big, boy bought a bike)
- Segmenting a sentence into words (/The/ /sky/ /is/ /blue/)
- Identifying syllables in a word (/do/, /o/, /g/)
- Develop phonemic awareness (isolate the beginning and ending sound)

Phonemic Awareness

- Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify, hear, and manipulate the individual sounds in spoken words
- Phoneme identification (first, middle, and end sound)



Student Example:

1				
2				

Phonemic Awareness Continued

Segmenting and Blending

- Combining, blending the separate sounds (“/c/, /a/, /t/ - cat”)
- Breaking or segmenting a word into its separate sounds (“up - /u/, /p/)

Advanced phonemic Awareness

- Phoneme Substitution: Replacing one sound with another (“change the /a/ in ‘bat’ to /i/” = “bit”)
- Phonemic Deletion (“say hand; don’t /n/” = had)
- Phoneme Reversal: Flip the order of sounds (“change ‘tab’ to ‘bat’”)
- Phoneme Addition: Add a phoneme to a word to create a new one (“say: seed; instead of /d/ say /t/” = seat)

Phonics Instruction

- **Alphabetic Principle:** Letters represent spoken sounds in an organized, predictable way
- **Sound-Letter Relationships:** Students learn how written letters map to spoken sounds (e.g., the letter *m* represents /m/ in mat, mine, moth)
- **Application:** Students use these relationships to decode both familiar and unfamiliar words
- **Phonics instruction must be:**
 - **Systematic** – logical sequence, practice opportunities, monitored progress
 - **Explicit** – precise directions following an I do, we do, you do pattern

The Building Blocks to Literacy

Early reading instruction begins with learning:

- Phonological awareness (phonemic awareness)
- Phonics skills (connecting the letter sounds to written letters and words)
- Reading fluency

Which students use to build:

- Vocabulary skills
- Listening and reading comprehension (background knowledge)
- Oral language skills
- Writing skills

To become students who are skilled readers

What can families do and why they should

- Intentional play opportunities
 - Feedback loops
 - Prompting with questions
 - Valuing what they say
- Language interventions can improve children's language skills
- Early language ability is a strong predictor of later reading development
- Parallel and self-talk
- Reading with your child (read aloud)
- Reading is not natural, **but** storytelling is

Dr. Joyce Epstein's Framework for Family Involvement

1. **Parenting:** Support families to build their parenting skills and awareness of how home conditions support learning
2. **Communicating:** Foster two-way communication
3. **Volunteering:** Opportunities across various locations, times, and methods
4. **Learning at home:** Build academic skills of parents and/or provide them with resources to support at-home learning
5. **Decision Making:** Include families in decisions, goal-setting, and empower them as leaders
6. **Collaborating with the community:** Coordinate resources and services with community partners

At-Home Activities

- **Cooking Together**
- **Counting Down**
- **Color Matching**
- **Snack Time Letters** (their names and sounds) **and Counting**
- **Singing:** Increases the ability to retain information
- **Nonsense word play**
- **Conversations**

Early writing: Writing is the Production of Ideas

Writing their own stories

See, say, and write: Show an object, engage in an open discussion, and think aloud about the writing process as you write while your children observe

What Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) can do

- Foster (expanded) parent leadership opportunities
- Leverage existing momentum for organizing, decision-making, and awareness building
- Build parenting, social, and academic skills for families
- Launch a campaign to develop knowledge and skills on how to read and interpret data, and what data is most meaningful when assessing your child's grade-level proficiency
- Implement hands-on, intervention pilot programs

Adapted from Parent Shield- Fort Worth

Additional Examples

- [Read LA! Literacy Ambassadors](#)
- [Oakland REACH](#)
- [Wayne School District's \(Utah\) Community Wellness Nights](#)

How to Share Resources with Families

- Community Nights
- Multi-media
- Peer networks

Resources for Families



Reading Rockets



National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)



The Utah State Board of Education Dyslexia Handbook



Milo and Friends

Connect with us on social media



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- Utah PTA
- Utah PTA Advocacy
- Utah PTA Super Secondary
- Utah PTA Excellent Elementary
- Utah PTA Treasurers
- Utah PTA Reflections
- Utah School Community Councils
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