

Louisiana Believes

Louisiana Early Literacy Commission
September 9, 2019



Early Literacy Commission

Commission Charge

The Early Literacy Commission is tasked with:

- gathering and analyzing data to determine the degree to which evidence-based reading is being implemented with fidelity in the state's public schools and childhood care and education settings;
- conducting an assessment of the number of practicing educators, including K-3 teachers, special education teachers, and reading specialists, with training and skills in evidence-based reading instruction; and
- assessing the degree to which state colleges of education and alternative certification programs provide a program of study on evidence-based reading practices for K-3 teachers, special education teachers, and education specialists.

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In January of 2020, the Early Literacy Commission will make its final recommendations to BESE and the Legislature regarding:

- how the state might ensure that all teacher preparation programs produce teacher candidates with the competencies needed to teach evidence-based instruction from day one;
- how to assist school systems to adopt reading programs that utilize systematic and cumulative evidence-based reading instruction; and
- how the state can equip educators with the evidence-based competencies and skills needed to ensure the reading proficiency of third grade students.

The Early Literacy Commission will also develop and propose a timeframe for increasing the reading proficiency of third grade students and establish benchmarks for the intervening years.



Reading: The Current State

Literacy Outcomes

Progress has been made, but deep problems persist.

- 4th grade reading results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have stagnated in the U.S. over the last decade. In 2017, 35 percent of 4th grade students demonstrated full or advanced reading proficiency. Nearly a third do not demonstrate basic reading proficiency.
- NAEP 4th grade reading in Louisiana has generally improved. Average NAEP scale score performance in the years 2002 and 2003 was 207-205. In the years 2015 and 2017, average scale score performance was 216-212 (national performance moved more modestly in the years from 218-219 to 223-222). However, in 2015 and 2017, between 37 and 44 percent of Louisiana grade 4 students demonstrated reading skills below basic proficiency.
- LEAP 2025 grade 3 ELA proficiency has improved for each of the last five years. However, fewer than half of 3rd grade students demonstrated full reading mastery in 2019. Louisiana students in grades K-3 participate in screeners within 30 days of school starting each year. Fewer than half of students were on or above level in Fall 2018.

Consequences

Reading skill is necessary for productive participation in work and society.

- Students who do not read proficiently by the end of the third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school, and those who have not mastered at least a basic level of reading proficiency are nearly six times as likely to leave school without earning a diploma.
- Students who are not proficient in reading as third graders make up nearly two-thirds of the students who fail to graduate on time from high school.
- Eighty-five percent of all juveniles who come into contact with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate, as are sixty percent of all prison inmates.

Reflecting

Our youngest students are struggling in reading. While there are signs of progress, the progress is too slow and must be accelerated.

The good news is that there is abundant research on how families and schools can contribute to improved reading levels.

“A series of scientific reports have yielded consistent findings on the importance of learning to read in the early stages, where the chance of making a difference is greatest. All assert the value of powerful reading instruction that prevents and ameliorates weaknesses in component language skills.”

Moats and Tolman, 2019

Digging In

Locate [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade Practice Guide Summary](#) in your folder.

The four evidence-based recommendations in this guide support teachers in developing students' foundational reading skills.

Please read the Introduction on pages 1-2.

Digging In

Read the recommendation from the practice guide that matches your number.

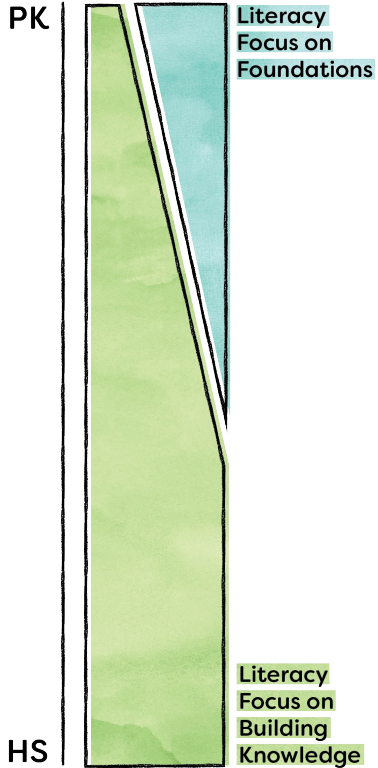
1. Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge.
2. Develop awareness of the segments of sound in speech and how they link to letters.
3. Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words.
4. Ensure that each student reads connected text every day to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

Each group will share out key points with the whole group.



Literacy

About Literacy



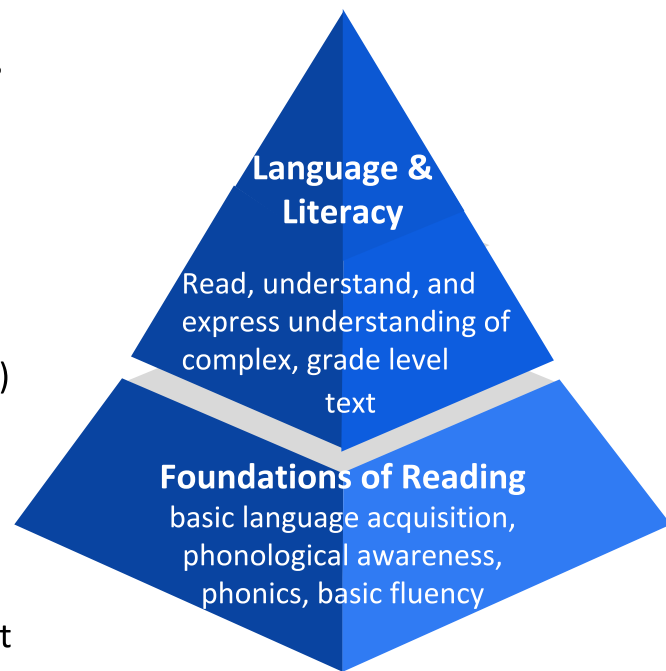
In early grades, literacy instruction focuses heavily on the foundations while not ignoring language and literacy that builds knowledge.

As grade levels progress, literacy instruction focuses heavily on language and literacy that builds knowledge while not ignoring foundations.

About Literacy in Early Grades

Learning to read is a complex, multifaceted process that generally follows a vertical progression but is also cyclical in nature. Students do not move cleanly from one phase to the next; for example, they continuously develop language as they develop the other skills. At the risk of being overly simplistic, the broad **stages of reading** are:

- Basic language acquisition (begins at birth and continues throughout life)
- Phonological awareness—the awareness of sounds themselves (ages 3-6) **(foundations)**
- Phonics -- the ability to decode a sound to match a letter/letters (ages 4-8) **(foundations)**
- Fluency -- accurate and automatic reading of words, phrases, sentences, and longer texts (ages 5-10) **(foundations)**
- Reading comprehension -- read, understand, and express understanding; dependent upon language, background knowledge and fluency attainment **(language and literacy)**



Foundations

Stage	Pre-K	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade
Phonological Awareness	Sentence/syllable segmentation Initial sounds in spoken words	Individual sounds in CVC spoken words	Individual sounds in single-syllable words	
Phonics	Letter names and some letter sounds	Produces primary sound for each consonant	Regularly spelled one-syllable words	Regularly spelled two-syllable words
Fluency		Phrases and simple sentences	Grade-level connected text	Grade-level connected text

PreK-2 Progression Examples

Component	PreK	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade
Phonological Awareness	Identifies Initial Sounds	Segments sounds in CVC words	Segments sounds in words with blends	Substitutes sounds in words to build new words
Phonics	Names 26 of 52 upper- or lower-case letters	Produces primary sound for each consonant	Decodes regularly spelled one-syllable words	Decodes regularly spelled two-syllable words
Fluency		Reads phrases and simple sentences	Reads grade-level texts fluently on successive readings	Reads grade-level texts fluently on successive readings
Language/Vocabulary	Uses frequently occurring nouns	Uses frequently occurring verbs	Uses frequently occurring adjectives	Uses frequently occurring adverbs
Comprehension	With prompting and support, describe some events in a text	With prompting and support, describe the connection between two events in a text	Describe the connection between two events in a text	Describe the connection between a series of events in a text
Writing	Draws, dictates, and/or writes about an event	Uses invented spelling to describe a single event	Uses a combination of invented and conventional spelling to describe two or more sequenced events	Uses mostly conventional spelling to recount a well elaborated event



Learning to Read: What We Know

Turn and Talk

Individually, take 5 minutes to review your pre-reading.

- [Hard Words](#) by Emily Hanford with companion [video](#)
- [Reading by Third Grade: How Policymakers can Foster Early Literacy](#) by Nell Duke

Discuss the following question with your shoulder partner:

Based on these articles, what are some of the most important actions that we should take as a commission?

How is learning to read different from learning to speak?

Why is it important that reading education is research based?

How Do We Learn to Read?

Let's Watch

- [The Science of Reading](#)

For Discussion

- Share one thing that you wish everyone knew about the science of reading.

A Call to Action

Research has documented what works to get kids to read, yet those evidence-based reading practices appear to be missing from many classrooms.

Let's Watch

- [“What Teachers Should Know About the Science of Reading”](#)

What is going on in our classrooms that is contributing to our reading problem?

Knowledge Matters

Let's Watch

- ["A Simple Step Towards Improving Student Literacy"](#)

Question to Consider:

- Why is knowledge important when reading?

The Challenge of Learning to Read

Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure.
While programs are very helpful tools, programs don't teach;
teachers do.

-Louisa C. Moats

Understanding the Science of Reading: Teachers

Let's Watch

- ["Can Science Bridge the Classroom Gap"](#)

Question to Consider

- What do teachers need?



The background of the slide features a world map rendered in a light blue, watercolor-like style. The map is centered and occupies most of the frame. Overlaid on the map are horizontal, light blue lines that resemble the ruling on a piece of paper. The text is centered horizontally and vertically on the map.

Reading: Areas to Explore

Reminder: Commission Charge

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Goal: Brainstorming

Individually, draft an overall goal.

For example, a goal might start like this: By third grade, all Louisiana students

Be prepared to share your goal.

Working Towards the Goal

Group Discussion: What is needed to achieve the goal? (examples below)

- Teachers
 - Implement evidence-based reading with fidelity
 - Are provided a program of study on evidence-based reading practices by state colleges of education and alternative certification programs
- Parents and families
 - Receive timely feedback on student progress
- PK-2 District and School Leadership
 - Understand evidence-based reading instruction
- PK-2 literacy data
 - Collect to ensure that all students are on target to achieve reading proficiency by third grade

Working Towards the Goal

Fill-in-the-blank: Recommendations that achieve the goal should be ____.

- Research based
- Scalable
- Cost-efficient
- Leverage existing support structures as much as possible
- Seamlessly integrate into Department of Education structures
- May need to take the best from multiple models

Next Steps

- To achieve the goal, what is needed in future meetings?
- Next Meeting: October 14, 2019
- Potential Topics for Next Meeting
 - Initial fall observation data
 - Current LDOE literacy initiatives
 - Case Studies
 - Louisiana Classrooms
 - Higher Education