

Top Ten Things that Every Literacy Leader (Administrator) Needs to Know

Office of Curriculum and Instruction
Division of Literacy

mdek12.org



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

MASS 2025



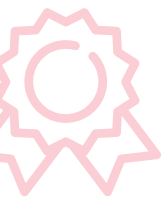
VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens



MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community



1

ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



2

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



3

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

4



EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

5



EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher

6



1. What is the Science of Reading (SOR)?
2. What models support the SOR?
3. Why are High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) important?
4. What is the difference in standards-based and standards-aligned instruction?
5. What is the difference in screeners, diagnostics, and progress monitoring?
6. What is the difference in structured literacy and balanced literacy?
7. What is effective Tier I instruction?
8. What is the difference in remediation, enrichment, and intervention?
9. What is the importance of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)?
10. What is effective feedback?

1

Science of Reading

The Science of Reading (SOR) aims to equip every individual with the essential skill of reading to improve literacy outcomes by understanding how the brain learns to read, leading to greater academic success and lifelong learning.

WHAT

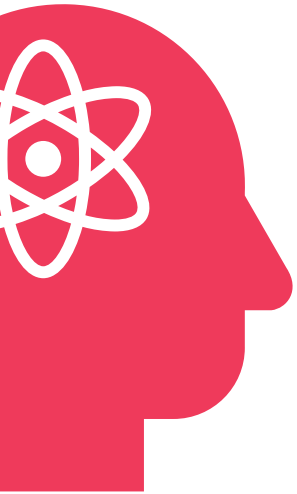
- A research-based framework that explains how people learn to read and identifies the most effective teaching methods.
- Emphasizes that reading comprehension is dependent on two key components: **word recognition (decoding) and language comprehension.**

WHY

The Science of Reading (SOR) is crucial in education because it provides a research-backed, evidence-based approach to teaching reading and writing, leading to improved literacy outcomes and empowering teachers with effective strategies.

HOW

- Applied through a systematic, explicit, and sequential approach for teaching literacy skills called Structured Literacy, which addresses both word recognition and language comprehension.





2

SOR Models

Scarborough's Reading Rope is an expansion of the Simple View of Reading. The models suggest that reading comprehension is the product of two complex and crucial components, meaning that if either word recognition or language comprehension is weak, reading comprehension will suffer.

WHAT

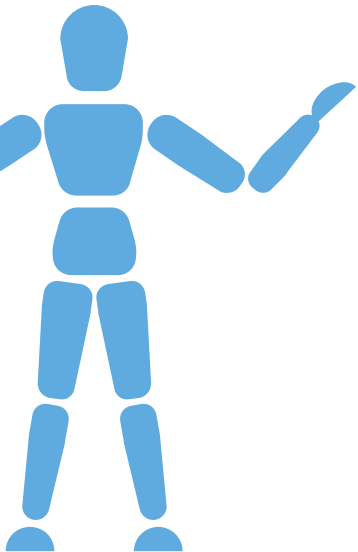
- Simple View of Reading (Gough and Tumner 1990)
- Scarborough's Rope (2001)

WHY

Word Recognition and **Language Comprehension** are THE two (2) components that lead to reading comprehension.

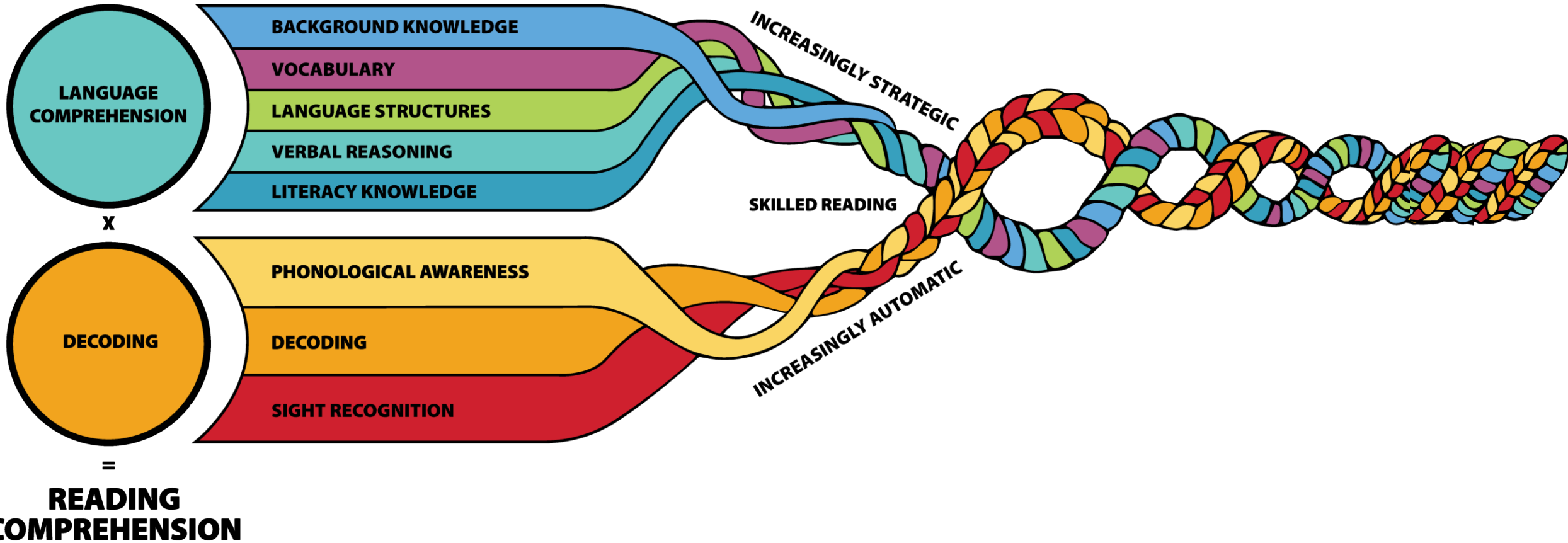
HOW

Use HQIM to effectively teach word recognition and language comprehension, focus on explicit phonics instruction, vocabulary development within reading contexts, fluency practice, and engaging students in text-based discussions and comprehension strategies.



**SIMPLE VIEW
OF READING**

SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE



3

High-Quality Instructional Materials

Access to High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) is a critical piece in providing a fair opportunity for instruction to ALL students in Mississippi.

WHAT

Mississippi Definition:

- **aligned** with the Mississippi College- and Career- Readiness Standards
- **externally validated**
- **comprehensive**
- includes **engaging** texts (books, multimedia, etc.), problems, and assessments


WHY

- Identifies students' strengths and weaknesses
- Builds knowledge of the world
- Provides consistency in delivery of instructional practices
- Supports students with diverse needs
- Supports teachers in delivering high quality instruction

HOW

- Form an implementation team
- Provide high-quality professional learning on the selected HQIM
- Follow the HQIM design and pacing for standards aligned instruction
- Ensure fidelity and consistency in the delivery of HQIM lessons





Office of Elementary Education and Reading, Division of Literacy

WHY HQIM?

INCENTIVES FOR ADOPTION

High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) can be used to identify students' areas of strength and opportunities for growth, which are sequentially mapped and designed to prepare students to graduate ready for college and the workforce, educative for teachers, and accessible to students with differentiated needs.

HQIM BENEFITS TO TEACHERS

- reduces the number of hours spent pulling resources
- returns the focus to instruction and texts that are on grade-level
- provides the "how" of the MS CCRS
- sets expectations and supports student learning through intended outcomes
- advances the craft of teaching by providing a shared body of knowledge
- provides embedded opportunities to

HQIM BENEFITS TO ADMINISTRATION

- dismantles systemic inequalities
- expands equitable access to meaningful learning experiences
- increases teacher retention
- provides the common set of tools and knowledge infrastructure needed for learning to transcend traditional classroom boundaries
- closes achievement gaps
- establishes a common language and set of expectations

ment
ork of

e levels,
dge

orway to broader
a strong, resilient K12
student-centered
articipatory problem
uit of equitable

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS
of purchasing through the portal:

- 5% shipping
- No Reverse Bid Process Needed
- Purchasing efficiency: Amount of time to receive materials reduced
- Cost reductions
- Purchases recorded in Textbook Inventory Management System (TMS)

Resource:
[Curriculum: Not Your Average Silver Bullet](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS


Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter


The *Science of Reading (SOR)* refers to a body of research that has identified the most effective ways to teach children to read. This research has shown that high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) can play a critical role in supporting the science of reading.

HQIM that are designed based on the science of reading principles provide explicit and systematic instruction in phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. These materials are aligned with the latest research on how students learn to read and are designed to ensure that all students receive the instruction they need to become proficient readers.

HQIM can also provide teachers with the tools and resources they need to deliver effective instruction. They can include detailed lesson plans, instructional routines, assessments, and other materials that support best practices in teaching reading. By using HQIM, teachers save time and ensure that they provide high-quality instruction backed by research.



[Science of Reading Classroom: Implementing HQIM](#) (Video)
[Science of Reading Classroom: Implementing HQIM](#) (PDF Handout)





MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND READING
OFFICE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION




English Language Arts

High-Quality
Instructional Materials

Roadmap to Text Adoption







Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter Resources (MIMM)

14

MIMM provides resources for districts that have adopted or not yet adopted.

Instructional materials are important for Mississippi teachers. With High-Quality Instructional Materials, they can bring lessons to life and inspire their students to learn and grow.

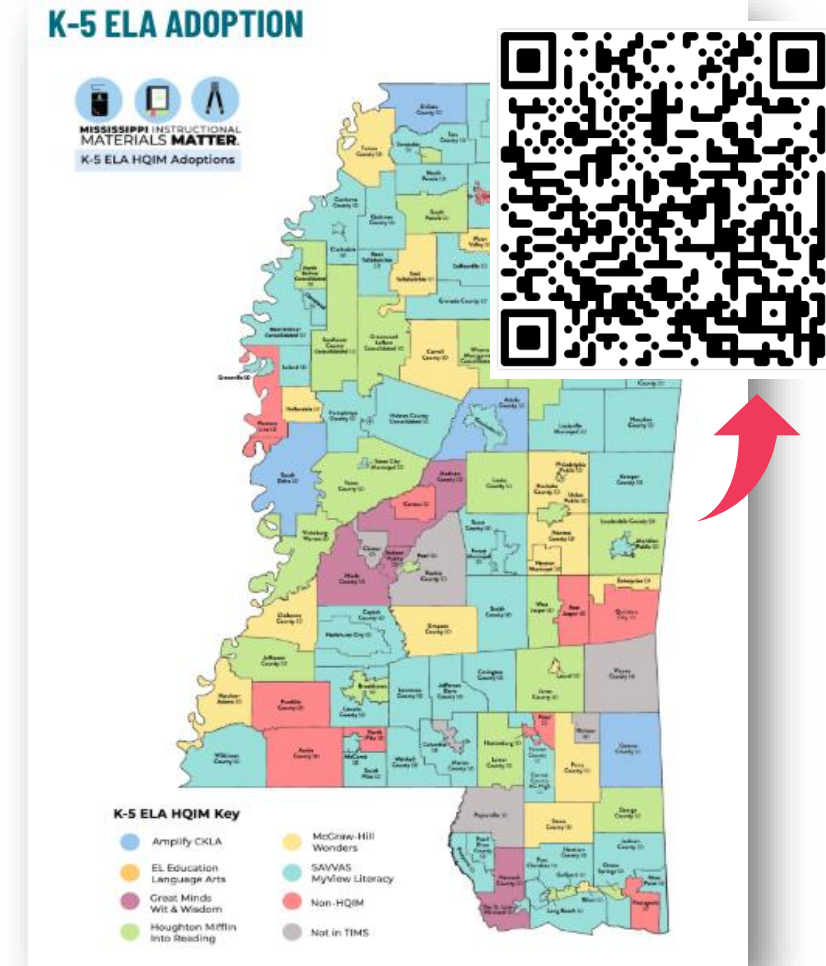
ADOPTION SAMPLES SITE ›

8 ELEMENTS OF
EFFECTIVE
IMPLEMENTATION ›

<https://msinstructionalmaterials.org/>



The **Division of Literacy** provides district-requested training on each of the adopted ELA high quality instructional materials.



HQIM PD Request: Lydia Aderholt, laderholt@mdek12.org

4

Standards-Aligned Instruction vs. Standards-Based Instruction

Standards-aligned instruction is arguably more critical because it ensures that all aspects of instruction, curriculum, and assessment are intentionally and consistently connected to the MSCCR standards, leading to more effective teaching and learning.

WHAT

- **Coherence:** Alignment ensures that all components are working together to achieve mastery of the standard by EOY.
- **Accuracy:** When instruction and assessment are aligned, educators can gain a more accurate understanding of student learning and progress.

WHY

- **Effectiveness:** Alignment helps to ensure that students are provided with the opportunities and support they need to master the standards.
- **Fairness:** Alignment can help to close learning gaps and promote fairness by ensuring that all students have access to the same HQIM and assessment.

HOW

Consistently implement high quality instructional materials (HQIM) as designed, following the intended scope and sequence and utilizing formative and summative assessments provided by the HQIM.




Standard mastery takes time.

Students need exposure and extended time on themes/topics with different types of texts.


Standards spiral throughout HQIM units for end of year mastery.

STANDARDS-ALIGNED VS STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTION

The term **STANDARDS-ALIGNED INSTRUCTION** directly correlates with the design of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and the use of a text-first approach. High quality texts are the central focus of lessons, are at the appropriate grade level text complexity, and are accompanied by quality tasks aligned to the MS CCRS in service to grow literacy skills.

 All standards are important and should not be taught in isolation. Mississippi does not recognize “power” or priority standards.

Standards-Based Instruction	Standards-Aligned Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilizes Mississippi CCR StandardsStandards-first instructionConsiders the standard in isolationFocuses on “learning targets” that simplify a standardStandards are taught using a memorization/definition approach: i.e., WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilizes Mississippi CCR StandardsAuthentic text-based content knowledgeConsiders parts of the wholeFocuses on connecting and “applying” a skillStandards are spiraled throughout the year
Curriculum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Often includes creating curriculum or pulling passages based on one (1) standardUtilizes simple texts based on quantitative measures (readability and text levels: based on vocabulary, sentence length)Standards are taught the same for all textsFocuses on a pacing guide that is often internally created, mini lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensures that the MS CCR Standards are metUtilizes complex texts and focuses on building key skillsUnderstands the what type of text



Scan for full document

5

Assessment

Screeners assessments, diagnostic assessments, and progress monitoring are vital in education because they help identify students at risk, pinpoint specific areas of need, and track the effectiveness of interventions, ultimately leading to more personalized and effective instruction.

SCREENER

This involves assessing all students to identify those who may be at risk for academic difficulties, allowing for early intervention and support.

DIAGNOSTIC

These assessments delve deeper into specific areas of concern identified through screening, helping educators pinpoint the root causes of learning challenges, and tailor instruction accordingly.

PROGRESS MONITOR

This involves regularly assessing students' progress to determine if interventions are effective and to make adjustments as needed, ensuring students are making adequate growth.

Assessments <i>FOR</i> Learning						
Type	Why	What	Who	When	Analogy	Examples
Universal Screeners	Which students are at risk? What systems are at risk?	Brief, standardized assessments of key literacy skills assessing all students to identify those who may be at risk for academic difficulties, allowing for early intervention and support.	ALL students	Beginning, middle, and end of the year	Blood pressure or temperature check Is there a problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Istation (ISIP) I-Ready STAR NWEA FAST mCLASS
Diagnostic Assessments	What skills does this student have? What skills need to be taught?	In-depth, often unstandardized assessments to determine specific areas of concern identified through screening, helping educators pinpoint the root causes of learning challenges, and tailor instruction accordingly.	Students at risk	When problem-solving for differentiated instruction and intervention	Blood test or diagnostic imaging What is the problem? What do we need to do about it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Phonics Survey Really Great Reading Decoding Survey Acadience Comprehension, Fluency and Oral Language Diagnostic

Assessments *FOR* Learning

Type	Why	What	Who	When	Analogy	Examples
Progress Monitoring	Is our instruction working? Do we need to change course?	Regularly assessing students' progress to determine if interventions are effective and to adjust as needed, ensuring students are making adequate growth.	Students at risk	Weekly or bi-weekly to allow for quick (1-3 minutes) adjustments based on response to instruction	GPS system Are we going in the right direction? Will we get there on time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acadience (formerly DIBELS NEXT) Dibels 8th Edition AimsWeb Plus FastBridge easyCBM

Assessments *OF* Learning

Type	Why	What	Who	When	Analogy	Examples
Outcome Evaluation	Have students learned what we need them to know? Did our instruction work?	Evaluations of mastery of learning goals of curriculum expectations	ALL students	After unit completion or at the end of the school year	Time on a running race How did we do? What can we learn for next time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summative assessments and (e.g. unit tests, projects and assignments)• HQIM Benchmark assessments• MAAP



UNIVERSAL SCREENER COMPANION GUIDE

Finding the Right Starting Point for Reading Interventions



6

Structured Literacy vs. Balanced Literacy

Structured literacy, with its explicit and systematic approach to teaching reading, is superior to balanced literacy because it provides a more robust foundation for decoding and language comprehension, particularly for struggling readers, and is grounded in the science of reading.

WHAT

Structured Literacy (SL) is an approach to teaching reading and writing that emphasizes explicit and systematic instruction in all essential components of literacy including:

Phonology,
Orthography, Syntax,
Semantics, Morphology,
and Discourse.

WHY

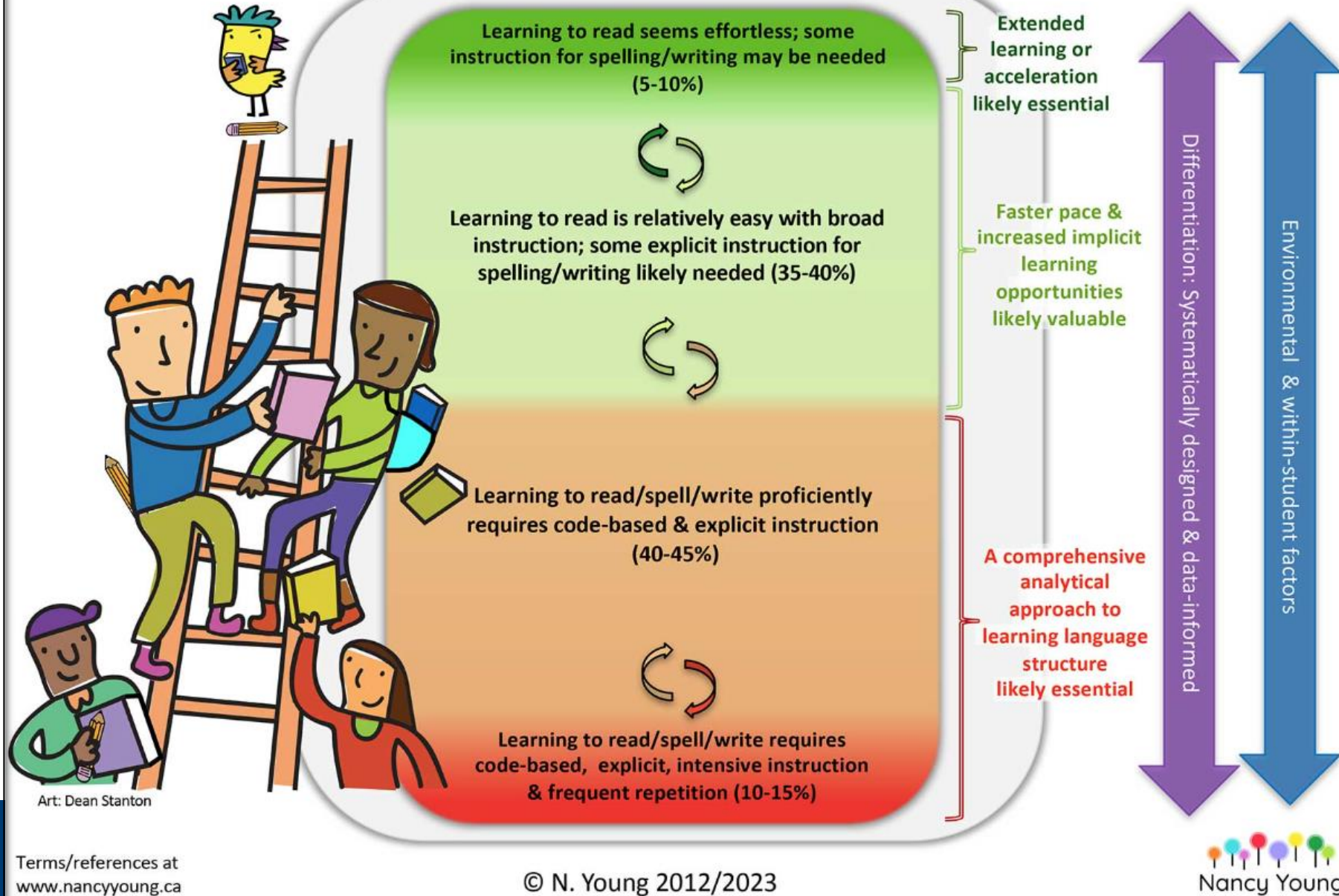
SL is particularly beneficial for students who are learning to read, by providing them with the direct, explicit instruction they need to develop strong reading skills, rather than relying on implicit learning or guessing.

HOW

To implement structured literacy, focus on explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction, using a diagnostic approach to assess student needs and adjust instruction accordingly.



The Ladder of Reading & Writing



Structured Literacy Elements: "POSSM"



5



PHONOLOGY: The study of the sound systems of a language. <How sounds function in a particular language; Sound patterns; Phonemes and how they're organized; *In English, the sounds /p/ and /b/ differentiate pat and bat.*>



ORTHOGRAPHY: The conventional spelling system of a language. <Rules for writing words; Use of letters, punctuation, and capitalization; Spelling conventions (even when they don't match pronunciation); *The word knight has silent letters that don't reflect how it's spoken.*>



SEMANTICS: The study of meaning in language. <Word meanings, sentence meanings, and how context influences meaning; Literal vs. figurative meaning; Word relationships (e.g., synonyms, antonyms); *The word bank can mean a financial institution or the side of a river.*>



SYNTAX: The set of rules that governs the structure of sentences. <Word order; Sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb-object); How phrases and clauses are combined; *In English, "The cat chased the mouse" is correct, but "Chased cat the mouse the" is not.*>



MORPHOLOGY: The study of the structure and formation of words. <Morphemes (the smallest units of meaning); Word roots, prefixes, and suffixes; How words change form (e.g., for tense or number); *The word unhappiness has three morphemes: un- (negation), happy, and -ness (state or quality).*>

BALANCED LITERACY

Holistic; Discover how to read by immersion,
Integrates various methods and activities

Meaning-making, context, and visual cues

May be short and not systematic; 3 Cueing;
Leveled Readers; Memorization of HF Words

Disconnected texts and mini-vocabulary
lessons; Isolated Skills; Text are chosen on
quantitative measures

Based on reading level, which can be arbitrary

Less emphasis on evidence-based practices

Running Records and isolated standard
assessments

For students to learn to love reading

FEATURES

INSTRUCTIONAL
APPROACH

FOCUS

WORD RECOGNITION
STRATEGIES

LANGUAGE
COMPREHENSION
STRATEGIES

GROUPING

EVIDENCE BASE

ASSESSMENTS

OUTCOMES

STRUCTURED LITERACY

Explicit, systematic, and sequential

Students get better at reading by learning to decode
and building knowledge

Decoding skills, phonics, and the structure of
language

Decodable Texts using phonics skills; HF words
identify phonics patterns; Irregular words taught
explicitly

Focus on building knowledge with multiple texts on one
theme/topic for a period of time; Use of diverse,
complex texts

Based on skill gaps and strengths

Rooted in the Science of Reading, which is an
extensive compilation of studies

Screeners, Diagnostics, HQIM Suite of Assessments

Produce literate students



OVERVIEW

The Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA) places an emphasis on grade-level reading skills, particularly as students progress through grades K-3. The LBPA calls for effective reading instructional practices grounded in the Science of Reading.

STRUCTURED LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Application of the Science of Reading

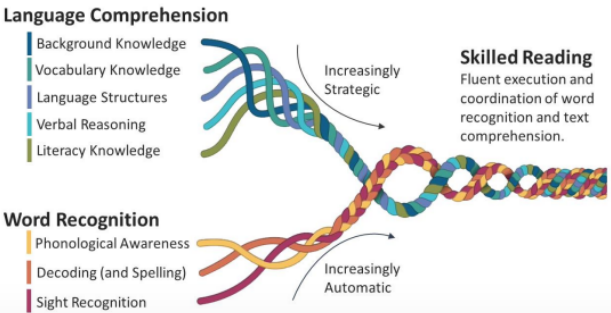
Structured Literacy is representative of reading instruction that applies the Science of Reading to classroom practice. *Structured Literacy* teaches all the components that evidence has found to be foremost in ensuring reading success.

Structured Literacy is **not** just about phonics; it includes much, much more. *The Simple View of Reading* (Gough and Tummer, 1986) and Scarborough's Rope Model (Scarborough, 2001) serve as frameworks for understanding and identifying Structured Literacy.

SIMPLE VIEW OF READING



SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE MODEL



Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) Handbook of Early Literacy. NY: Guilford Press.



7

MTSS: Tier 1 Instruction

Tier 1 instruction, also known as core instruction or universal support, is the foundational level of teaching and learning that all students receive, forming the basis for a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework and is crucial for ensuring high-quality learning for all students.

Tier I Core Instruction



Intervention Time

Core HQIM* with differentiation, language supports, and scaffolds for ALL

HQII** based on student needs and grounded
in Structured Literacy

*HQIM – High-Quality Instructional Materials; **HQII – High-Quality Instructional Interventions

WHAT

- **Foundation for Learning:** It establishes the base level of instruction and learning for all students, ensuring they have access to high-quality, standards-aligned learning.
- **Data-Driven:** Tier 1 instruction should be informed by data to ensure that instruction is effective and responsive to student needs.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** While Tier 1 is designed for all students, it should also incorporate strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners within the classroom.

WHY

- **Prevents Learning Gaps:** Strong Tier 1 instruction can reduce the need for more intensive interventions (Tiers 2 and 3) by addressing the needs of students in a general classroom setting.
- **Promotes Fairness:** By providing high-quality instruction to all students, Tier 1 helps to ensure that all learners have the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or learning needs.

HOW

- Clear and consistent instruction
- Engaging activities
- Positive classroom environment
- Regular feedback
- Collaboration



3 Tier Instructional Model

- **Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction aligned with Mississippi standards.**
- Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction.
- Tier 3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students.

If Tier 1 and 2 instruction is unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST). The TST is the local team responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3. Each school must have a TST implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education.

<https://mdek12.org/elementaryedu/interventionservices/>



8

The Difference Between Intervention, Remediation, and Enrichment

Understanding and effectively implementing intervention, remediation, and acceleration strategies are vital for supporting the diverse needs of all students.

	REMEDIATION	ENRICHMENT	INTERVENTION
FOCUS	Addressing learning gaps and providing additional instruction to help students master previously taught concepts at grade level.	Providing opportunities for students to explore their interests and delve deeper into subjects beyond the core curriculum at/above grade level.	Proactive and targeted support for students who are struggling or at risk of falling below grade level.
GOAL	To help students catch up and reach grade-level proficiency.	To develop critical thinking skills and promote higher-order thinking.	To prevent academic difficulties from escalating and to provide timely support.
EXAMPLES	Reteaching, providing extra practice, and using different instructional strategies.	Advanced projects, independent research, and specialized courses.	Small group instruction, one-on-one, and differentiated instruction.
TIMING	Implemented after learning gaps have been identified during Tier 1 instruction (Reading Block).	Implemented throughout the school year, providing opportunities for students to engage in instruction at a higher level during Tier 1 instruction (Reading and/or Plus Block).	Implemented early, before significant gaps in learning develop. Frequency, duration, and intensity determines the tier of instruction (Plus Block).
TRACKING AND ASSESSMENT	Informally monitored or tracked (Based on lack of skills mastered)	Informally monitored or tracked (Based on skills mastered)	Progress Monitoring (Specific to deficit area)

9

Professional Learning Communities

The main purpose of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in education is to foster collaboration and shared responsibility among educators to improve teaching practices and ultimately enhance student learning and achievement.

WHAT

- Focus on student learning
- Collaboration and shared responsibility
- Inquiry and reflection
- Decision making

WHY

- Professional growth
- Improved teaching practices
- Enhanced student achievement

HOW

- Schedule a rotation of the following:
 - Data-Analysis
 - Content
 - Preparation
- Collaboratively create norms and assign roles





Resources for Administrators



If you have questions,
please email
askacoach@mdek12.org

The "*Ask A Literacy Coach*"
button is also available on the
MDE Literacy > Resources for
Teachers webpage.

Ask a Literacy Coach



10

Effective Feedback

Effective instructional feedback to teachers leads to **improved teaching practices, stronger teacher-leader relationships, and a culture of continuous improvement.**



WHAT

The process of providing **specific, timely, and actionable** information to educators that helps them **improve their teaching practices and enhances student learning**

WHY

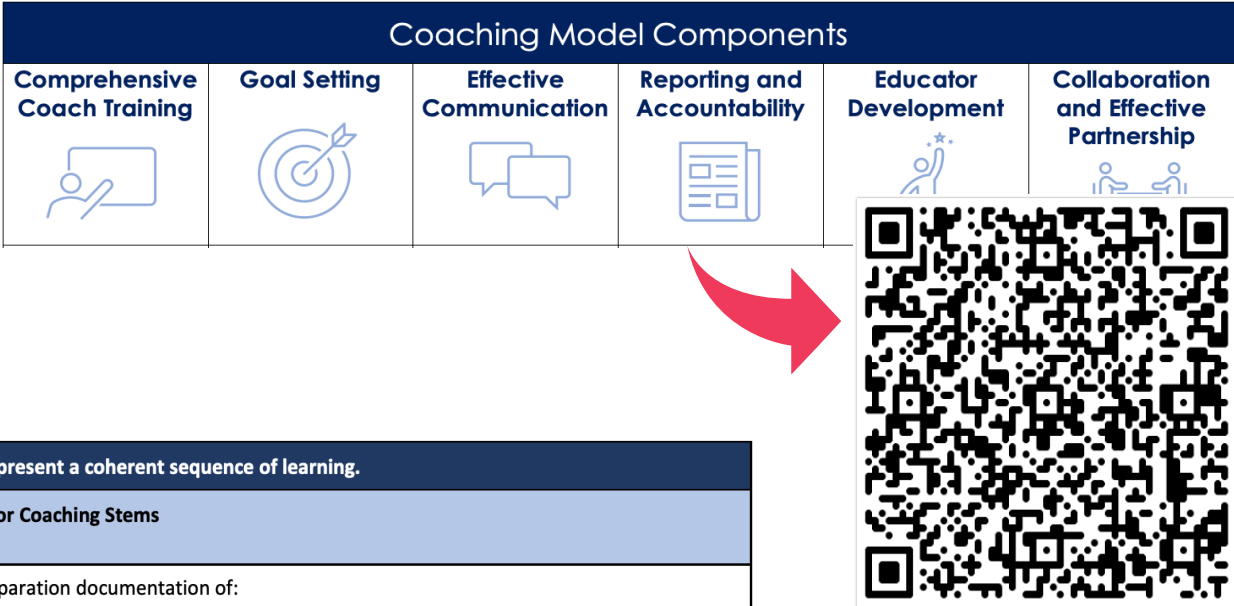
- Improves teaching quality
- Boosts student outcomes
- Fosters collaboration
- Supports ongoing growth through data and insights of teaching practices and performance

HOW

- Provide **actionable feedback** that teachers can use to improve immediately.
- **Regular check-ins** help track progress over time.
- Tailor feedback to each teacher's **unique** teaching style and needs.
- Align feedback to specific HQIM lessons and focus



Mississippi Department of Education's
COACHING MODEL



DOMAIN 1: LESSON DESIGN

Standard 1: Lessons are aligned to standards and represent a coherent sequence of learning.	
PGS Indicators of Highly Effective Practice	Literacy Look-Fors and/or Coaching Stems
Are fully aligned to current MCCRS or Framework	Lesson Planning and Preparation documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructional routines that support age- and developmentally appropriate practices to teach the Five Components of Reading through RF, RI, RL, SL, L, and W standards with applicable evidence of best practices of instructional routines for teaching reading for 1st-5th grades or KindergartenPractices and material alignment with the Science of Reading through high quality instruction with grade level, complex textAnnotated plans when using High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) that include preparation for whole and small group instruction based on current MCCRS <i>and</i> student needs



**Professional Growth System (PGS)
Literacy Look-Fors and Coaching Stems**



Learning Walk Protocols



Enhancing Instructional Leadership Cohort *Learning Walk Modules*



Literacy Support Non-Negotiables

OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION DIVISION OF LITERACY



STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION | *Dr. Lance Evans*

ASSOCIATE STATE SUPERINTENDENT | *Dr. Michelle Nowell*

STATE LITERACY DIRECTOR, K-12 | *Dr. Amanda Malone*

ASSISTANT STATE LITERACY DIRECTORS, K-3

Kelli Crain | kcrain@mdek12.org

Valerie Gilbert | valeriegilbert@mdek12.org

Jill Hoda | jhoda@mdek12.org

LITERACY ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

Melissa Beck | mbeck@mdek12.org



mdek12.org/literacy



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

