



# Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years

[www.popey.ca](http://www.popey.ca)



## POP

Provincial Outreach Programs  
Ministry of Education and Child Care

## POPEY: Supporting K-3 Literacy Instruction

Friday, October 25th

10:30am – 11:45am

Presenters:  
Lisa Thomas  
Calico Clark  
Jen Kelly

POPEY 



## Our learning objectives

Meet the POPEY team and learn about all of the services, supports, and literacy resources we provide to BC primary teachers.

We'll also share some evidence-based strategies and routines to help your students build strong literacy foundations and find meaning, joy, and success as readers.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Education and Child Care.



# POPEY's Mandate & Workshops

- POPEY's mandate is to **increase K–3 educators' capacity** to support all **primary literacy learners**, within inclusive classroom settings
- In the last five years, we have provided:
  - **150 free workshops** to
  - **over 12,000 educators** from
  - **58 school districts** across BC
- In our workshops, we offer a collection of **evidence-based strategies** for teachers to consider
- Our website hosts a large collection of evidence-based **resources** to **support K–3 literacy teaching and learning**, including on-demand workshop videos
- POPEY has also supported 14 rural school districts with our Rural Residency Program of ongoing professional learning supports



# A Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years





**Literacy Resources**



**Assessment**



**BC Curriculum**



**Responsive Teaching**





## Comprehend & Connect

Listening →

Reading →

Viewing →

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## Create & Communicate

Representing →

Speaking →

Writing →





Comprehensive Reading  
Activities Levels Of Support

Download pdf ↓

Connected Literacy  
Experiences

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Independent Reading

Download pdf ↓

Language Games To Support  
Phonological Awareness

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Reading Interest Survey

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Reading Level Comparison  
Chart

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Reading Rope

Scaffolded Support For  
Reading

SEL Book Suggestions



## The Ministry's K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative

The Government of British Columbia is investing \$30M over the next three years to better support students' literacy development in the K-12 school system.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care is working closely with provincial K-12 education and Indigenous partners, and experts in literacy development and intervention, to guide the implementation of this initiative.







# POPEY & the Ministry's K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative

- Implementing **early literacy screening** for all students in K – 3.
- Distributing over **\$15M** in funding to districts to provide **professional learning opportunities** for teachers and support staff on evidence-based approaches to literacy instruction and supporting students with learning disabilities.
- Creating new **resources for parents and caregivers** to support literacy learning at home.
- Developing a **provincial online library** of literacy development tools, resources, and videos for educators, school staff, and families.
- **Expanding intervention and outreach programs** for K – 12 students requiring additional support.





# POPEY's Expanded New Team

Expansion of Provincial Outreach Program staffing and support services for schools and districts to conduct needs assessments, scale up early literacy screening and intervention programs, and provide professional development opportunities for staff.



Lisa Thomas  
Program  
Co-ordinator



Jen Kelly  
Teacher  
Consultant



Calico Clark  
Teacher  
Consultant



Megan Zeni  
Teacher  
Consultant



Jacquie  
Anderson  
Teacher  
Consultant



Marianne  
Vande Pol  
Teacher  
Consultant





# Reflecting on how we learn



- observation of someone skilled modelling/demonstrating
- direct instruction
- gradual release of responsibility
- practice / repetition
- time / opportunity
- encouragement / feedback
- safety to take risks and try new things
- relationships, motivation, engagement...

## Learning is:

- \* social
- \* constructive
- \* experiential
- \* inquiry-based



# The foundations of literacy learning



The goal is for students to...

- be enthusiastic explorers of words:
  - ★ puzzle out letter–sound relationships
  - ★ see patterns
  - ★ take words apart
  - ★ investigate meanings
- connect to words in an active way



To **expand** their reading and writing powers





It doesn't need to be either/or

➔ **and, and, and...**

Decodable texts	vs.	Authentic literature
Research	vs.	Classroom Practice
The art of teaching	vs.	The science of reading
Individual student needs	vs.	Whole class efficiency
Direct instruction	vs.	Discovery learning
Practice in isolation	vs.	Practice in context
Mastery of skills	vs.	Joy of reading
Structure	vs.	Choice
Urgency	vs.	Joy

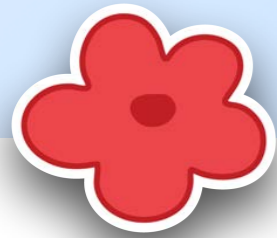
Comprehensive – complete; including all elements or aspects of something



# De-mystifying the Science of Reading

The Science of Reading is **NOT**:

- An ideology or philosophy
- A fad, trend, new idea, or pendulum swing
- A political agenda
- A one-size-fits-all approach
- A program of instruction
- A single, specific component of instruction such as phonics



# De-mystifying the Science of Reading

## The Science of Reading **IS**:

- A vast, interdisciplinary body of **scientifically-based** research about **reading** and issues related to reading and writing.
- The **research** has been conducted over the last **five decades** across the world, and it is derived from thousands of studies conducted in multiple languages.
- The science of reading has culminated in a preponderance of **evidence** to inform:
  - **how** proficient reading and writing develop;
  - **why** some have difficulty; and
  - **how** we can most effectively assess and teachtherefore, **how to improve student outcomes** through **prevention** of and **intervention** for reading difficulties.

**It is the science of learning**



# Structured Literacy

## Structured literacy is:

- an evidence-based instructional approach that
- fosters strong reading and writing instruction for all students
- comprehensive – addressing listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- characterized by what content is taught and how content is taught

A comprehensive approach that meets the needs of all learners





# Structured Literacy

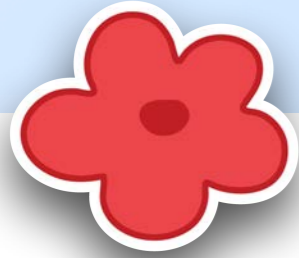
## WHAT is taught:

- Both foundational skills
- AND
- Higher-level literacy skills

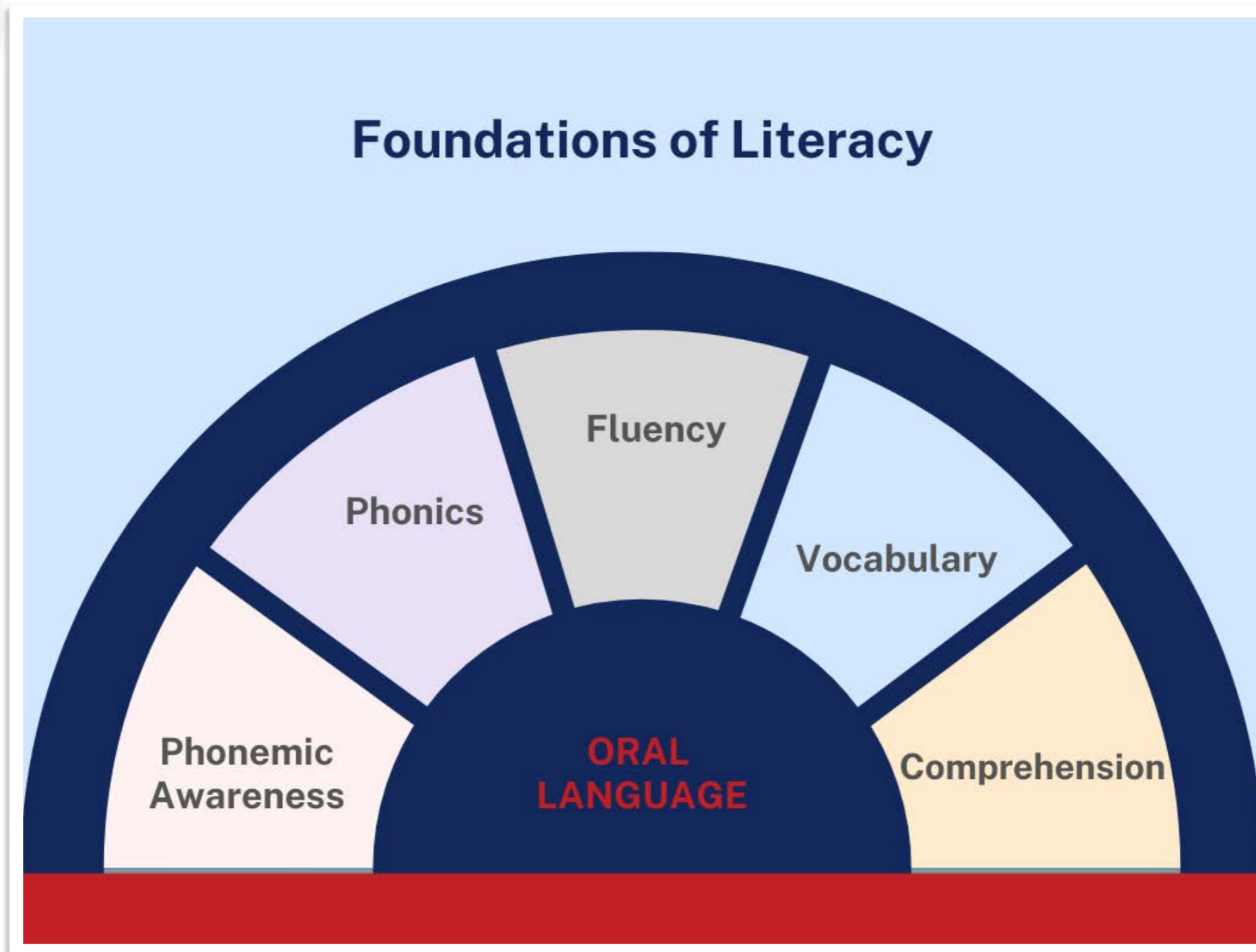
## HOW it is taught

- Systematic and Cumulative
  - Organized, from simple to complex, follows a scope and sequence
- Explicit
  - Direct instruction
    - “Today we are learning to...”
- Continuous student-teacher interaction
- Not assuming all students can infer concepts
- Careful and considered practice
- Prompt and specific feedback (corrective if needed)

I Do. We Do. You Do.



# Foundational Skills For Reading

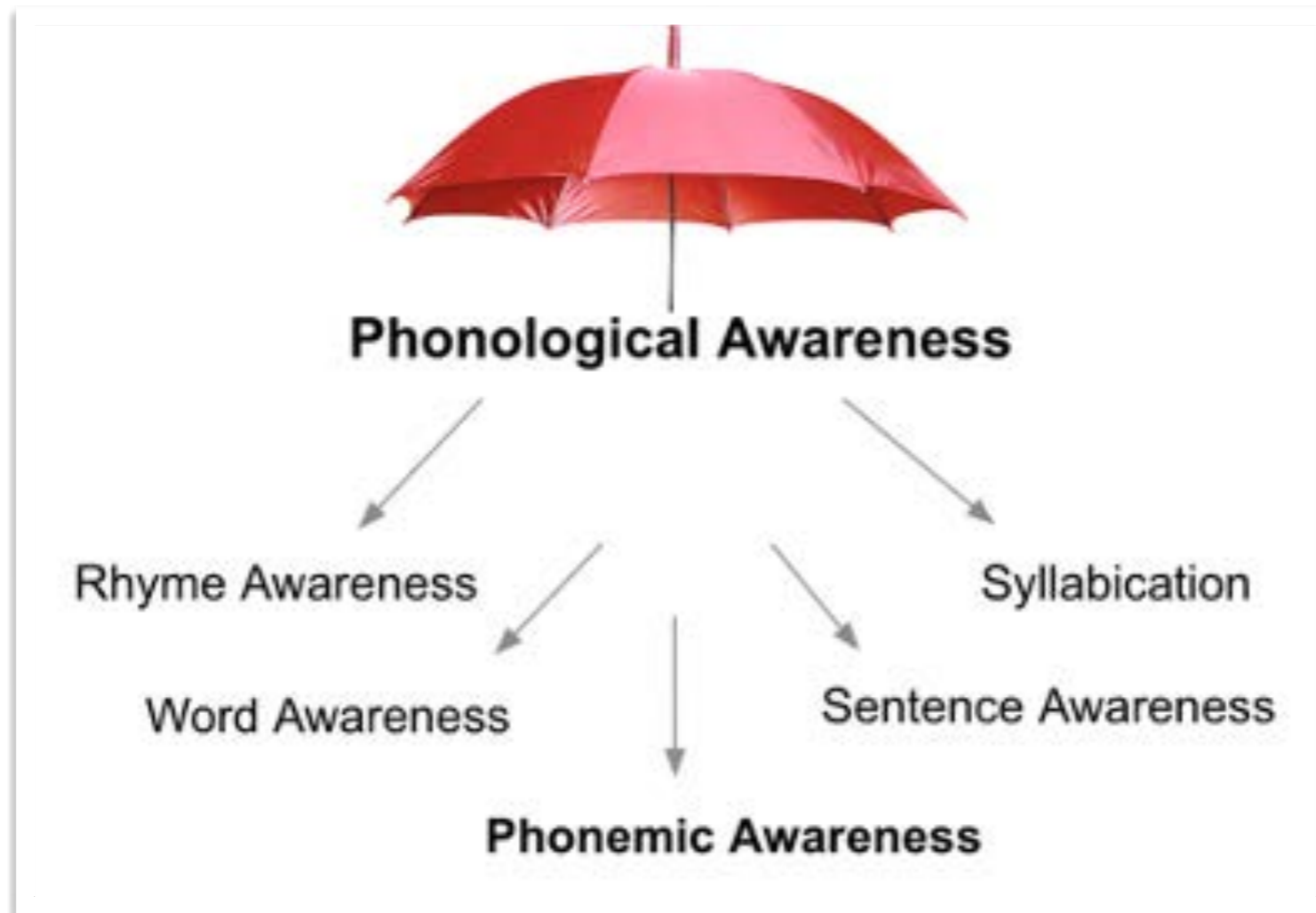


Proficiency in these foundational skills is necessary for all students to be reflective, critical and independent readers

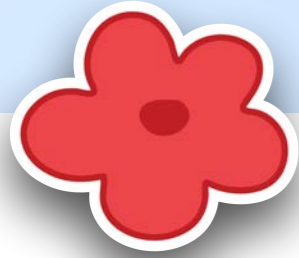


# Phonemic Awareness

the ability to notice and manipulate individual sounds in spoken language



Over nearly four decades of research, “phonemic awareness has consistently been found to be the strongest precursor to, and predictor of, reading achievement” (Kenner, et al).



# Phonemic Awareness Instruction

## Keep in mind:

- Short and frequent sessions
- Focus primarily on blending and segmenting (phoneme-level skills)
- Begin to add letters to this work
- Often integrated into phonics lesson



## Ideas for instructional strategies:

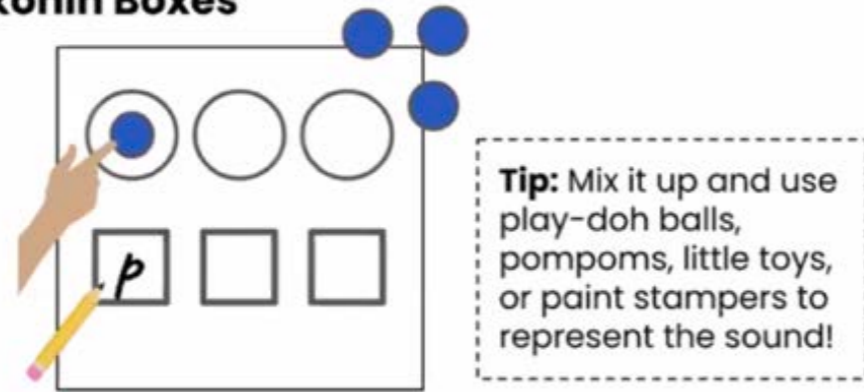
- Use manipulatives to keep it playful
  - ★ Elkonin boxes + bingo chips
  - ★ Pop It fidget toys
  - ★ Race cars + tracks
  - ★ Unifix cubes
- Encourage gestures
  - ★ Hand choppers
  - ★ Tap down arm
  - ★ Finger/thumb tap
- Word Chains – build phonemic awareness and phonics skills at the same time



# Instructional Strategy: small group work

Manipulatives to support phonemic awareness & orthographic mapping

Elkonin Boxes



c / a / t

<p><b>Say it</b></p>	<p><b>Connect to Meaning</b></p>	<p><b>Stretch it</b></p>
<p><b>Tap it</b></p>		
<p><b>Write it</b></p> <hr/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <hr/>		<p><b>Check it!</b></p>



# Characteristics of Strong Phonics Instruction

Phonics refers to knowledge of letter sounds and the ability to apply that knowledge in decoding unfamiliar printed words.

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- **Systematic**
  - ★ It has a scope and sequence
  - ★ Skills and concepts are taught in a logical order – prerequisite skills are taught first
- **Explicit**
  - ★ Clear and direct instruction of important skills and concepts
- **Cumulative**
  - ★ Build on previously learned skills
  - ★ Sufficient repetition and review for mastery



Engaging \* Active \* Social \* Reflective



# Phonics Instruction

## A phonics lesson

same letter/sound focus throughout each lesson part



The last two steps should be approximately 50% of your lesson time. Blevins states “students progress at a much faster rate in phonics when the bulk of instructional time is spent on applying the skill to authentic reading and writing experiences” (2017).



# Phonics Instruction

## Keep in mind:

- Systematic: Move from simple to complex
  - Following a scope and sequence
- Explicit: “*Today I want to teach you...*”
- Keep students engaged by:
  - Inviting student responses
  - Have students come to the board to find a word, highlight a phonics skill in a word



## Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Understand “the code” yourself
- Consider using a Systematic and Explicit phonics program
- White boards will be your best friend!
- Keep lessons lively, and stick to suggested times
- Don’t forget to unpack word meaning
- Word sorts
- Word chains
- Try multi sensory methods
- Use Elkonin (sound) boxes to support encoding
- Weekly progress monitoring is critical!





# Instructional Strategy: Word Chains

## Teacher Language

## Skill

(Begin with **mat**.) Change **mat** to **sat**.

encoding

Change the **S** to an **F**.  
Now tell me what word you have?

decoding

Change **fat** to **fit**.

encoding

Change the **F** to an **S**. What word is that?

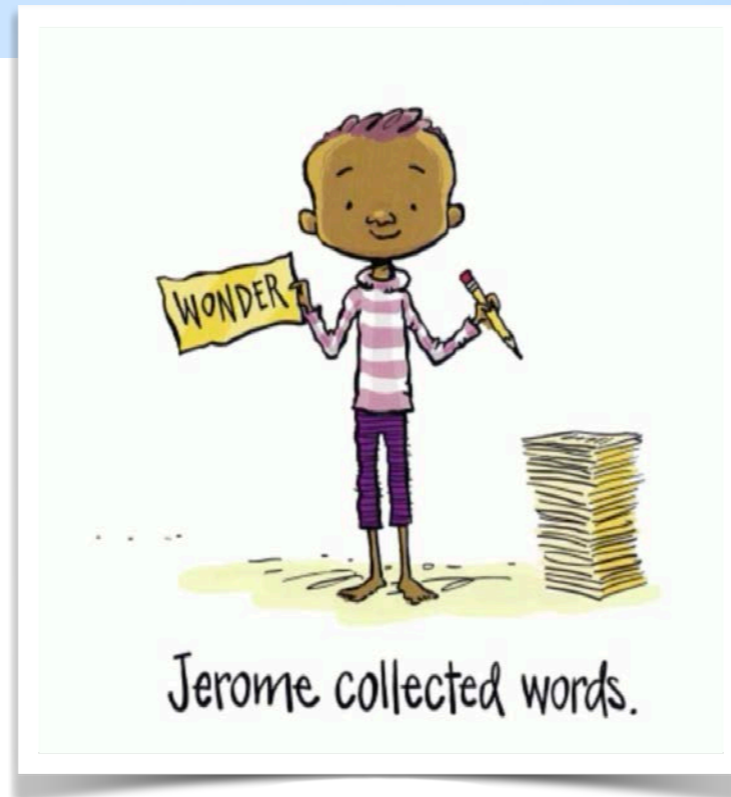
decoding

What letter do you need to change **sit** to **lit**?

encoding

Now add an **S** to the beginning of **lit**.  
What word do you get?

decoding



...phonics helps students gain access to words, which in turn helps them gain access to meaning. And that is the point of reading – to comprehend the information, to learn something new, to enjoy escaping into the world of a story. Phonics is just a tool to gain that access.

–Blevins, A Fresh Look at Phonics



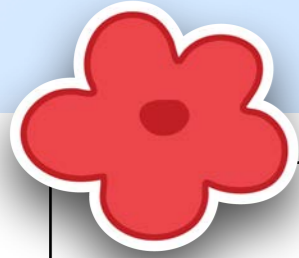
# Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, at an appropriate pace, with expression.

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- As decoding is automatized, students increase their ability to read texts fluently, freeing cognitive resources to focus on the meaning of the texts.
- Reading fluency develops as a result of strong instruction in other core components of literacy: phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary.
- To read a text fluently, students must have accurate and automatic word reading skills (Hudson et al., 2009). Text-level fluency develops with extended opportunities to practice oral reading. (Zimmermann et al., 2021).

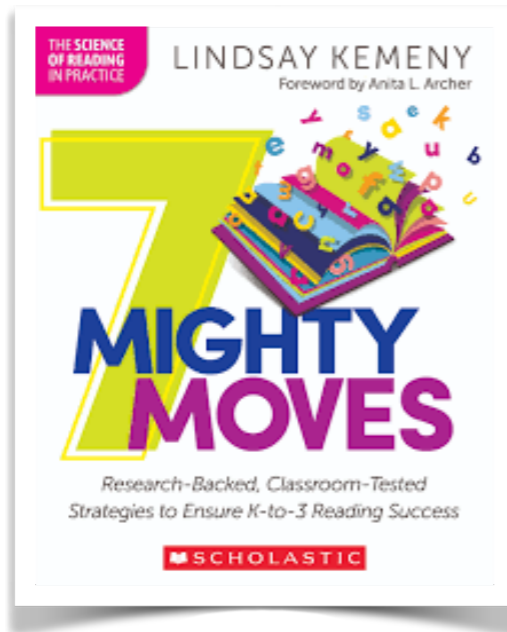
Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension.



# Building Fluency

## Keep in mind:

- More than just reading fast
- Don't teach phonics in isolation
- Avoid "round robin" reading
- Be mindful of how you use independent reading time



## Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Remember...fluency is not an isolated skill
  - subskills: phonemic awareness, sound-symbol knowledge, automaticity at letter or word level
- Small Group instruction affords specific, immediate feedback
- Model, model, model!!!
- Whole Group Reading including:
  - Read aloud, cloze reading, choral reading, echo reading
- Partner Reading
- Reader's Theatre
- Beat the Clock Timed Reading
- Repeated Reading



# Why Teach Vocabulary?

- A rich vocabulary supports learning about the world, new ideas, and enjoying the beauty of language
- A rich vocabulary enhances what an individual wants to say and write
- Vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency
  - ▶ tightly related to reading comprehension in primary, intermediate, high school, and adults

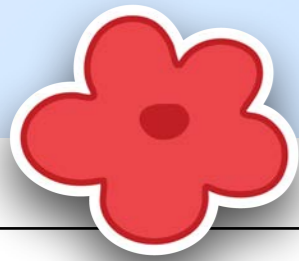
**READ**

**WRITE**

**SPEAK**

**LISTEN**

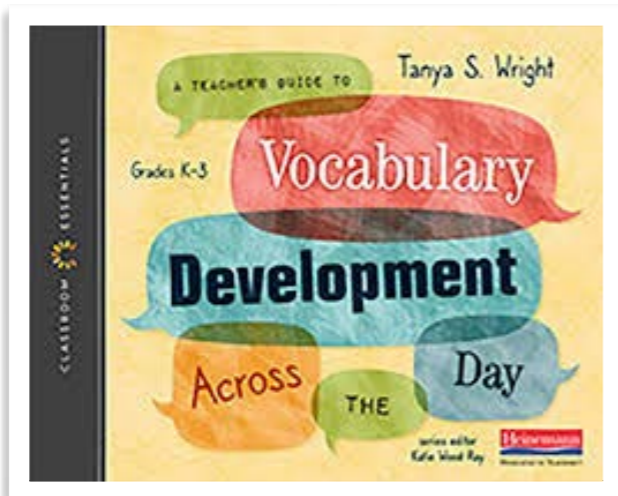
**LEARN**



# Vocabulary Instruction

## Keep in mind:

- Prepare student friendly definitions
- Learners need repeated exposure in meaningful contexts
- We learn words that are relevant, meaningful and useful
- We learn words when we have opportunities for active engagement with those words

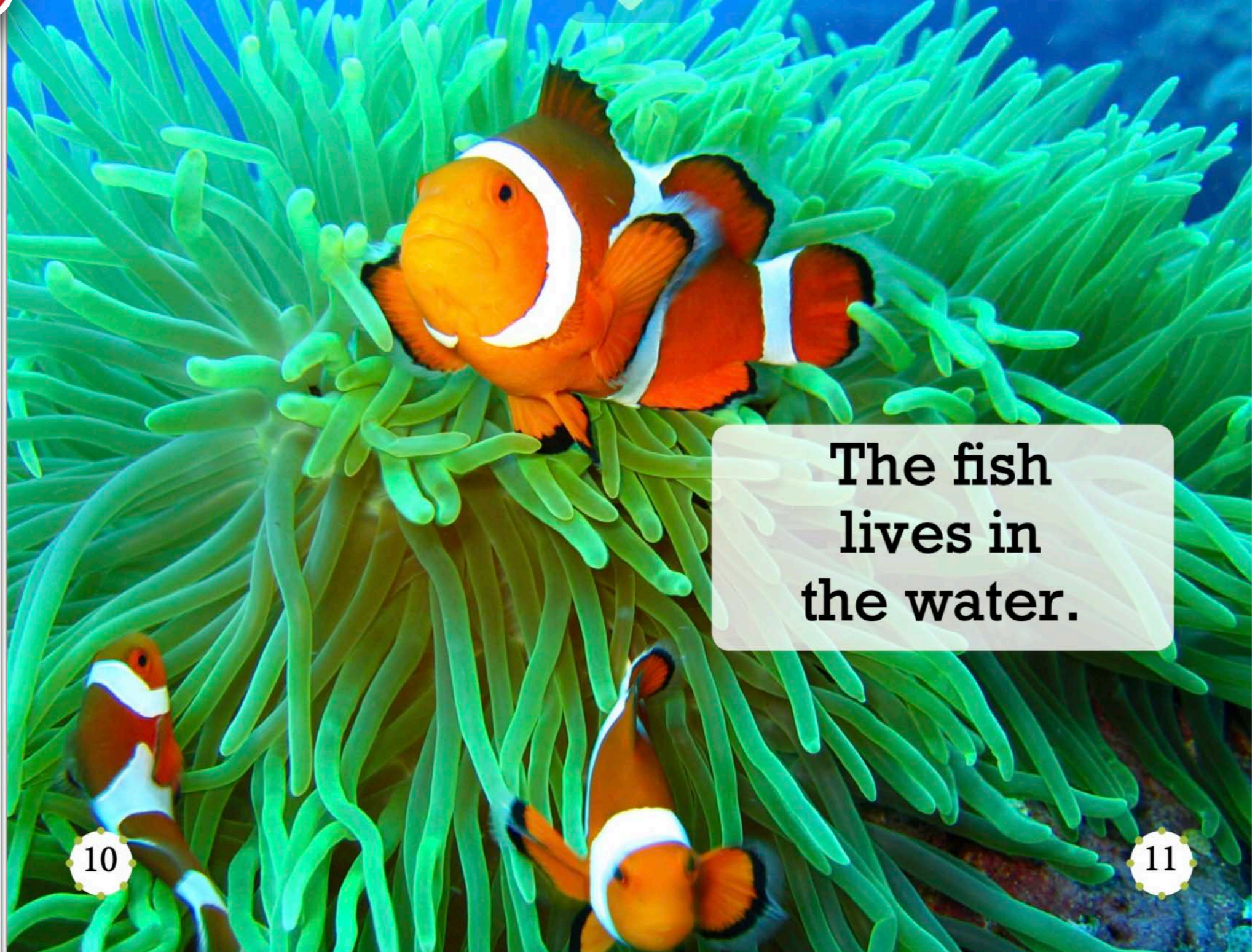


## Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Rich read aloud
  - Planned, pre-selected vocabulary, re-read, connect to content in Social Studies or Science, opportunities for active engagement
- Use text sets
  - [www.readworks.com](http://www.readworks.com) (Article a Day)
- Read – A LOT!
- Use and model sophisticated language, starting in Kindergarten
- Model being word curious!
- Dive into morphology – look for word parts



# Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary



**The fish  
lives in  
the water.**

10

11



# Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary



## Chapter 1

### HEADING HOME

It is early September. A female salmon has spent three years in the Pacific Ocean. It is time to leave. She will return to the place she was born. Where she was born is a good place to **spawn**. She begins her long journey home to Washington State.

The salmon swims south. She finds a body of water called an **estuary**. This is where a river meets the ocean. The salmon stays here for several weeks. The mix of salt water and freshwater in the estuary prepares her to live in the river. New muscles develop that will help her sprint and jump. Eggs start to grow in her body. The salmon gobbles down a few more fish. This will be the last meal of her life.

◀ After living most of their lives in the ocean, salmon return to the freshwater rivers from which they came.





# Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary

## Read-aloud texts:

choose texts that will stretch listening comprehension by providing exposure to rich ideas, wide vocabulary, background knowledge, and novel language structures

## GLOSSARY

**current (KUR-uhnt):** Current is the movement of water in rivers, streams, and oceans. Salmon swim against the current to find a spot to lay their eggs.

**dam (DAM):** A dam is a structure that blocks the flow of water. Salmon must get past a dam to continue up the river.

**estuary (ES-choo-er-ee):** An estuary is a body of water where the ocean meets the river. The salmon stay in the estuary before swimming upstream.

**fertilize (FUR-tuh-lize):** To fertilize is to make an egg ready to hatch. Male salmon fertilize the female salmon's eggs.

**invertebrates (in-VUR-tuh-brits):** Invertebrates are animals without backbones. Salmon eat small invertebrates.

**mucus (MYOO-cuss):** Mucus is a thick liquid that protects parts of the body. Mucus covers a salmon's scales.

**plankton (PLANGK-tuhn):** Plankton are tiny plants and animals floating in the water. Young salmon eat plankton.

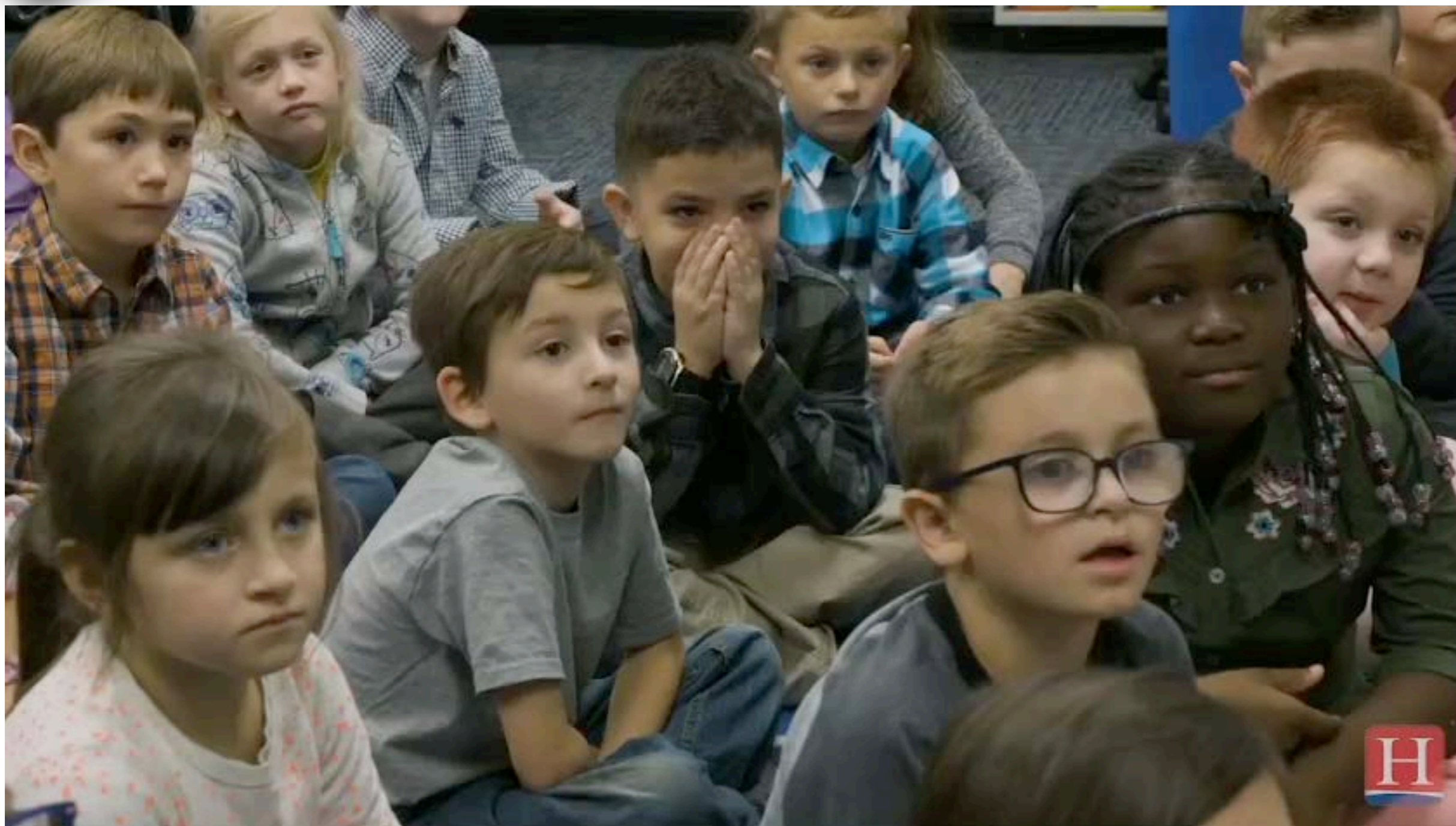
**rapids (RAP-idz):** Rapids are part of a river where the water flows very quickly. Salmon must be strong to swim through the rapids.

**scales (SKAYLZ):** Scales are thin, overlapping plates that cover a salmon's body. Scales protect the salmon from harm.

**spawn (SPAWN):** To spawn is to produce young, usually in large numbers. Salmon swim up the river to spawn.

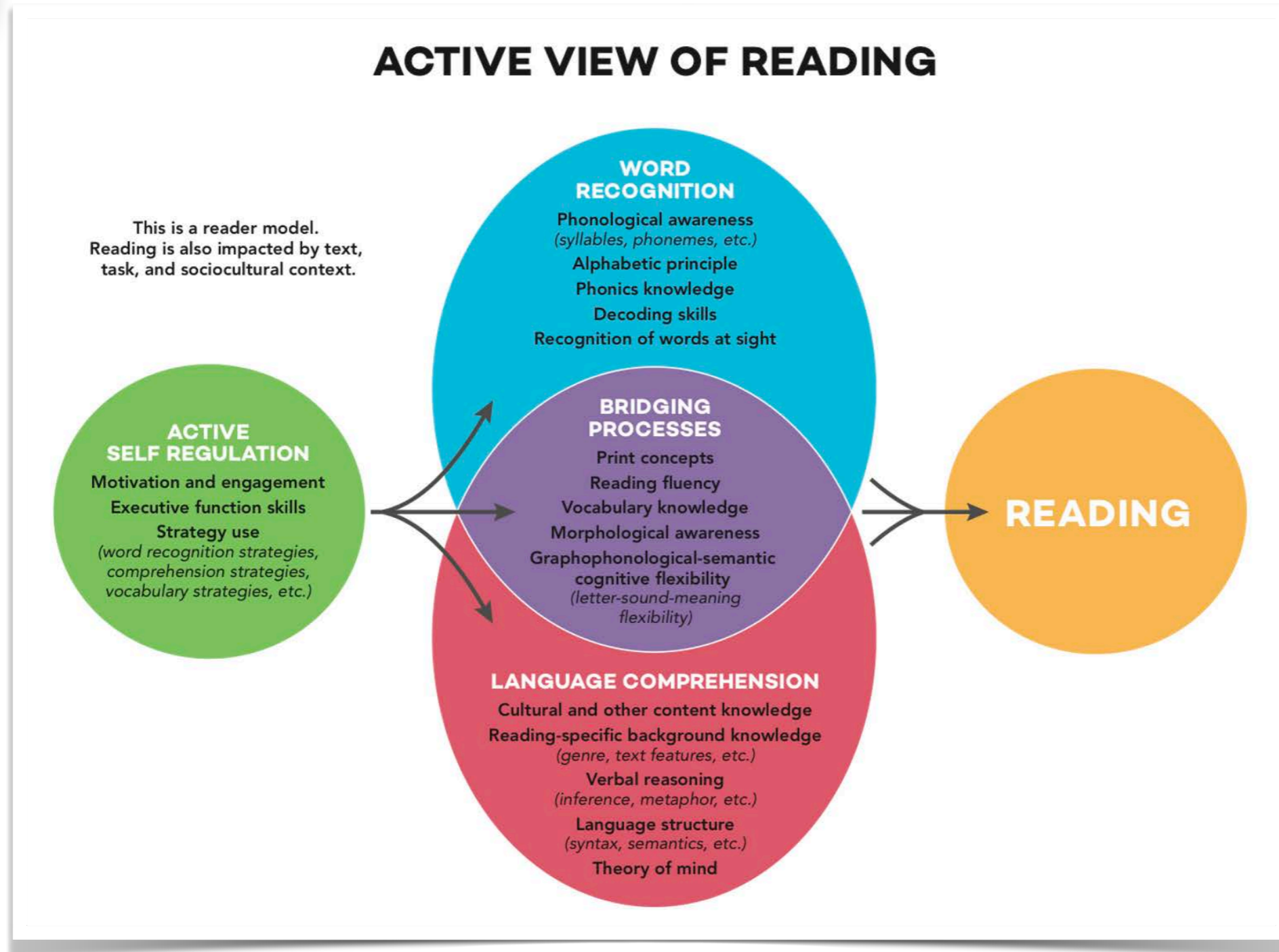


# Video: Instructional Strategy – teach word parts





# Reading is complex and active



these components must be working in concert

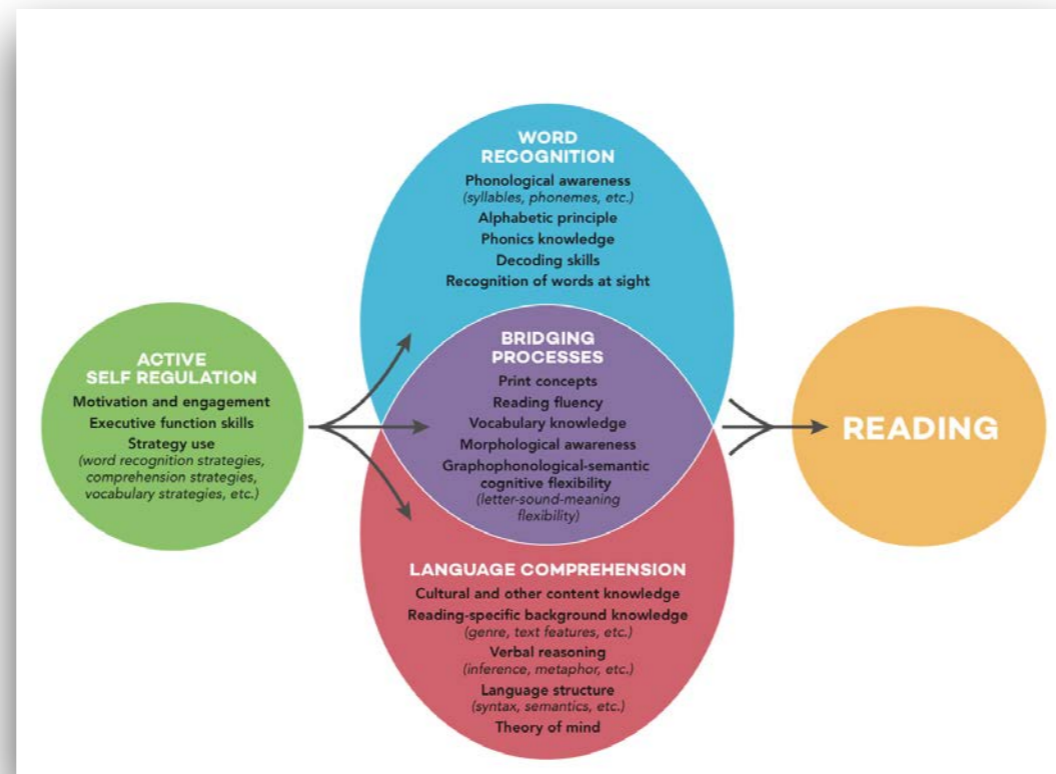


# Questions prompted by the AVR

If a reader is in trouble, we can look at student data and ask questions:

Do they have the word recognition knowledge and skills they need?

Do they have the self-regulatory skills needed to manage all aspects of reading?



Can they co-ordinate word reading and meaning-focused processes?

Do they have the language knowledge and skills they need?

We can use this information to help us form flexible reading groups and plan instruction.



# Teach and model reading comprehension strategies

Students need direct, specific strategy instruction and comprehension-building practice.

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## Supporting comprehension growth and development:

- A teacher's explicit modelling of comprehension behaviours is an effective tool that improves students' use of comprehension strategies
- Asking students to tell you about what they've read sends a message that what they are reading is important and helps them dig deeper for meaning
- Prompting or questioning before, during, and after reading can lead students to deeper text understanding, especially the use of questioning that leads students to draw inferences and connect ideas across sentences



## Skilled comprehenders use these strategies

- **connecting** to prior knowledge – schemas
- **self-questioning** – ask themselves questions about the text
  - an essential component of **planning** to understand a text
- **predicting** – using prior knowledge and clues from text to make hypotheses about the text content
- using **text structure** – organize text information to make meaning
- **visualizing** – mental imagery to remember information from texts
- **making inferences** – integrate bits of info and fill in the gaps
- **summarizing** – prioritize the importance of info to get the ‘gist’
  - this requires complex working memory and cognitive flexibility

*We can explicitly model these comprehension skills and engage students in conversations that allow them to practice comprehension.*



# Scarborough's Reading Rope – a visual metaphor

## SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)

### LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

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

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

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

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

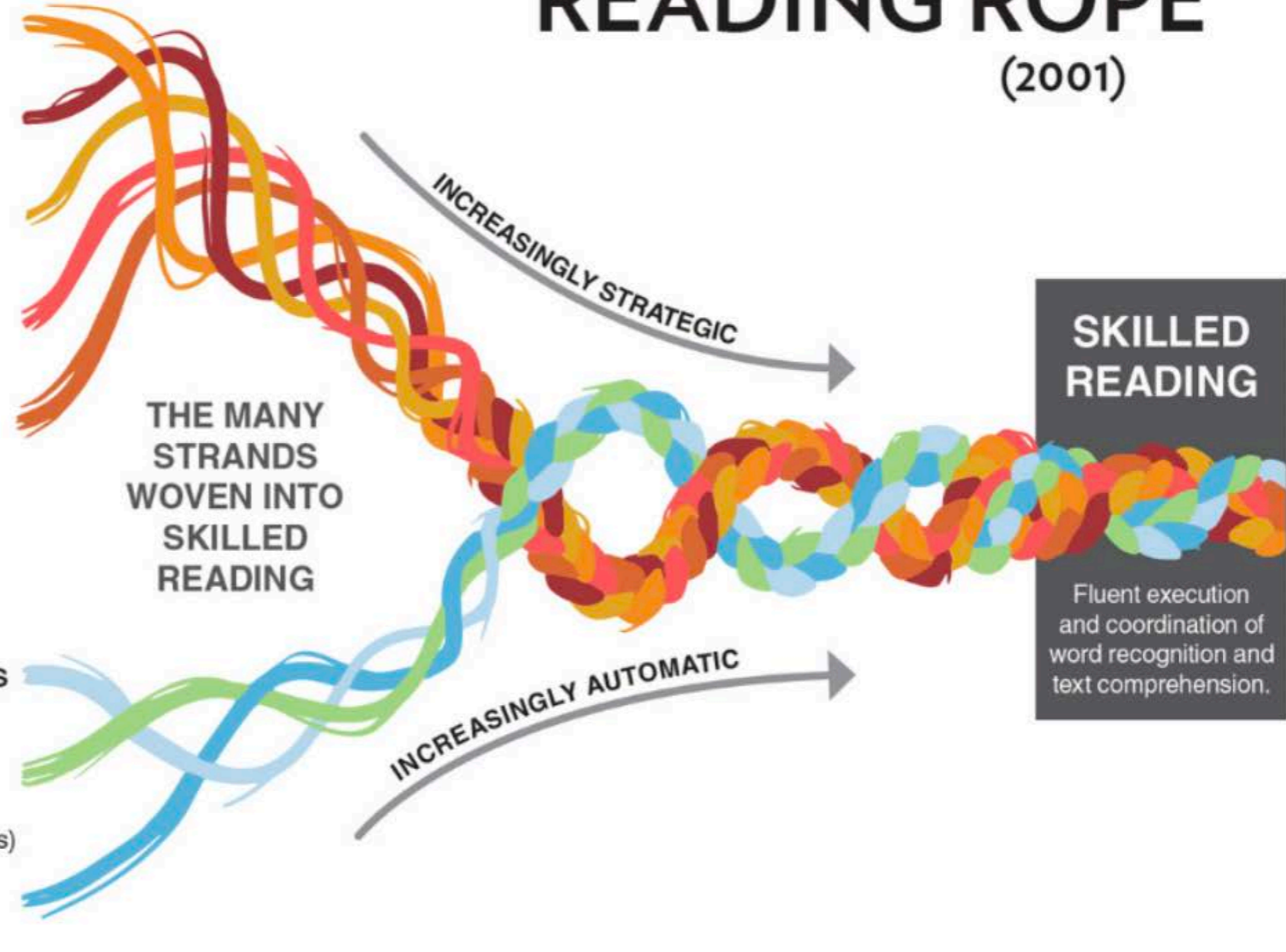
**LITERACY KNOWLEDGE**  
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

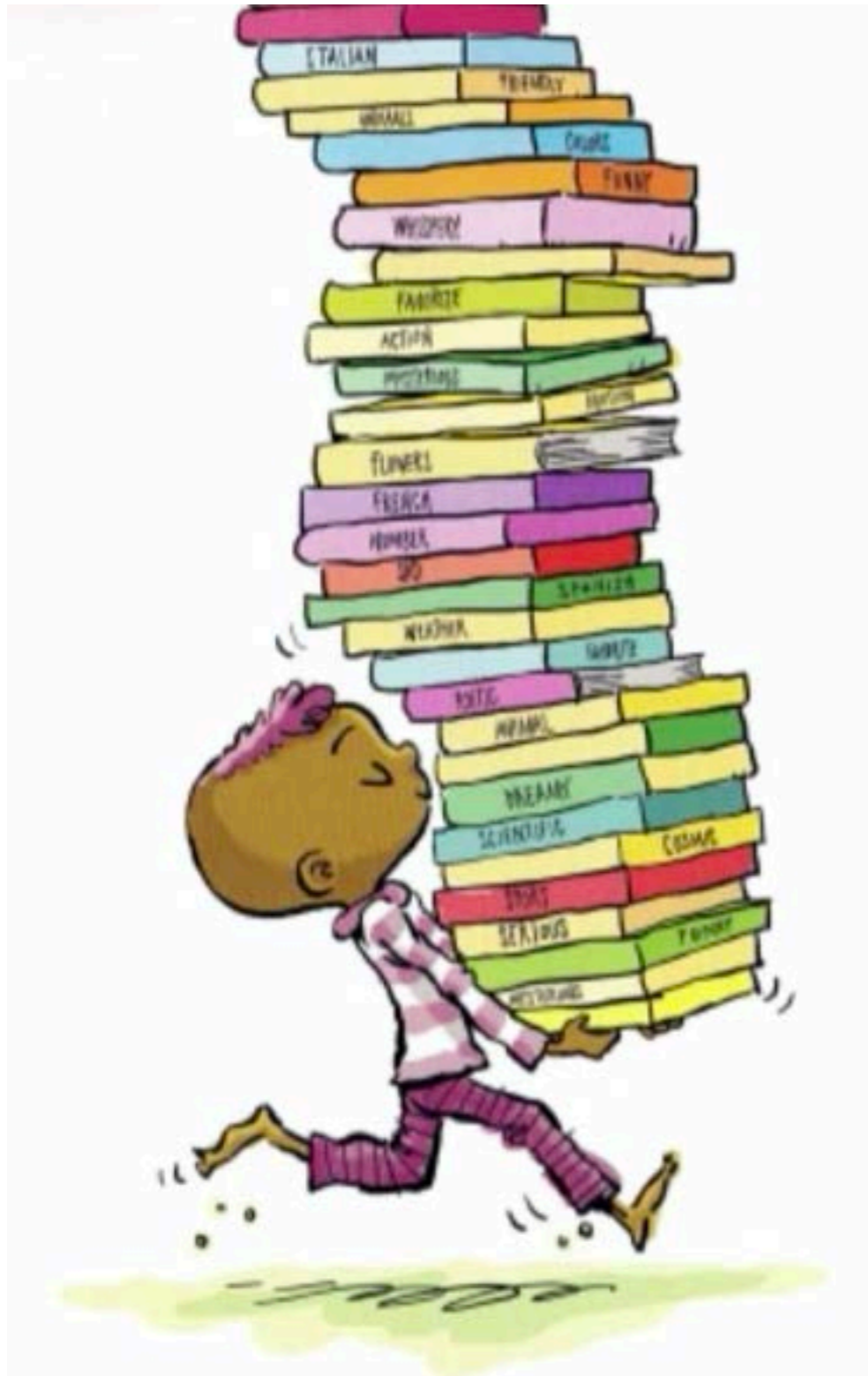
### WORD RECOGNITION

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

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

**SIGHT RECOGNITION**  
(of familiar words)





Engagement deepens further as children actually deploy their developing phonics and spelling abilities to read and write texts to inform, persuade, entertain, and innovate.

–Nell Duke





# Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



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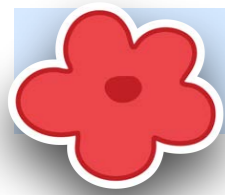
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# Sources

## Books & Presentations

Bringing Words to Life – Beck, McKeown, Kucan

A Fresh Look at Phonics, Grade K–2 – Blevins

Phonics From A–Z – Blevins

Shifting the Balance – Burkins & Yates

Shifting the Balance 3–5 – Burkins, Cunningham & Yates

Executive Skills & Reading Comprehension: – Cartwright

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum

7 Mighty Moves – Kemeny

Lesley University Institute: Word Study: Teaching Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling in Grades K–3

Letter Lessons & First Words – Mesmer

Trusting Readers – Scoggin & Schneewind

Next Steps in Literacy Instruction – Smartt & Glaser

UFLI Foundations Manual

A Teacher's Guide to Vocabulary Development Across the Day – Wright , 2021

## Videos

[Balanced Literacy Diet – Word Wall I Spy](#)

[Balanced Literacy Diet – YouTube: Dramatic Vocabulary – Introducing Action Words](#)

## Digital Resources

[International Dyslexia Association Ontario](#)

[Epic Books – I See Animals: Fish](#)

[Epic Books – The Upstream Journey of Salmon](#)

[ONlit – Fluency Overview](#)

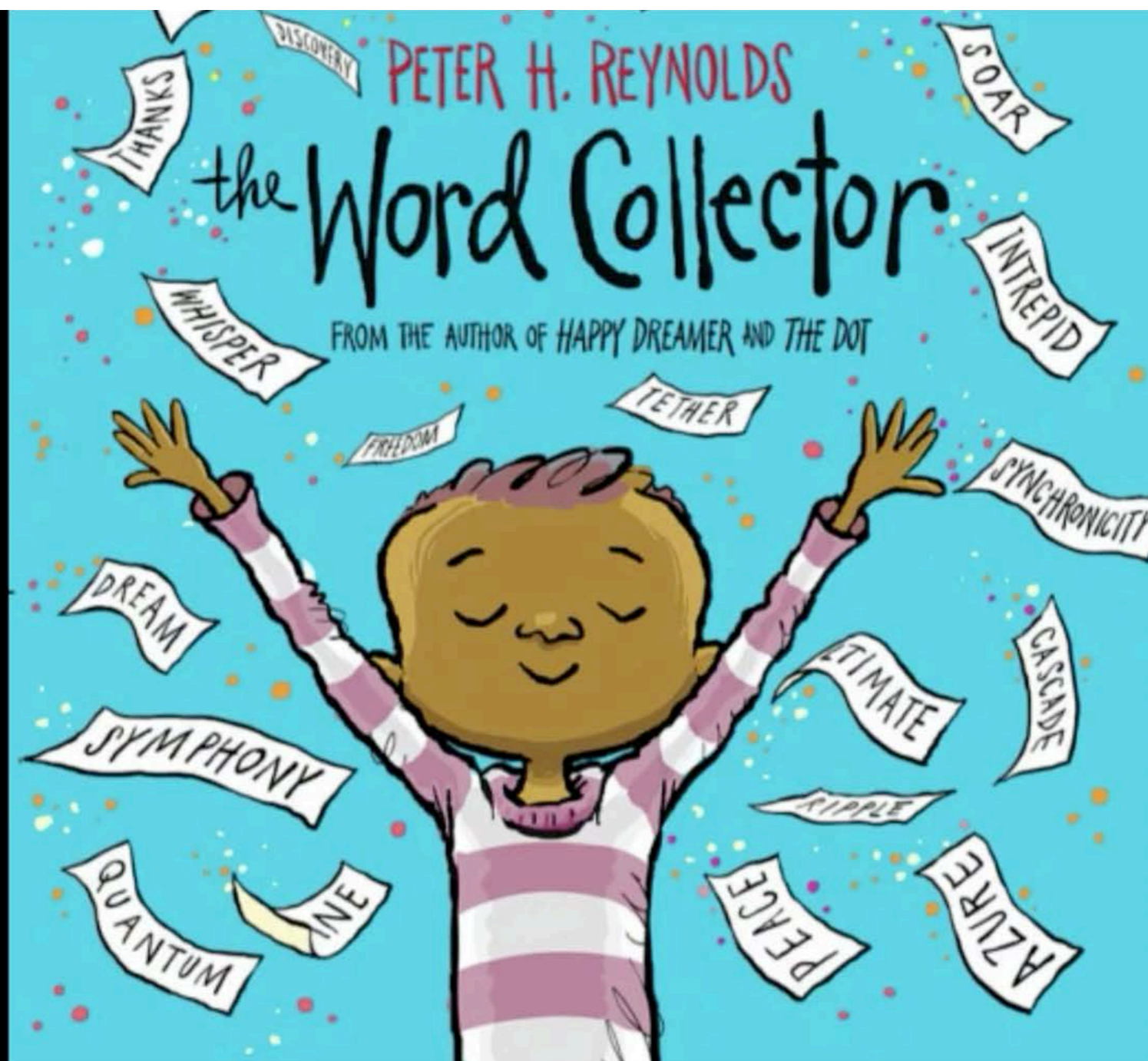
[Reading Rockets: The Active View of Reading](#)

[Reading Rockets: Models of Reading](#)

[Science of Reading Defining Guide](#)

[The Six Shifts – Burkins & Yates](#)

# The transformative power of language and words



## Book Recommendation List from POP Conference on Oct 25, 2024

	Book Title	Author	Illustrator
1	Ox-Cart Man	Donald Hall	Barbara Cooney
2	The Whatifs	Emily Kilgore	Zoe Persico
3	Be a Good Ancestor	Gabrielle Prince, Leona Prince	Carla Joseph
4	The Three Questions	Graf Leo Tolstoy	Jon J. Muth
5	Learns to Listen	Howard B. Wigglebottom	Howard B. Wigglebottom
6	Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt	Kate Messner	Christopher Silas Neal
7	The Girl Who Never Make Mistakes	Mark Pett, Gary Rubinstein	Mark Pett
8	Red: A Crayon's Story	Michael Hall	Michael Hal
9	How to Catch a Star	Oliver Jeffers	Oliver Jeffers
10	The Invisible String	Patrice Karst	Joanne Lew-Vriethoff
11	The Word Collector	Peter H. Reynolds	Peter H. Reynolds
12	The Dot	Peter H. Reynolds	Peter H. Reynolds
13	Any books by Peter Reynolds	Peter Reynolds	N/A
14	Any books by Ryan T. Higgins	Ryan T. Higgins	N/A
15	We Don't Eat Our Classmates	Ryan T. Higgins	Ryan T. Higgins
16	I am Human	Susan Verde	Peter H. Reynolds
17	The Barnabus Project	The Fan Brothers (Terry Fan, Eric Fan, Devin Fan)	N/A
18	Phonics A to Z	Wiley Blevins	N/A
19	Sylvester and the Magic Pebble	William Steig	William Steig