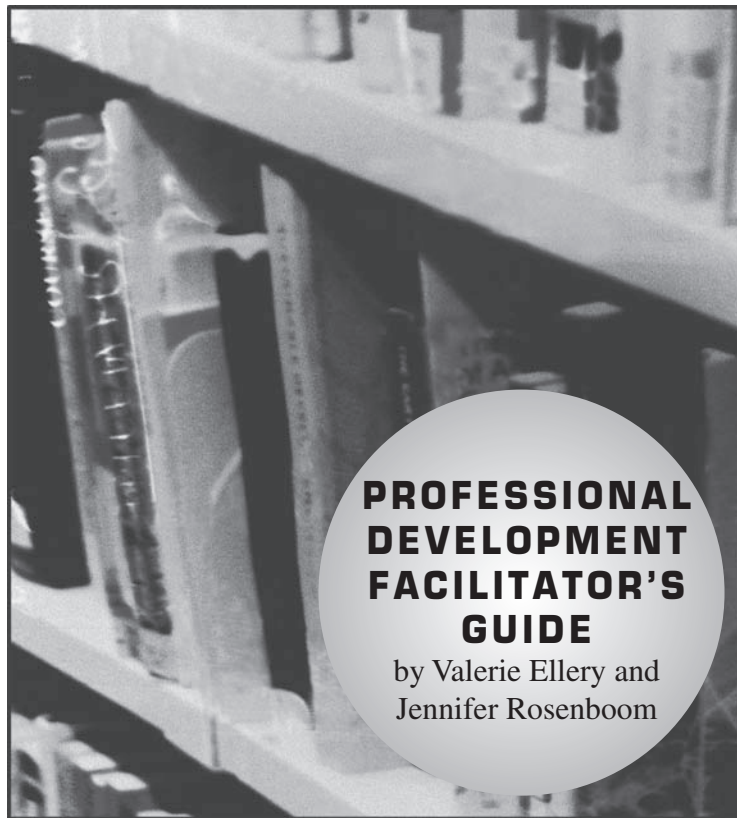


# What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction



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THIRD EDITION

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# Welcome to Study Groups!

This resource is designed to equip you with ideas and strategies for effectively using *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, edited by Alan E. Farstrup and S. Jay Samuels, for professional development in a book study group in your school. School-based learning communities, such as those fostered in study groups, can empower faculty, improve teaching and learning, and bring positive, systemic change to schools. This facilitator's guide contains strategies to assist you in providing this opportunity for professional growth to your colleagues.

## What Is a Study Group?

Study groups provide a forum for teachers to develop themselves by reading, discussing, and reflecting on professional literature related to a topic of interest to them personally or one that is a school priority. Many schools and districts use study groups as a formal means of professional development because they recognize the value of allowing teachers time to engage together in academic dialogue and inquiry. Study groups meet regularly to learn from outstanding professional books or other resources; members then employ the knowledge gained in group study in their own teaching. The ultimate goal is to gain professional knowledge, improve teaching, and thereby improve student achievement.

## First Steps

As the study group facilitator, it's your job to get the ball rolling. Here are some steps to follow before the group sits down together for your first meeting.

### *Think About a Goal*

All learners, children and adults alike, are most engaged when the topic under study is relevant and interesting to them. It's important to your study group's success to have clear goals in mind, both to ensure that group members are active participants and to be able to demonstrate accomplishments to yourselves and your administrators.

Reflect on these ideas, and start off with some answers in mind. You can discuss these more deeply with group members at your initial session.

- What do we want to know and be able to do because of our study? Your answers might touch on a desire to reflect and expand on insights about effective instructional practices and to apply expert thinking to support students' reading achievement.
- How are we going to connect our PD outcomes to student learning? Here you should refer to the desired outcomes for each group meeting, which focus on classroom application.

### ***Put the Study Group in a Larger Context***

Keep in mind that many districts approve the activities of school-based learning communities toward requirements for ongoing teacher professional development. Participation in a study group might therefore count toward PD points or clock-hour credit. Note that, in order for credit to be awarded, districts may require careful record-keeping, follow-up assignments, or specific documentation of the group's activities. Requirements vary in each state and school district, so make certain to research this thoroughly ahead of time. Contact your district's professional development office to inquire whether and how your study group members can earn credit, or make an appointment to discuss this with school administrators. Make sure that potential group members know how participation will apply to their personal PD plans.

The sessions described in this guide are intended to last for one hour each. Reading and extended learning activities will take another one to two hours each week. It is recommended, therefore, that participation in each session be credited for two hours of PD activity.

Finally, you should obtain and review a copy of your school's continuous improvement plan and your district's teaching and learning standards for literacy and language arts. Think about how your study group's activities will fit in with the overall goals set in these documents. In order to gain the full support of school administrators and ensure that PD credit can be earned to the extent allowed in your district, you should make sure that you can demonstrate how your group's activities tie to school priorities.

## ***Clarify Roles and Responsibilities***

As the facilitator, your role includes prompting group reflection, discussion, discovery, and application of findings and insights gathered from study of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*. Your job is to establish an environment in which all group members—yourself included!—can learn, reflect, and apply new knowledge in their own teaching, all to benefit students in the classroom. You should get to know the range of experience and background knowledge represented in the group and implement the session activities as appropriate to meet members' needs and interests.

It's also your job to organize the meetings. You'll need to

- Let people know about the study group and invite participation (don't forget to include administrators, paraprofessionals, the school library media specialist, resource teachers, speech pathologists, or others on staff who might be interested and who have an interesting perspective to share)
- Find a meeting location and establish a schedule
- Set up an e-mail notification list or some other means by which you can disseminate materials and communicate efficiently with the group between meetings
- Identify group members willing to assist you by taking on roles such as meeting recorder or facilitator for specific sessions

Of course, group members should recognize their roles and responsibilities as well. In addition to assisting with recording and group facilitation, it is essential that all participants agree on guidelines for how the group will function. This should be a topic of discussion at your first meeting. Sample guidelines might include

- Completing the readings and extended learning activities prior to each session
- Seeking to understand as well as to be understood
- Being totally present and engaged
- Being courteous (turn off those cell phones!)
- Supporting one another as members of a community of learners

Capture the agreed norms in writing and circulate them or post a copy at each meeting.

## **Gather Resources**

Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the book you'll be reading in your study group. *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction* is a key text in the field, in which highly respected scholars highlight the best thinking on important literacy topics. Editor Alan Farstrup has served as both research director and executive director of the International Reading Association; Jay Samuels has been on the faculty of the University of Minnesota since 1965 and is one of the field's recognized leaders on the topic of fluency. Contributors to this volume include P. David Pearson, dean of the College of Education at the University of California, Berkeley; Timothy Shanahan, a member of the U.S. National Reading Panel and professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago; and distinguished educator and researcher Dorothy Strickland of Rutgers University. You should become comfortable yourself with the entire book, but also identify those chapters that you might wish to skip in your study group because their topics aren't relevant to the group's needs and interests as a whole.

In addition, you should familiarize yourself with this guide and with the additional resources included in the Appendix.

Before your first meeting, make sure that every participant in your study group has a copy of the book.

Finally, make copies of your school's continuous improvement plan, state or district standards, other documents or research that may be relevant to your study, and any forms required by your school or district for tracking group members' participation.

## **Using This Resource**

The next section of this guide takes you through a suggested sequence for your study group. School environments vary, so these guidelines are intended to provide a flexible model. Using this model, you can tailor group sessions so they are relevant to the needs of your particular school and promote optimal professional development for your faculty and staff. Most session plans focus on a single chapter of the book and are self-contained, so if the topic of a chapter doesn't fit your school's priorities or context, you can skip over that session.

After welcoming participants, you should open each session with a brief recap of the previous meeting and, in a group discussion, share learning and questions from follow-up activities undertaken

in the preceding week (see the description of “Extended Learning,” following). Then, dispense with any required record-keeping or logistics and move on to review the agenda for today’s session.

After these initial activities, each session is divided into two main phases: “Framing the Session” and “Session Activities.”

### ***Framing the Session***

These points and activities are designed to help you highlight key topics for discussion and put study group members in a “learning state of mind.”

- **Desired outcomes:** The learning goals of the session, which you should share explicitly with group members
- **Guiding questions:** Prompts that establish a purpose for reading, stimulate group members to explore and direct their own thinking, and provide a “seed” for professional dialogue
- **Key vocabulary:** Terms critical for understanding the concepts for each chapter
- **Materials:** Any items you may want to gather in addition to the text—for example, chart paper, markers, forms

### ***Session Activities***

At the heart of each session are activities designed to engage group members in discussion of and learning from each week’s reading. The activities also serve as models of effective practice that group members can adapt for their own classrooms.

- **Initiating learning:** An initial focus designed for schema activation, clarifying understanding, and scaffolding instruction, with embedded cognitive coaching
- **Interactive group design:** Collaborative group tasks focused on processing chapter content through reflection, discussion, and organization of information
- **Learning logs:** A simple, straightforward means for helping participants synthesize content through reflection, classroom application, and planning

Each session outline closes with ideas for “**Extended Learning,**” activities designed as follow-up in order to maintain and extend

the learning process. Note also that *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction* itself includes questions and tasks at the end of each chapter, which your group may elect to do instead of or in addition to those suggested in this guide.



# Working Your Way Through *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction:* A Session-by-Session Guide

## SESSION 1

### The Initial Meeting

Your initial group meeting should focus on a discussion of the topics highlighted in the preceding “Welcome to Study Groups!” section of this guide. At this session, you should clarify the purpose of the group, explain the procedures and routines you’ll be following, agree on roles for participants, finalize your goals, and clarify how you will report to school administrators and whether participants can gain credit for PD points, clock hours, or other requirements for professional development activities in your school or district.

You should review student data, your school’s improvement plan, and your state or district teaching and learning standards for reading, writing, and English language arts. You should also question participants to make sure they are familiar with critical policy-related documents that affect teaching and learning—for example, in the United States, the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and adequate yearly progress, the report of the National Reading Panel, and recommendations for Response to Intervention (RTI) included in the reauthorization of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

Finally, if your study group is large and members do not already know one another, you should spend a little time with ice-breaker activities. Ask participants to introduce themselves and share a little personal information so that the group atmosphere will quickly become relaxed and comfortable.

You can then begin delving into the book in session 2.

## SESSION 2

### What Reading Research Says: The Promises and Limitations of Applying Research to Reading Education (Chapter 1)

There is disagreement and confusion over what the term *research-based instruction* means. Timothy Shanahan, author of this chapter, advocates for increased thoughtfulness about approaches to and interpretations of research, outlines types and purposes of educational research, and discusses how research might best be used to inform literacy instruction.

#### *Framing the Session*

##### Desired outcomes

- To define the role of research in planning and instructional decision making
- To investigate forms and types of research and their relevance to effective reading instruction
- To clarify the role of reading research in determining instructional practice and policy

##### Guiding questions

- Reflect on your practice. What are key considerations when determining if instruction and instructional tools are “research based”?
- What sort of evidence can you gather about instructional effectiveness to improve instruction and student achievement?
- How will you apply key understanding about the role of research to inform your practice?

##### Key vocabulary

- *Reading research*: An “attempt to understand something better through the systematic and formal collection and analysis of empirical data” (p. 10)
- *Findings*: Something that is discovered or ascertained through research

- *Instructional decision-making*: Using data to determine student needs and to implement appropriate interventions and activities to support student achievement

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 1 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction* (ensure that each participant has a copy of the book)
- ✓ Three index cards
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

Ask participants to think about best practice in reading instruction and the components of effective teaching. Then, in a three-minute conversation with a partner, they should consider what role research findings play in determining best instructional practices.

### Interactive group design

Save the Last Word (Beers, 2002; Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996) is an activity designed to help learners summarize what they have read, connect it to other texts or to their own experience, make inferences, and draw conclusions.

1. Working individually, group members should review and consider one section of Chapter 1: “What Is Research?” (pp. 10–13), “Reading Research: What It Is and Why It Is Valuable” (pp. 13–16), or “How Research Is Used” (pp. 17–22). Ensure that each of the three sections is covered by approximately the same number of people.
2. Have participants record up to three key items of learning or passages from the text that stand out and note each on an index card. On the back of each card, they should write why they found this passage to be important.

3. Now, working in partners or small groups, participants should read the passages they selected and invite comment from others on this key learning.
4. The participant who initiated discussion of the passage gets the last word and reads the reason it was selected.
5. Capture group learning and applications on chart paper.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Return to the session's guiding questions and ask participants to reflect and react to them in their logs.

### ***Extended Learning***

Before the next session, participants should take time to reflect on their classroom practice. How do they or will they apply research to inform their practice? How will they apply their learning from this session in the classroom? Ask them to be prepared to share key applications with colleagues at the next session.

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## **SESSION 3**

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### **Holistic, Integrated Approaches to Reading and Language Arts Instruction: The Constructivist Framework of an Instructional Theory (Chapter 2)**

In a holistic, integrated, language arts learning environment, children are actively engaged in learning to read, learning about reading, and learning through reading. They construct knowledge as they think critically and speculatively, monitor their understanding, and negotiate meaning through social interaction. In this chapter, author Brian Cambourne describes the theoretical underpinnings of this approach to literacy instruction, outlines contrasting views, and suggests that researchers make clear their ideological positions in order to advance discussion and debate.

In earlier work, Cambourne (1995) outlined “conditions of learning”: immersion, demonstration, engagement, expectations, responsibility, approximations, employment, and response. Teachers

should examine these conditions in all their instructional endeavors, with the ultimate goal of ensuring effective, quality instruction for optimal learning. In this session, the group will look at the constructivist approach within these conditions of learning.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To examine the constructivist framework
- To explore instructional principles within the constructivist framework, with reference to conditions of learning
- To identify research that supports and refutes the constructivist framework

### **Guiding questions**

- How do the ends relate to the means in the constructivist theory?
- How do you create conditions in your classroom that encourage all learners to engage in demonstrations of literacy?

### **Key vocabulary**

- *Constructivism*: A set of assumptions that Cambourne holds to include three primary components: (1) What is learned cannot be separated from the context in which it is learned, (2) the purposes the learner brings to learning are central to what is learned, and (3) knowledge is socially constructed
- *Intellectual unrest*: “Puzzlement” that a learner experiences and engages with as a stimulus and organizer for learning
- *Epistemology*: Theory of knowledge; philosophy concerned with the nature and scope of knowledge

### **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 2 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ A copy of Cambourne’s 1995 article “Toward an Educationally Relevant Theory of Literacy Learning: Twenty Years of Inquiry” (available at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org))
- ✓ Conditions of Learning chart (see Appendix)

- ✓ Notepaper and pen
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ A text to read aloud (e.g., *The Art Lesson* by Tomie dePaola)
- ✓ Several sets of Conditions of Learning cards (one set per small group; see Appendix)

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

A “quick write” (Ellery, 2009; Tate, 2003) allows learners to let their thoughts flow about a prompt topic, thereby activating background knowledge.

1. Prompt the group to think about ways to promote readers’ active engagement in learning to read.
2. Ask participants to do a “quick write” for three to five minutes.
3. Working in pairs, group members can briefly share their ideas and discuss similarities and differences among them.

### **Interactive group design**

1. Choose a picture book in which the story illustrates specific conditions that enhance learning (e.g., *The Art Lesson* by Tomie dePaola or *Tomás and the Library Lady* by Pat Mora). Read the book aloud, asking group members to listen to the story and record any specific conditions that they notice that engage and enhance characters’ learning. Prompt listeners that the conditions could be environmental or embedded in interactions among characters.
2. Ask participants to form table groups of three to five members. Distribute a set of Conditions of Learning cards to each group.
3. Have groups share and compare their observations from the read-aloud. Ask groups to read and match the cards to their notes from the story, and then review using the Conditions of Learning chart.

## Learning logs: Reflection and application

Ask participants to use the Conditions of Learning chart to reflect on what learning conditions look like in their own classrooms. In their logs, they should write in answer to this question: Do their classrooms have the characteristics of constructivist learning environments?

## *Extended Learning*

Working on their own prior to the next session, participants should pursue one or more of the following:

- Construct a chart that describes the differences between the terms *explicit* and *implicit*, *systematic* and *unsystematic*, *mindful* and *mindless*, *contextualized* and *decontextualized*.
- Determine, justify, and record your stance with respect to the four categories of learning and teaching found in constructivist classrooms (see p. 32 of the book chapter). Create “intellectual unrest” by employing constructivist structures and processes in your classroom. What do you observe about your teaching? About student learning?

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## SESSION 4

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## Home and School Together: Helping Beginning Readers Succeed (Chapter 3)

Author Jeanne R. Paratore’s research explores parents’ roles in children’s literacy learning and suggests these conclusions:

- Home storybook reading is important to early literacy success.
- Although mainstream literacy practices (such as storybook reading) may be absent in many homes, other language and literacy practices exist in children’s lives but are frequently not built upon by teachers.
- Issues of language, culture, and class influence children’s and parents’ literacy use and understanding as well as their expectations about formal education.

The author surveys cultural and linguistic differences among families and their effects on literacy practice and expectations, describing successful family programs that have brought home and school literacies more closely together.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To define cultural, family, and school factors and practices that research indicates support early literacy
- To investigate family–school partnerships and the essential elements of early literacy instruction
- To apply research-validated practices to involve families effectively in literacy learning

### **Guiding questions**

- What factors should be considered when thinking about and working with families?
- How does research support our understanding of the role parents play in their children’s school success?
- How might teachers effectively and appropriately involve families in children’s literacy learning?

### **Key vocabulary**

- *Mere literacy*: A conceptualization of literacy as based in language only, and frequently in narrow rules of language such as mastery of letter–sound correspondence (p. 57, quoting from work by The New London Group, 1996)
- *Multiliteracies*: A system focusing on modes of representation much broader than language alone (p. 57, again quoting from work by The New London Group)
- *Intergenerational literacy*: Programs “explicitly designed to support the literacy development of both parent [or other adult caregiver] and child” (p. 59)

### **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 3 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*



- ✓ Charting the Research form (see Appendix)
- ✓ Learning log
- ✓ IRA's position statement *Family–School Partnerships: Essential Elements of Literacy Instruction in the United States* (optional; available at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org))

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

## ***Session Activities***

### **Initiating learning**

With the Think-Pair-Share strategy (Lyman, 1981), learners discuss new ideas and have the opportunity to put them in the context of prior learning and to clarify misunderstandings. It's an activity that requires response—and therefore keeps participants on task.

1. Prompt participants to think about their early reading experiences.
2. Next, they discuss their early experiences with an elbow partner.
3. Finally, during a group share, record reflections on factors that contribute to successes and struggles in learning to read.

### **Interactive group design**

In table groups, participants should explore targeted research studies presented in Chapter 3 and capture key findings on the Charting the Research graphic organizer.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

In their learning logs, participants should reflect on how a deeper understanding of research supporting family literacy might help them bring home and school literacy together for parents and students.

## ***Extended Learning***

Participants, working independently or with a partner, should choose one of the following and be prepared to share their findings with the group at the next session.

- Pursue the first Question for Discussion from page 65 of the chapter: Interview the principal and two or three teachers about their home–school partnership initiatives. Are there practices and procedures in place that are likely to lead to the reciprocal learning that characterizes effective partnerships? Which of the practices are likely to help teachers learn about the family and their literacy practices and routines? Which of the practices are likely to help parents learn about the skills and strategies that they might use to help children succeed in school?
- Read and reflect on the IRA position statement *Family–School Partnerships*.

## SESSION 5

### The Importance of Effective Early Intervention (Chapter 4)

Research indicates that children who experience difficulty with initial literacy acquisition may lose motivation to practice reading and writing and, as a result, be set on a path of continuing academic struggle. As a result, it is important that children who are struggling be identified early so that they can be provided with appropriate support to avoid this spiral. Author Dorothy Strickland describes approaches to early intervention and outlines the components of successful programs.

#### *Framing the Session*

##### **Desired outcomes**

- To clarify the terminology of intervention and prevention
- To explore the characteristics and components of effective intervention programs
- To distinguish policy and practices that affect intervention

##### **Guiding questions**

- What components are essential for achieving success with prevention and intervention programs?

- How can we apply research-validated practices to support students who are experiencing difficulty in school?

### Key vocabulary

- *Early intervention*: “Programs designed to positively influence the course of language and literacy development in children age 0–8” (p. 70); action taken to decrease the chance of a child needing reading remediation at a later date
- *Response to Intervention (RTI)*: A means and framework for providing intervention to children at risk for school failure, and an alternative to IQ-achievement discrepancy for identifying children with learning disabilities

### Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 4 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Background reading on RTI (e.g., you can select from “Implications of RTI for the Reading Teacher” by Timothy Shanahan or “Introduction to Response to Intervention: What, Why, and How Valid Is It?” by Douglas Fuchs and Lynn Fuchs, available at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org))
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Materials from or descriptions of intervention programs at use in your school
- ✓ Semantic Feature Analysis matrix (one for each small group; see Appendix)

### Session Activities

#### Initiating learning

Open the session with a brief overview and discussion of prevention and intervention materials at use in your school.

As a prereading activity, mind streaming (Santa, Havens, & Valdes, 2004) helps learners activate background knowledge.

1. Group members should find a partner.

2. Partner A should speak for one minute on the topic of “the concept of prevention and intervention in today’s classrooms.” Partner B should encourage Partner A through active listening.
3. Partners A and B reverse roles.

### **Interactive group design**

Working in teams of three to five, group members should complete the Semantic Feature Analysis Matrix on the various intervention programs identified in the chapter, referring also to their background reading on RTI.

To complete the matrix, participants

1. Discuss the properties, features, or characteristics of the topic and list them horizontally across the top row
2. Discuss the chapter and any supplemental texts
3. Write a plus (+) or minus (–) symbol in each box to indicate the presence or absence of a particular feature
4. Explain their findings, share common features, and identify terms or features that they are still questioning

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Have participants revisit the guiding questions and reflect on them with reference to their learning from the chapter, supplementary readings, and this session.

### ***Extended Learning***

Participants should consider the first Question for Discussion (p. 83) and be prepared to discuss it at the opening of the next session: What are some of the factors that have caused educators to rely less heavily on remediation programs to emphasize prevention and intervention? How does this shift correspond with your personal experience as a teacher?

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## **SESSION 6**

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### **What We Know About How to Teach Phonics (Chapter 5)**

Beginning readers need phonetic awareness and abilities in sequential decoding, and they should be afforded opportunities to apply phonics

skills. It's important to realize, however, that research does not support one particular approach to phonics teaching over another. Chapter authors Patricia Cunningham and James Cunningham describe principles of effective teaching that apply across the curriculum and discuss application to phonics instruction and early literacy learning. Detailed descriptions of three research-based activities for teaching phonics are provided.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To identify research-based principles of effective phonics teaching and learning
- To identify key findings on how children learn phonics
- To determine the learning principles within a phonics lesson

### **Guiding questions**

- According to the research findings described in this chapter, how should phonics be taught?
- Why are multifaceted and multilevel instructional principles essential in teaching phonics?

### **Key vocabulary**

- *Cognitive clarity*: “Knowing what you are trying to do and understanding where you are trying to go and why you are going there” (p. 88)
- *Engagement*: The relationship between motivation and learning (discussed on p. 90)
- *Multilevel activity*: “A single activity that is so rich, students at different levels may learn through the same activity” (p. 91)
- *Morphemes*: A meaningful language unit such as root words, suffixes, and prefixes (discussed on p. 96)

### **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 5 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Phonics Activity Checklist (see Appendix)
- ✓ Learning log

## ***Session Activities***

### **Initiating learning**

Ask participants to decide what they think is the meaning of each of the vocabulary words and phrases noted on the preceding page. Then, read aloud the passages from the chapter that discuss those terms. With the whole group, briefly discuss and clarify the terms' meanings.

### **Interactive group design**

Hot Seats (Hoyt, 1999) provides a supportive structure that enables all participants, regardless of level of background knowledge or ability, to engage in an activity to learn key information.

1. Ask participants to form groups of three or four. Assign each group one of the following topics as a discussion stem: phonemic awareness, sequential decoding, applying phonics in text, patterning and analogy, decoding multisyllabic words.
2. Working in their groups, participants should use the text and share their own background knowledge to “become the experts” on their assigned topic.
3. The first group moves to the front of the class and audience members take turns posing questions about the group’s topic.
4. As each question is asked, group members put their heads together to discuss and, in turn, each member acts as spokesperson to deliver the answer.
5. The process continues until all groups have been “in the hot seat.”

To apply the learning from the Hot Seats activity, the entire study group can use the Phonics Activity Checklist to evaluate the three instructional activities presented in the chapter, according to principles for effective learning and phonics teaching.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Lead participants to revisit and discuss responses to the guiding questions in their learning logs.

## ***Extended Learning***

Participants can select one or both of the following and be prepared to discuss their ideas at the next session:

- Reflect on aligning and incorporating phonics instruction within a comprehensive literacy plan.
- Consider and respond to one or more of the Questions for Discussion at the end of the chapter.

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## SESSION 7

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### The Role of Phonemic Awareness in Learning to Read (Chapter 6)

Linnea Ehri and Simone Nunes present a comprehensive definition of phonemic awareness, distinguishing it from phonological awareness and phonics. They then review correlational and experimental studies that report strong relationships between phonemic awareness and learning to read, highlighting instructional approaches that have proven successful. A review of the National Reading Panel's meta-analysis of phonemic awareness studies is also presented.

#### *Framing the Session*

##### Desired outcomes

- To differentiate among phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and phonics
- To investigate why phonemic awareness is vital to learning to read
- To examine what constitutes effective instruction in phonemic awareness

##### Guiding questions

- What are the differences between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and phonics?
- According to the studies presented in this chapter, what is the relationship between phonemic awareness and learning to read?
- How should what we have learned from these studies affect classroom practice?

## **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 6 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Charting the Research form (see Appendix)
- ✓ Learning log

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

Working in partners, group members explore the meaning of *isolation*, *identity*, *categorization*, *blending*, and *segmenting* in the context of a phonemic awareness instructional activity.

### **Interactive group design**

In table groups, participants should explore targeted research studies presented in Chapter 6 and capture key findings on the Charting the Research graphic organizer.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Ask participants to think about the research summarized in the Charting the Research organizer. Based on this research, how is phonemic awareness a means of enhancing children's learning of the alphabetic system for use in their reading and writing? Participants should note ideas in their logs.

### **Extended Learning**

In the coming week, participants should focus on the second of the chapter's Questions for Discussion: Look at the lessons in your school's adopted beginning reading program and identify the ones that purport to teach phonemic awareness. Determine what types of phonemic awareness are taught and whether print is incorporated into the instruction. Critique the lessons and their likely effectiveness based on your reading of this chapter. If found lacking, how might the instruction be strengthened?



## SESSION 8

### The Place of Word Consciousness in a Research-Based Vocabulary Program (Chapter 7)

Acquisition of a rich vocabulary can facilitate students' reading comprehension and lead to improved academic achievement and out-of-school success. Authors Michael Graves and Susan Watts-Taffe make a case for the importance of word consciousness—that is, awareness of and interest in words and their meanings—and provide numerous suggestions for teaching strategies to foster vocabulary growth with learners of all ages.

#### *Framing the Session*

##### Desired outcomes

- To investigate the concept of word consciousness
- To clarify the importance of word consciousness in vocabulary instruction
- To identify research-validated approaches for developing word consciousness

##### Guiding questions

- What evidence can demonstrate that students are developing word consciousness?
- How can teachers foster word consciousness in the classroom?

##### Key vocabulary

- *Balanced instruction*: For these authors, a program that balances cognitive and affective factors
- *Word consciousness*: An “awareness of and interest in words and their meanings...[that] integrates metacognition about words and motivation for learning words” (p. 144)
- *Polysemy*: Having multiple meanings

##### Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 7 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ List/Group/Label graphic organizer (one for each small group; see Appendix)

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

Ask participants to brainstorm for a few moments on the relationship between vocabulary acquisition and reading achievement. As a group, discuss what you think are components of effective vocabulary instruction.

### **Interactive group design**

The List/Group/Label strategy helps learners categorize new concepts and terms in relation to prior knowledge, using visual representations (Ellery, 2005; Johnson & Pearson, 1984; Olson & Gee, 1991).

1. Working in small groups, participants should brainstorm the meaning of *word consciousness*, drawing on the content of this chapter.
2. As a team, they complete the List/Group/Label graphic organizer.
3. In a brief whole-group discussion, each team shares its understanding of the concept.

Now, with their deeper knowledge of word consciousness, participants should return to their small groups to explore the specific approaches to fostering word consciousness presented by Graves and Watts-Taffe on pages 145 to 159 of their chapter. Conclude this section of the session with a group discussion on this topic.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Participants should return to the guiding questions and reflect on them in their learning logs.

## **Extended Learning**

The second of the Questions for Discussion in this chapter asks readers to describe “two things you can do to foster word consciousness

among your students with very little preparation. Be as specific as possible. Spend 10 to 15 minutes planning one of these activities, and then do it. Afterward, take a few minutes to think about how it went.”

In addition to their pursuing this activity before the next session, suggest that participants also consider these questions: What characteristics might students demonstrate that lead us to believe they are developing word consciousness? How can teachers foster word consciousness in the classroom?

Open the next session with a brief discussion on these topics.

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## SESSION 9

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### **Reading Fluency: Its Development and Assessment (Chapter 8)**

Fluent readers recognize printed words quickly, effortlessly, and almost unconsciously. Fluency reduces the need for text processing devoted to word identification and allows the reader to attend actively to comprehension. Author Jay Samuels stresses the importance of supporting children’s development of fluency and provides a detailed description of repeated readings, a strategy designed to increase automaticity in word identification and recognition. He concludes with tips on assessing students’ levels of fluency.

#### ***Framing the Session***

##### **Desired outcomes**

- To determine the characteristics of a fluent reader
- To note the differences between beginning and fluent readers
- To examine techniques for building fluency

##### **Guiding questions**

- How is reading fluency developed and how can it be assessed appropriately?
- Why is time spent reading vital to reading fluency?

## Key vocabulary

- *Fluency*: According to *The Literacy Dictionary* (Harris & Hodges, 1995), “freedom from word identification problems that might hinder comprehension”
- *Automaticity*: In the context of fluency, the ability to recognize words automatically without the need to decode
- *Repeated reading*: A technique that has students “read and reread a text many times to improve reading fluency on indicators such as word recognition accuracy, reading speed, and oral reading expression” (p. 175)

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 8 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Examples of effective fluency strategies (e.g., see Chapter 4 from Valerie Ellery’s *Creating Strategic Readers*)
- ✓ Learning log

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

An Anticipation/Reaction Guide (Herber, 1984) helps learners activate background knowledge and determine the accuracy and validity of their understanding about a topic. As an opening activity for this session, write the following statements on a piece of chart paper:

1. The National Reading Panel report states that fluent readers are characterized by the ability to read orally with speed, accuracy, and proper meaning.
2. Comprehension is a process in which meaning is constructed using information from the printed page and the knowledge stored in the mind of the reader as the building materials.
3. The size of the visual unit of word recognition for beginning readers is the letter.

Have each participant read and respond to each statement. Then, as a group, discuss each statement and reach consensus on whether you think it is true or false, marking each with a ✓ or ✗. Revisit the chapter text to confirm or refute the group’s decision.

(*Note:* Statement 1 is false according to p. 167, which refers to proper expression rather than proper meaning; statement 2 is true according to p. 169; statement 3 is also true, according to p. 173.)

### **Interactive group design**

1. Ask participants to form small groups of three to five members.
2. Assign each group one of the fluency strategies.
3. Each group should read the strategy, reflect on the teacher talk and techniques that support the strategy, and review the strategy to determine how it contributes to increased fluency as described by Jay Samuels in his chapter.
4. Each small group then selects a spokesperson to present the strategy and a full rationale for it to the whole group.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Have participants think about professions that require a high degree of training. In their learning logs, they should write about how people in that profession are able to perform successfully, and how they developed the required skills. Then, they should create an analogy using their “highly trained person” and a proficient reader.

### ***Extended Learning***

Encourage participants to select another fluency technique to read, reflect on, review, and then apply in their classrooms. At the next session, they should report on the results.

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## **SESSION 10**

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### **Making a Difference in Adolescents’ School Lives: Visible and Invisible Aspects of Content Area Reading (Chapter 9)**

Teachers across subject areas share the responsibility of ensuring that students receive high-quality, appropriate reading instruction throughout the school years. In outlining thinking about content area literacy and providing a detailed review of research and strategies

in the field, author Richard Vacca makes a strong case for increased attention to adolescents' literacy needs.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To clarify differences between the visible and invisible dimensions of content area reading
- To examine the direct, functional role of teachers in adolescents' literacy development
- To analyze the strategies that adolescent learners need to be successful in academic subjects

### **Guiding questions**

- Why is it essential for teachers to have an understanding of the needs of adolescent readers?
- What constitutes visible instruction in the development of reading strategies?
- Why is it important to make reading an invisible and seamless part of content area curricula?

### **Key vocabulary**

- “Visible” *aspects of content area reading*: Those that emphasize the explicit development of reading strategies
- “Invisible” *aspects of content area reading*: The dynamic integration of reading and disciplinary content, in which language and literacy scaffold students' learning
- *Schema activation*: “The mechanism by which readers access what they know and match it to the information in a text” (p. 191)

### **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 9 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Double-Entry Reflection form (see Appendix)
- ✓ Notepaper and pen

- ✓ IRA's position statement *Supporting Young Adolescents' Literacy Learning* (available at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org))
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

Invite participants to read and reflect on the quotations in the first column of the Double-Entry Reflection form and summarize their initial thoughts in writing in the middle column.

### **Interactive group design**

1. Note the headings and main subheadings from the chapter on chart paper at the front of the room:
  - I. Evolution of Content Area Reading: A Historical Context
    - (a) Reading and study skills paradigm
    - (b) Cognition and learning paradigm
    - (c) Social constructivist paradigm
  - II. Visible Aspects of Content Area Reading
  - III. Invisible Aspects of Content Area Reading
2. Working individually, participants should revisit these sections of the chapter in turn and find a key statement in each. The statement and its page number should be recorded by each group member, along with individual thoughts on why he or she finds it interesting and important.
3. Participants should come together as a whole or in small groups to discuss the key statements each member has recorded.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Using the IRA position statement *Supporting Young Adolescents' Literacy Learning* and the chapter as a guide, revisit and reflect on the session's guiding questions.

## ***Extended Learning***

Participants should revisit the two quotations on the Double-Entry Reflection form and record their thoughts in the “after discussion” column. How did thinking change as a result of the reading, session activities, and discussion? What action can participants take in the classroom as a result?

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# SESSION 11

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## **Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension (Chapter 10)**

Authors Nell Duke and David Pearson outline instructional models and approaches for developing reading comprehension and provide an overview of numerous strategies. Reviews of the supporting research and literature are offered, and the authors conclude with thought-provoking questions about possibilities for future research.

### ***Framing the Session***

#### **Desired outcomes**

- To describe effective individual and collective strategies for teaching comprehension
- To analyze characteristics of a balanced comprehension program with embedded strategic instruction
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in instructional practices

#### **Guiding questions**

- How can we support students in acquiring the strategies and processes used by good readers and improve their overall comprehension of text?
- What supportive classroom features need to be present for comprehension instruction to “take hold and flourish” (p. 207)?
- Which “well-taught, well-learned strategies” (p. 233) might teachers apply in classroom practice to model effective comprehension?



## Key vocabulary

- *Balanced comprehension instruction*: For these authors, “both explicit instruction in specific comprehension strategies and a great deal of time and opportunity for actual reading, writing, and discussion of text” (p. 207)
- *Comprehension routines*: An “integrated set of practices that could be applied regularly to one text after another, and in the process, provide students with two benefits: (1) better understanding of the texts to which the routines are applied, and (2) the development of an infrastructure of processes that will benefit encounters with future text” (p. 225)

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 10 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers
- ✓ Charting the Strategies form (one copy for each small group; see Appendix)

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

Conduct a Think-Pair-Share (see session 4).

1. Participants should think about the tools and strategies used by effective readers.
2. Next, they should discuss their ideas with an elbow partner.
3. Finally, during a group share, you should record reflections on the following: Duke and Pearson state, “As it should be, much work on the process of reading comprehension has been grounded in studies of good readers” (p. 205). What practices do effective readers demonstrate when they read?

### Interactive group design

1. In table groups, participants investigate the six “effective individual comprehension strategies” presented on pages 212

to 224, capturing key learning on the Charting the Strategies graphic organizer.

2. In discussion in small groups or with all participants, compare the characteristics of good readers presented by Duke and Pearson on pages 205 and 206 with what group members have discovered about the effective strategies. What patterns of effective comprehension instruction are noted?

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Have participants reflect and respond to the following: What are the successes and challenges in demonstrating effective comprehension instruction in the classroom?

### ***Extended Learning***

The third of the Questions for Discussion in this chapter suggests that readers observe comprehension instruction in a classroom and ask themselves “What do you see as relative strengths and weaknesses of comprehension curriculum and instruction in this classroom?” Each group member should visit the classroom of another teacher in the school to observe and then, using the checklist on page 235 (Figure 10.6) of the chapter as a guide, respond to this question.

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## **SESSION 12**

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### **Reading Comprehension Strategies and Teacher Preparation (Chapter 11)**

Joanna Williams posits that successful teachers of reading comprehension are created through teacher training and professional development. She describes four studies that investigated how specific teacher-training approaches later affected children’s achievement in comprehension.

### ***Framing the Session***

#### **Desired outcomes**

- To explore the correlation between instruction of comprehension strategies, student use of strategies, and improved performance on commonly used comprehension measures

- To identify research-validated instructional components for proficient reading and proven teacher-preparation practices
- To analyze two major approaches to comprehension strategy instruction and applications for the classroom

### Guiding questions

- How can teachers effectively teach comprehension strategies in order to have lasting effects on students' future reading?
- What characteristics of effective reading instruction presented in this chapter demonstrate a positive effect on reading comprehension?
- What characteristics of instructional delivery have proven most effective in comprehension instruction?
- How can teachers apply these effective instructional approaches and strategies in the classroom?

### Key vocabulary

- *Guided practice*: An instructional approach “in which students are led to the point when they are able to perform independently, by means of a gradual reduction of scaffolding” (p. 243)
- *Direct explanation*: Rather than focusing on instruction in individual strategies, an approach that emphasizes “helping students to (a) view reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking and (b) learn to think strategically about solving reading comprehension problems” (p. 246)
- *Transactional strategy instruction*: An approach that builds on direct explanation by focusing also on teachers' ability “to facilitate discussions in which students (a) collaborate to form joint interpretations of text and (b) explicitly discuss the mental processes and cognitive strategies that are involved in comprehension” (p. 249)

### Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 11 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Double-Entry Reflection form (see Appendix)

- ✓ IRA's position statement *Investment in Teacher Preparation in the United States* (optional; available at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org))
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Approach to Comprehension Instruction cards (one set for each small group; see Appendix)

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

Invite participants to read and reflect on the quotations in the first column of the Double-Entry Reflection form and summarize their initial thoughts in writing in the middle column.

### **Interactive group design**

The technique of conceptual matching asks learners to manipulate cards as a way of involving tactile senses to reinforce learning and relationships among concepts.

1. Ask participants to form small groups and distribute a set of Approach to Comprehension Instruction cards to each group.
2. Working in their groups, participants should read and discuss the statement on each card and match it to one of three larger concepts—Direct Explanation, Transactional Strategy Instruction, or Both—sorting the cards into one of three stacks for each concept.
3. As a whole group, discuss the card assignments. (The Card Assignment Key on the following page shows one possible arrangement.) Do study group members agree with the assignments shown on the key?

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Participants are invited to reflect and respond to the following:  
In your opinion, is one of these approaches—direct explanation or transactional strategy instruction—more promising than the other? Why or why not?

### Card Assignment Key

Direct Explanation	Both DE and TSI	Transactional Strategy Instruction
Explanation of strategy conducted primarily by the teacher	Teacher models the reasoning associated with the use of the strategy	Instruction is collaborative in nature with learning designed to occur through interaction
Focus on teachers' ability to explain the reasoning and mental processes involved in successful reading comprehension	Teacher explains specific strategies	Involves much student discussion
Instruction is explicit in nature	Involves the systematic practice of new skills	Generates high levels of student involvement and engagement during reading
Teacher helps students view reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking		An interactive exchange between learners

### *Extended Learning*

Participants should revisit the two quotations on the Double-Entry Reflection form and record their thoughts in the “after discussion” column. How did thinking change as a result of the reading, session activities, and discussion?

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## SESSION 13

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### Research on Reading/Learning Disability Interventions (Chapter 12)

According to author Richard Allington, definitions of reading and learning disability are remarkably inconsistent and have shifted significantly over the years. Despite the ambiguities in definitions, research indicates that some interventions may prove effective with children who struggle to learn to read. Allington summarizes research on preventive and acceleration designs and on more systemic, longer term approaches, concluding that a reconceptualizing of reading/learning disability is needed to achieve the desired goal of improved reading achievement for all children.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To interpret achievement levels
- To investigate the difference between children with a learning disability and those who are experiencing difficulty with reading acquisition
- To deliberate types of interventions (preventive, acceleration, long-term support)
- To compare RTI with the types of interventions described in Chapter 12

### **Guiding questions**

- How can educators determine which students are experiencing reading difficulties and which may have learning disabilities?
- What constitutes an effective intervention?
- How can schools provide a comprehensive literacy intervention program?
- How is RTI affecting our classrooms today?

### **Key vocabulary**

- *Relative standard*: In describing a shift in reporting from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), how students perform “on an administration of the test relative to their performance on previous administrations” (p. 261)
- *Absolute standard*: Again in discussing the NAEP, “how many students achieve a particular level of performance set a priori as the desired achievement level” (p. 261)
- *Learning disability*: A term that is, according to Allington, “socially constructed” (p. 267), with “no commonly accepted operational definition” (p. 266)
- *Response to Intervention (RTI)*: As discussed in session 5, a means and framework for providing intervention to children at risk for school failure, and an alternative to IQ-achievement discrepancy for identifying children with learning disabilities

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 12 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Notepaper and pen
- ✓ Supplementary reading on RTI
- ✓ Learning log

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

To help participants activate and reflect on their background knowledge, ask them to let their thoughts flow for a few minutes in a “quick write” (see session 3) in response to this prompt:

Over the last 30 years, there has been a substantial increase in identification of students as “learning disabled.” What do you think are some of the factors for this increase, and what are some of the interventions you think may be effective in responding to and decreasing this epidemic?

Group members should discuss their responses briefly with an elbow partner.

### Interactive group design

Use the Hot Seats strategy described in session 6.

1. Ask participants to form groups of three or four. Assign each group one of the following discussion stems: absolute standard, reading/learning disability, preventive design, acceleration design, longer term support. Working in their groups, participants should use the text and share their own background knowledge to “become the experts” on their assigned topic.
2. The first group moves to the front of the class and audience members take turns posing questions to group members about their topic.
3. As each question is asked, group members put their heads together to discuss and, in turn, one acts as spokesperson to deliver the answer.
4. The process continues until all groups have been “in the hot seat.”

## Learning logs: Reflection and application

Participants should respond to one or more of the following questions related to the discussion stems from the Hot Seats activity:

- Do other countries use the same sort of “absolute standard” to describe reading achievement as is used in the United States with the NAEP? What differences exist, and what are the pros and cons of the various approaches?
- Are the terms *reading disabled* and *learning disabled* interchangeable? Are we creating learning-disabled students?
- Explain several components that would be evident in a comprehensive program based on a preventive design. What is the difference between “meaning emphasis” and “skill emphasis”?
- What role does the classroom teacher play in accelerating the development of students with learning disabilities?
- How does RTI support the acceleration process in our schools?
- How are schools supporting students who need more than a one-year intervention program?

## *Extended Learning*

Have participants read an article or chapter on RTI; several are listed in the “Recommended Readings” section of this guide (for this session and session 5). Ask participants to reflect and respond to Richard Allington’s view that most of what schools have always done simply has little research foundation to suggest that common approaches will accelerate reading development and solve children’s reading problems. Ask them to consider their own practice with struggling readers in their classes and to reflect on the question of whether we are creating learning disabilities.



## SESSION 14

### Metacognition and Self-Regulated Comprehension (Chapter 13)

Michael Pressley makes the point that skilled readers actively use a variety of comprehension strategies while they read, that these strategies should be taught beginning in the earliest grades, and that these strategies are often not taught at all. From this perspective, the author explores the nature of effective comprehension instruction, focusing particularly on the role of metacognition.

#### *Framing the Session*

##### Desired outcomes

- To investigate research-based instructional conditions for increasing students' reading comprehension
- To clarify the role of the thinking processes in self-regulated comprehension
- To apply practices of comprehension instruction that are well validated in research to support the development of skilled readers

##### Guiding questions

- What applications for classroom practice can be gleaned from both the older and more contemporary research studies described in this chapter?
- What is specifically metacognitive about skilled, self-regulated reading?
- What are effective practices of a “metacognitively sophisticated” reading teacher?

##### Key vocabulary

- *Metacognition*: Knowledge of thinking processes; with respect to reading, “specifically knowledge about reading and how reading is accomplished” (p. 304)

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 13 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Index cards
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

Encourage participants to engage in a three-minute conversation with a partner, reflecting on the following: As a reader, what strategies and thinking processes do you use to assign meaning to difficult text? Briefly share key ideas with the whole group.

### Interactive group design

Use the Save the Last Word technique described for session 2.

1. Working individually, group members should review and consider a section or sections of Chapter 13: “Strategy Instruction Experiments in the 1970s and Early 1980s” (pp. 298–300), “Strategies Instruction in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s: Transactional Strategies Instruction” and “Comparative Studies of Transactional Strategies Instruction Versus Conventional Teaching” (pp. 300–302), “Comprehension Instruction in Elementary Classrooms in the 1990s” (pp. 302–303), “Summing Up: Metacognition of Skilled Readers and Skilled Reading Teachers” (pp. 304–306). Ensure that each of the sections is covered by approximately the same number of people.
2. Have participants record up to three key items of learning or passages from the text that stand out and copy each on an index card. On the back of the card, they should write why they found this passage to be important.
3. Now, working in partners or small groups, participants should read the passages they selected and invite comments from others on this key learning.

4. The participant who initiated discussion about the passage gets the last word and reads the reason it was selected.
5. Capture group learning and applications on chart paper.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Invite participants to revisit the Guiding Questions, focusing on next steps and applications for classroom practice, and record their thinking in their learning logs.

### ***Extended Learning***

Reflecting on their own classroom practice, group members should think about and be prepared to respond to the fourth of the chapter's Questions for Discussion: Are students being encouraged every day to use comprehension strategies? Are students being taught to use a small repertoire of comprehension strategies? Are they being taught to apply the strategies they learn during reading instruction across the school day?

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## **SESSION 15**

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### **The New Literacies: Research on Reading Instruction With the Internet (Chapter 14)**

As public policy initiatives worldwide focus on how schools can prepare students to meet the challenges of a competitive global economy, information and communication technologies (ICTs) are being infused into curricula. Donald Leu discusses research on the efficacy of technology in education and the implications for teacher education and staff development and advocates embracing change in the interest of preparing children for their futures.

### ***Framing the Session***

#### **Desired outcomes**

- To explore how new literacies and technologies lead to changes in reading

- To clarify the effects of new literacies on reading instruction, assessment, and student learning
- To identify ways to align classroom practice, technology, and the forms of strategic thinking and understanding that are important to new literacies

### Guiding questions

- What are new literacies?
- Why are new literacies important?
- What do we know about new literacies?

### Key vocabulary

- *New literacies*: The “skills, strategies, and insights necessary to successfully exploit the rapidly changing information and communication technologies that continuously emerge in our world” (p. 313)
- *Hypermedia*: A nonlinear form of communication and expression that uses linked plain text, hypertext, graphics, audio, video, and other media in combination
- *Deixis*: A term “used by linguists to describe words whose meanings change quickly, depending on the time or space in which they are uttered” (p. 319)

### Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 14 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ One or more Internet-connected computers, with bookmarks pointing to outstanding websites that support literacy education; see the Literacy Links area of the IRA website at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org) or the website of IRA’s Technology in Literacy Education special interest group at [tilesig.wikispaces.com](http://tilesig.wikispaces.com) for some possibilities
- ✓ Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies recording sheets (see Appendix)

## **Session Activities**

### **Initiating learning**

Working in pairs or small groups, participants should visit two or three of the bookmarked websites. In a brief, whole-group discussion, invite responses to this chapter's first Question for Discussion: What new forms and functions of literacy did you encounter? How might these prepare children for their literacy future?

### **Interactive group design**

Carousel brainstorming allows participants to reflect on, discuss, and record what they know about subtopics within a larger topic. This group technique is useful whether activating background knowledge prior to reading or checking understanding after studying a topic.

1. Divide the whole group into five small groups. Distribute one of the Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies sheets to each group.
2. For a five- to seven-minute period, members of each small group reflect on, discuss, and record key terms, phrases, or ideas for the questions presented on each sheet.
3. At the end of this brief period, each group passes its sheet along to the next group.
4. Repeat the process until all groups have had a chance to record their thinking on each of the five sheets.
5. A whole-group discussion can then focus on commonalities and differences among the groups' thinking about each question.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Invite participants to reflect and record their thoughts on the following in their learning logs: How are the changing technologies of literacy affecting your instruction, assessment, and professional development? How *should* they be affecting these things?

### **Extended Learning**

Ask participants to spend some time online in the coming week, browsing the Web for outstanding websites and online resources

that support literacy teaching and learning within a new literacies framework. Each participant should e-mail other group members during the week to recommend a particular site and explain why the recommendation is being made.

Also, as the sessions begin to wind down, group members should reflect on their professional learning during this book study. How will they apply their learning in the classroom? How will they share their learning with colleagues and administrators?

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## SESSION 16

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### **Standards, Assessments, and Text Difficulty (Chapter 15)**

This chapter examines definitions of text difficulty and how they are expressed in standards and assessments. Elfrieda Hiebert reviews work on readability and lexiles and describes how models of text difficulty have replaced readability formulas. She goes on to discuss the treatment of text difficulty in U.S. national and state standards and how it is used in assessments that attempt to determine whether those standards have been met.

#### ***Framing the Session***

##### **Desired outcomes**

- To examine definitions of text difficulty and how they are expressed in standards and assessments
- To explore interpretations of text difficulty in assessments used to determine whether standards have been achieved

##### **Guiding questions**

- Is there a match between the curricular materials identified in your district as appropriate for use in meeting state or national standards and the texts used in assessment? Why or why not?
- What criteria need to be considered when determining text difficulty?

## Key vocabulary

- *Readability formulas*: Methods of determining text difficulty “on the basis of syntactic and semantic complexity” (p. 339)
- *Critical word factor (CWF)*: An “indicator of the task demands for recognizing words in primary-level texts. The CWF indicates the number of words that will be difficult in a text when measured against a curriculum” (p. 345)
- *Text leveling*: In Reading Recovery and guided reading, a method of differentiating texts along certain dimensions to establish their level of difficulty for students in the elementary grades

## Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 15 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ A variety of leveled texts

## Session Activities

### Initiating learning

As described in session 5, mind streaming helps learners activate background knowledge.

1. Group members should find a partner.
2. For one minute, Partner A should describe the dilemma confronting teachers and students regarding the texts of assessments designed to determine students’ achievement of state or national standards. Partner B should encourage Partner A through active listening.
3. Partners A and B reverse roles.

### Interactive group design

Display a variety of level texts. Ask participants to examine and classify them according to the systems identified in this chapter. As a group, analyze the texts and identify key ways of determining readability, interest level, and text difficulty. Reflect and share group findings.

## **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

In their logs and referring to the session's guiding questions, participants should describe how this chapter confirmed or changed the way they view matching books to the needs of their students.

## ***Extended Learning***

Participants should undertake the activity suggested in the fifth of this chapter's Questions for Discussion:

One procedure for identifying critical text features is to select a sample of texts for the grade you teach with texts for different points in the school year represented. Ask colleagues and students to describe the features of these texts that make them easy or difficult to read. How can the features that are commonly identified be developed into a curriculum that supports students in reading texts where these features become increasingly more complex? (p. 365)

As the sessions begin to wind down, group members should reflect on their professional learning during this book study. How will they apply their learning in the classroom? How will they share their learning with colleagues and administrators?

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# **SESSION 17**

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## **Preparing Students for High-Stakes Test Taking in Reading (Chapter 16)**

In response to calls for accountability, schools and districts are increasingly making use of the results of “high-stakes” tests to demonstrate student achievement and school improvement. Author John Guthrie examines the characteristics of these high-stakes tests; describes the responses of teachers, administrators, and students to them; and offers recommendations for preparing students for testing.

### ***Framing the Session***

#### **Desired outcomes**

- To explore characteristics of high-stakes tests and their impact on teachers, administrators, and students
- To recognize and clarify potential curriculum and instructional challenges in preparing student for high-stakes tests



- To identify research-validated planning and instructional practices for preparing students to meet the requirements of reading assessments

### Guiding questions

- How can a teacher allocate time to the essential phases of test preparation (format practice, strategy instruction, and integrated curriculum for engaged reading)?
- What are the potential hazards of high-stakes test preparation in classrooms and schools?
- What are research-validated components of instruction for preparing students to take high-stakes reading tests?

### Key vocabulary

- *High-stakes tests*: Tests or testing programs that are “used to make important decisions about individual students, teachers, or schools” (p. 370)
- *Performance-oriented teacher*: One who is concerned with “test scores, student achievement and external evaluations” (in contrast to a “learning-oriented teacher”; p. 386)
- *Self-efficacy*: An individual’s belief in his or her capacity to produce designated levels of performance and thereby to exercise influence over events; a component of intrinsic motivation

### Materials

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 16 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

### Session Activities

#### Initiating learning

As described in session 9, the Anticipation/Reaction Guide helps learners activate background knowledge and determine the accuracy and validity of their understanding about a topic.

Write the following statements on a piece of chart paper:

1. Research suggests that teachers often adapt to the high-stakes tests in use in their schools, and this adaptation often means narrowing the curriculum and restricting teaching to specific test-like activities.
2. Research shows that some format practice is beneficial, but excessive format practice may jeopardize test success.
3. The strongest predictor of achievement on standardized tests in grades 3 to 6 is student motivation and application of meaningful reading activities.

Have each participant read and respond to each statement. Then, as a group, discuss each statement and reach consensus on whether you think it is true or false, marking each with a ✓ or ✗. Revisit the chapter text to confirm or refute the group's decision.

(*Note:* Statement 1 is true, according to p. 373; Guthrie asserts that this adaptation often results in the trivialization of the reading process. Statement 2 is also true, according to p. 377. Statement 3 is false; on p. 382, Guthrie demonstrates that the strongest predictor is the amount of reading.)

### **Interactive group design**

The Read and Say technique provides readers with opportunities to construct meaning and monitor their understanding. It is a clear, simple method for making connections to text, especially when the material is complex.

1. Ask participants to form table groups of three or four.
2. One member of each table group volunteers to begin by reading aloud the first page or two of the “Preparing Students to Take High-Stakes Reading Tests” section of the chapter (pp. 374–384).
3. The person immediately to the volunteer's left asks a question or makes a comment about this section. Any member of the group can respond.
4. The person immediately to the right of the volunteer then reads the next page or two aloud, and the process repeats until all members have read and asked questions and the passage is complete.

Conclude with a whole-group discussion and capture group learning and applications on chart paper.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Ask participants to reflect on whether their responses to the three statements in the initiating activity are now different, given their new learning. They should also consider the extent to which their own classroom instruction makes use of research-validated practices for preparing students for high-stakes testing. Have them respond in their learning logs to the following question: How can a teacher allocate time to the essential phases of test preparation (format practice, strategy instruction, and integrated curriculum for engaged reading)?

### ***Extended Learning***

Ask participants to interview and discuss high-stakes assessment with at least three teachers or administrators in their school or a nearby school in the district. Refer them to the fourth of the chapter's Questions for Discussion: What are the different reactions of teachers, students, administrators, and parents to the high-stakes testing in your school or district? How can these reactions be used to improve test preparation for success on high-stakes tests?

As the sessions begin to wind down, group members should reflect on their professional learning during this book study. How will they apply their learning in the classroom? How will they share their learning with colleagues and administrators?

---

## **SESSION 18**

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### **Multicultural Factors and the Effective Instruction of Students of Diverse Backgrounds (Chapter 17)**

Here, “students of diverse backgrounds” refers to those who differ from the mainstream in terms of ethnicity, primary language, or social class. These students may face challenges in acquiring high levels of literacy, and they frequently perform less well on measures of achievement. Kathryn Au reviews the research regarding ways

to improve teaching and learning for these students, focusing on motivation, struggling readers, second-language learners, cultural responsiveness, and assessment.

## ***Framing the Session***

### **Desired outcomes**

- To reflect on and analyze how educators can improve the reading achievement of students of diverse backgrounds
- To investigate research-based approaches for improving the reading performance of students of diverse backgrounds within a constructivist framework

### **Guiding questions**

- How might a teacher win all his or her students over to schooling and reading?
- What are some things teachers can do to help English learners with reading and writing?
- Why do you think efforts to raise standardized test scores rarely have a positive effect on students' learning to read?

### **Key vocabulary**

- *Cultural responsiveness*: Refers to teaching that reflects the values and standards for behavior of students' home cultures

### **Materials**

For each participant:

- ✓ Chapter 17 of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*
- ✓ Learning log

For you:

- ✓ Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity recording sheets (see Appendix)

## ***Session Activities***

### **Initiating learning**

Ask participants to note what they think is the meaning in this chapter of the words *diverse*, *artifacts*, and *responsive*. Then, read aloud

the passages from the chapter that discuss those terms (pp. 393, 394, and 404, respectively). With the whole group, briefly discuss and clarify the terms' meanings.

### **Interactive group design**

As described in session 15, carousel brainstorming allows participants to reflect on, discuss, and record what they know about subtopics within a larger topic.

1. Divide the whole group into five small groups. Distribute one of the Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity sheets to each group.
2. For a five- to seven-minute period, members of each small group reflect on, discuss, and record key terms, phrases, or ideas for the questions presented on each sheet.
3. At the end of this brief period, each group passes its sheet along to the next group.
4. Repeat the process until all groups have had a chance to record their thinking on each of the five sheets.
5. A whole-group discussion can then focus on commonalities and differences among the groups' thinking about each question.

### **Learning logs: Reflection and application**

Invite participants to reflect in their logs on the group brainstorming summaries for each of the five questions. Have them synthesize all five summaries in addressing this question: What do you think teachers might do to improve reading achievement for students of diverse backgrounds?

### ***Extended Learning***

Ask participants to pursue the first and second of the chapter's Questions for Discussion:

1. Create a profile showing the diversity among the students enrolled at your school. Go over any statistics available for the school that indicate the ethnicity of the students, their language backgrounds, and (in the United States) how many are eligible for free lunches. Interview several teachers who have been at the school for a while to find out whether the profile of the

student body has changed in recent years or remained the same over time. What are the implications of your findings?

2. Identify the programs or initiatives in place at your school that support the literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds. Interview the principal, another administrator, a curriculum specialist, or a resource teacher to learn more about these programs. Analyze the possible strengths and weaknesses of these programs and initiatives in light of the ideas presented in this chapter.

Finally, group members should reflect on their professional learning during this book study and be prepared to suggest some next steps at the final group meeting.

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## SESSION 19

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### Wrapping Up, Moving Forward

The essential question at this point is, Where do we go from here? Your next steps will be determined by the original goal of your group: Why did you embark on this study in the first place?

Some ideas for follow-up tasks and ways to share your group's outcomes include

- Examine additional professional literature related to the topics covered in the book (see Appendix for recommended readings).
- Conduct an action research project on one of the book's topics.
- Engage in observation or coaching cycles with colleagues to further the implementation of practices learned during study group (consult with your reading specialist or literacy coach for advice and recommendations).
- Produce a podcast that summarizes your learning and implications for teaching practice at your school—and share it with your district officials or school board members.

# Appendix: Additional Resources

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## Session 3: Conditions of Learning Chart

Condition	Description	Comprehensive Literacy Classroom
Immersion	To be exposed to an environment rich in spoken and written language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide multiple opportunities for reading and writing using a wide variety of materials</li> <li>• All literacy approaches</li> </ul>
Demonstration	To observe models of proficient, strategic reading and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model explicit, deliberate, and meaningful initial instruction</li> <li>• Read-aloud and modeled writing</li> </ul>
Expectation	To believe that literacy strategies and skills can and will be acquired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify expectations that are reasonable, conveyed to all involved, and posted; procedures listed</li> <li>• Informal and formal assessments</li> </ul>
Engagement	To want to try authentic reading and writing strategies and techniques; confident with support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interact in experiences of successful readers and writers</li> <li>• Shared literacy</li> </ul>
Use	To apply authentic reading and writing throughout daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate with other content areas</li> <li>• Guided and independent literacy</li> </ul>
Approximations	To be free to explore and make attempts at what proficient, strategic readers and writers can do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote risk taking and support instruction at the learner's need level</li> <li>• Guided literacy</li> </ul>
Response	To receive feedback on attempts to read and write strategically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give specific, timely, and relevant feedback</li> <li>• Conferences, small groups, journal responses</li> </ul>
Responsibility	To be able to make choices and decisions; engaged rather than observing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to make choices through centers, logs, and stations</li> </ul>

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## Session 3: Conditions of Learning Cards

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Immersion</b></p> <p><i>Exposing learners to an environment rich in spoken and written language</i></p> <p>Think about the classroom climate and environment: Is there purposeful print at eye level? Does the room accommodate a variety of types of groupings?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Demonstration</b></p> <p><i>Providing models of proficient, strategic reading and writing</i></p> <p>Think about modeling and the explicitness of teaching: Is initial instruction deliberate, clear, and concise?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Expectation</b></p> <p><i>Communicating the belief that literacy strategies and skills can and will be acquired</i></p> <p>Think about formal and informal assessments: Are the expectations reasonable and conveyed to all involved?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Engagement</b></p> <p><i>Encouraging the desire to pursue authentic reading and writing strategies and techniques</i></p> <p>Think about interaction and sharing: Is support provided? Is the development of confidence facilitated? Is there an opportunity for students and teacher to engage together with the text?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use</b></p> <p><i>Using authentic reading and writing in daily life</i></p> <p>Think about opportunities provided for application: Do learners have many chances to employ and integrate their knowledge with other content areas?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Approximations</b></p> <p><i>Encouraging exploration and attempts at what proficient, strategic readers and writers do</i></p> <p>Think about how to scaffold and encourage risk taking: Are approximations encouraged as a natural part of learning through the gradual release of responsibility?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Response</b></p> <p><i>Receiving feedback on attempts to read and write strategically</i></p> <p>Think about the feedback provided: Is it differentiated for different students? Is feedback specific, timely, relevant, and frequent enough?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responsibility</b></p> <p><i>Allowing learners to make choices and decisions</i></p> <p>Think about how to encourage independence: Are opportunities provided for learners to make their own decisions and to demonstrate their knowledge?</p>

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## Session 4: Charting the Research in Chapter 3

Study	Topic	Key Research Findings
<p>Gonzalez, N., Moll, L.C., Tenery, M.F., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzales, R., et al. (1995). Funds of knowledge for teaching in Latino households. <i>Urban Education, 29</i>, 443–470.</p>		
<p>Ada, A.F. (1988). The Pajaro Valley experience: Working with Spanish-speaking parents to develop children’s reading and writing skills in the home through use of children’s literature. In J. Cummins (Ed.), <i>Minority education: From shame to struggle</i> (pp. 223–238). Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.</p>		
<p>Krol-Sinclair, B. (1996). Connecting home and school literacies: Immigrant parents with limited formal education as classroom storybook readers. In D.J. Leu, C.K. Kinzer, &amp; K.A. Hinchman (Eds.), <i>Literacies for the 21st century: Research and practice</i> (45th yearbook of the National Reading Conference, pp. 270–283). Chicago: National Reading Conference.</p>		
<p>Paratore, J.R. (1993). Influence of an intergenerational approach to literacy on the practice of literacy of parents and their children. In C.K. Kinzer &amp; D.J. Leu (Eds.), <i>Examining central issues in literacy, research, theory, and practice</i> (42nd yearbook of the National Reading Conference, pp. 83–91). Chicago: National Reading Conference.</p>		

(continued)

## Session 4: Charting the Research in Chapter 3 (continued)

Study	Topic	Key Research Findings
<p>Paratore, J.R. (1994). Parents and children sharing literacy. In D.F. Lancy (Ed.), <i>Children's emergent literacy: From research to practice</i> (pp. 193–216). Westport, CT: Praegar.</p>		
<p>Paratore, J.R. (2000). <i>Opening doors, opening opportunities: Family literacy in an urban community</i>. Boston: Allyn &amp; Bacon.</p>		
<p>Madrigal, P., Cubillas, C., Yaden, D.B., Tam, A., &amp; Brassell, D. (1999). <i>Creating a book loan program for inner-city Latino families</i> (Report No. 2-003). Ann Arbor, MI: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.</p>		
<p>Shockley, B., Michalove, B., &amp; Allen, J. (1995). <i>Engaging families: Connecting home and school literacy communities</i>. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.</p>		

# Session 5: Semantic Feature Analysis

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Text \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Examples <input type="checkbox"/> Categories <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary words <input type="checkbox"/> Phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Concepts	Characteristics, Properties, Features, Elements						

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## Session 6: Phonics Activity Checklist

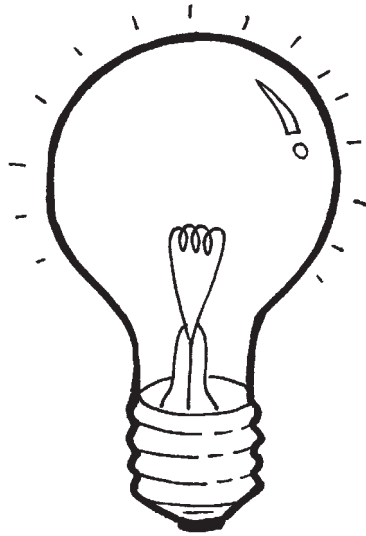
Principles of Effective Learning and Phonics Teaching	Yes	No
Does the activity promote cognitive clarity?		
Are the children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engaged and motivated?</li> <li>✓ Exhibiting self-confidence?</li> <li>✓ Trying new strategies when they experience difficulty?</li> <li>✓ Showing enjoyment of the activity?</li> </ul>		
Are multilevel learning opportunities available in this single activity?		
Are one or more of the following included in the activity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Phonemic awareness</li> <li>✓ Sequential decoding</li> <li>✓ Applying phonics in text</li> <li>✓ Patterning and analogy</li> <li>✓ Decoding multisyllabic words</li> </ul>		
Are one or more of these strategies evident? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Synthesizing</li> <li>✓ Analyzing</li> <li>✓ Contextualizing</li> <li>✓ Patterning</li> <li>✓ Spelling</li> <li>✓ Recognizing</li> </ul>		

## Session 7: Charting the Research in Chapter 6

Study	Topic	Key Research Findings
Lundberg, I., Frost, J., & Petersen, O. (1988). Effects of an extensive program for stimulating phonological awareness in preschool children. <i>Reading Research Quarterly, 23</i> , 263–284.		
Schneider, W., Kuspert, P., Roth, E., Vise, M., & Marx, H. (1997). Short- and long-term effects of training phonological awareness in kindergarten: Evidence from two German studies. <i>Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 66</i> , 311–340.		
Byrne, B., & Fielding-Barnsley, R. (1991). Evaluation of a program to teach phonemic awareness to young children. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology, 83</i> , 451–455.		
O'Connor, R., Jenkins, J., & Slocum, T. (1995). Transfer among phonological tasks in kindergarten: Essential instructional content. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology, 87</i> , 202–217.		
Davidson, M., & Jenkins, J. (1994). Effects of phonemic processes on word reading and spelling. <i>Journal of Educational Research, 87</i> , 148–157.		
Reitsma, P., & Wesseling, R. (1998). Effects of computer-assisted training of blending skills in kindergartners. <i>Scientific Studies of Reading, 2</i> , 301–320.		

# Session 8: List/Group/Label Graphic Organizer

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New Definition  
or Word Usage

Example	Example	Example
---------	---------	---------

What it is like?	What it is like?
------------------	------------------

What is it?

What is it NOT?

Word

---

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## Session 10: Double-Entry Reflection Form

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Quotation	My Thoughts Before Discussion	My Thoughts After Discussion
<p>“The responsibility for teaching reading is a shared one, belonging to all teachers in all subjects” (p. 187).</p>		
<p>“With good instruction, ample time, and opportunity to read across a variety of types of texts, young adolescents can become successful readers both in and out of the school setting” (<i>Supporting Young Adolescents’ Literacy Learning</i>, IRA, 2002).</p>		

## Session 11: Charting the Strategies

---

Strategy	Benefit to Student Learning	Classroom Technique
Prediction/prior knowledge		
Think-aloud		
Text structure		
Visual representations		
Summarization		
Questions/questioning		

## Session 12: Double-Entry Reflection Form

---

Quotation	My Thoughts Before Discussion	My Thoughts After Discussion
<p>"Can comprehension instruction be done successfully within the context of content area instruction?" (p. 256).</p>		
<p>"Preparing beginning teachers in the United States to teach reading well must be a top priority. Currently, there is great variability in the competence of beginning teachers as they emerge from their teacher preparation programs" <i>(Investment in Teacher Preparation in the United States, IRA, 2003).</i></p>		

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## Session 12: Approach to Comprehension Instruction Cards

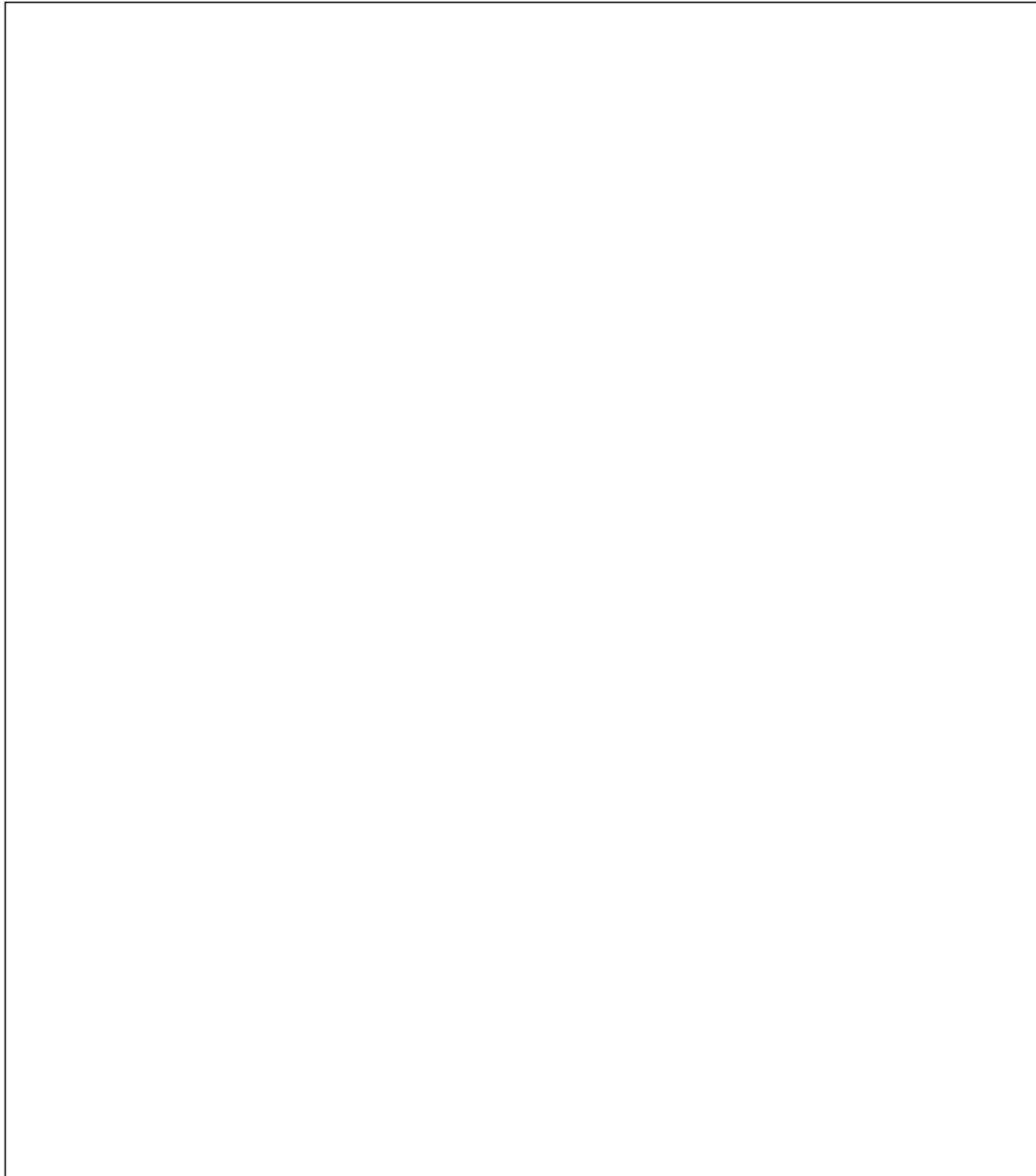
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	Teacher explains specific strategies
Teacher models the reasoning associated with the use of the strategy	Involves the systematic practice of new skills
Teacher-scaffolded support (teacher gradually withdraws the amount offered to students)	Explanation of strategy conducted primarily by the teacher
Focus on teachers' ability to explain the reasoning and mental processes involved in successful reading comprehension	Instruction is explicit in nature
Requires intensive teacher training	Teacher helps students view reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking
Instruction is collaborative in nature with learning designed to occur through interactions	Involves much student discussion
Generates high levels of student involvement and engagement during reading	An interactive exchange between learners

## Session 15: Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies

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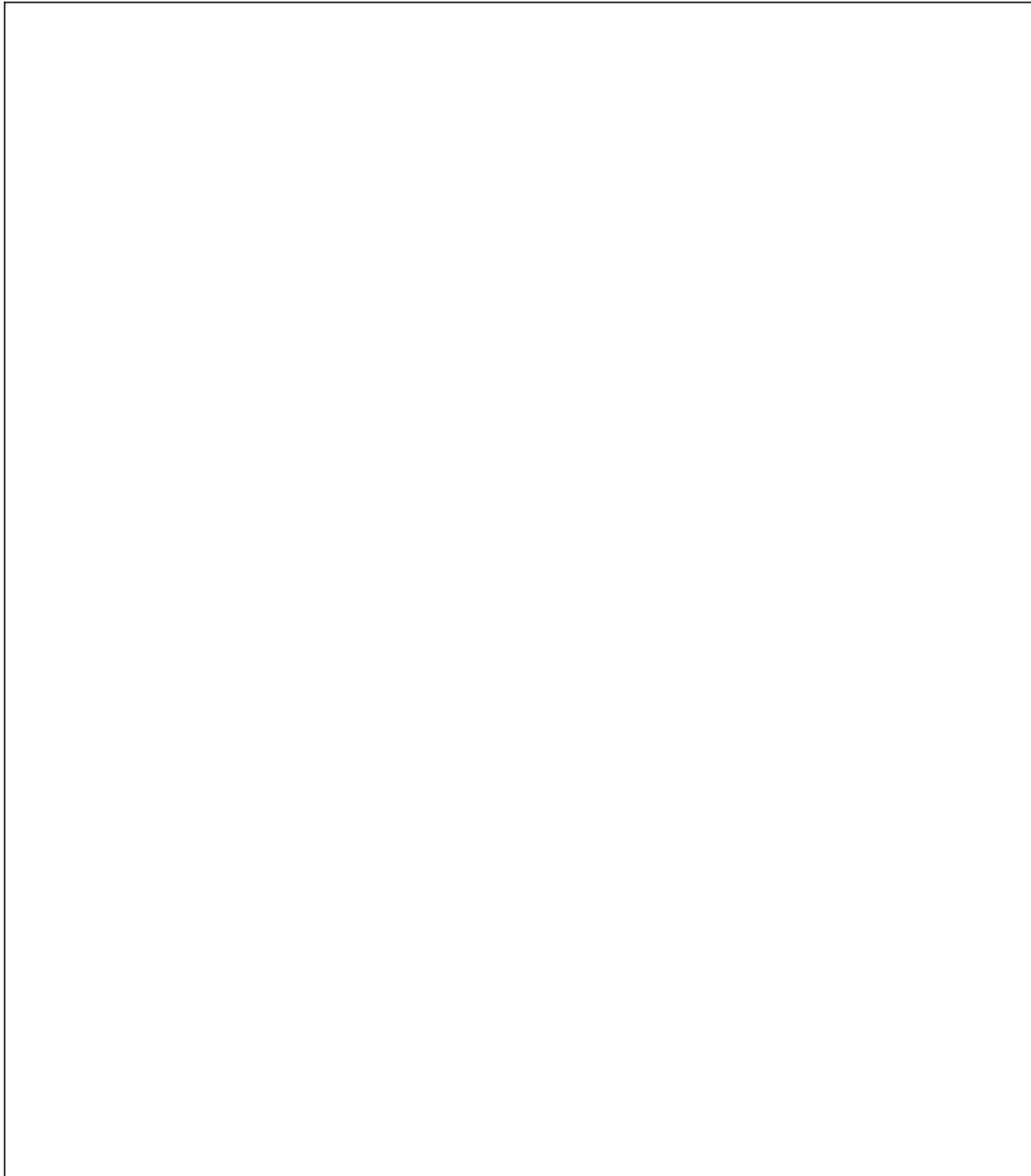
What are the new literacies? How can teachers support new literacies while enhancing the traditional elements of literacy and literacy instruction? (refer to text pp. 313–314)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for participants to write their responses to the brainstorming question.

## Session 15: Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies

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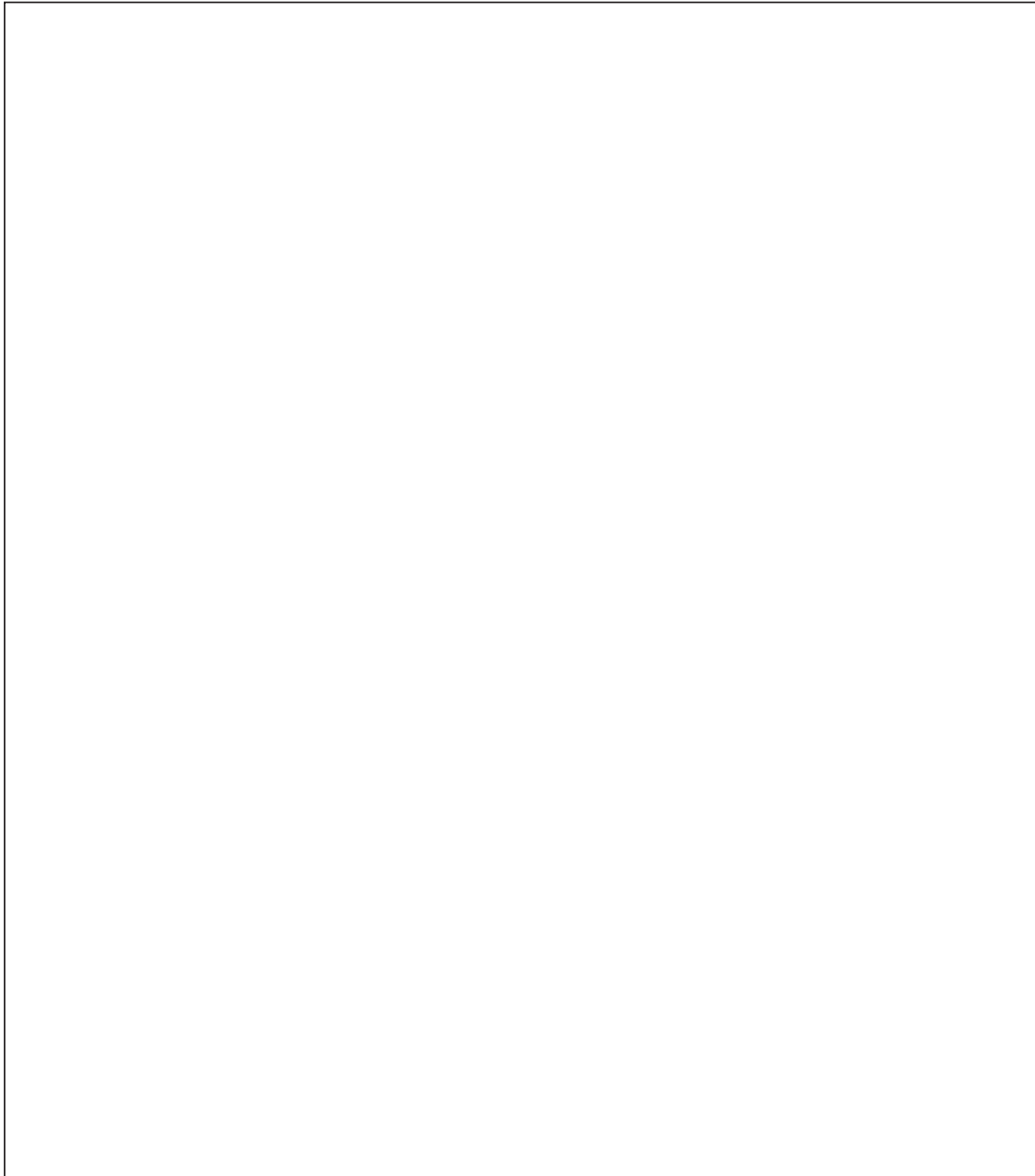
Why are the new literacies important? How does comprehension while reading a traditional text compare to comprehension while reading a networked information resource? (refer to text pp. 315–317)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for participants to write their brainstorming responses to the questions above.

## Session 15: Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies

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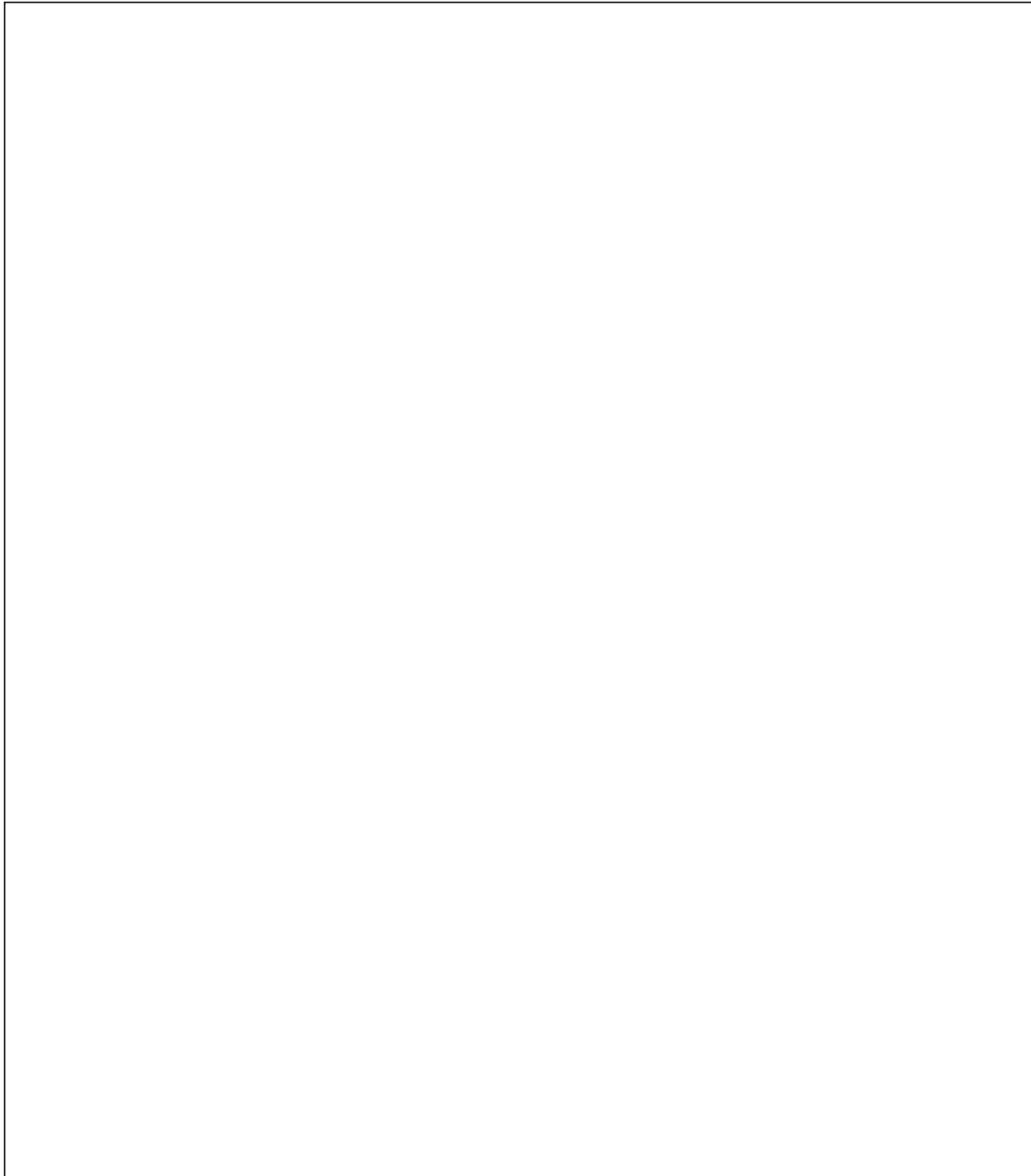
What do we know about the new literacies? How does the description of literacy as “deictic” create challenges for educators? (refer to text pp. 317–319)



## Session 15: Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies

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What are common patterns across technologies? How are teacher education programs assisting new professionals in meeting the challenges of new literacies? (refer to text pp. 319–322)

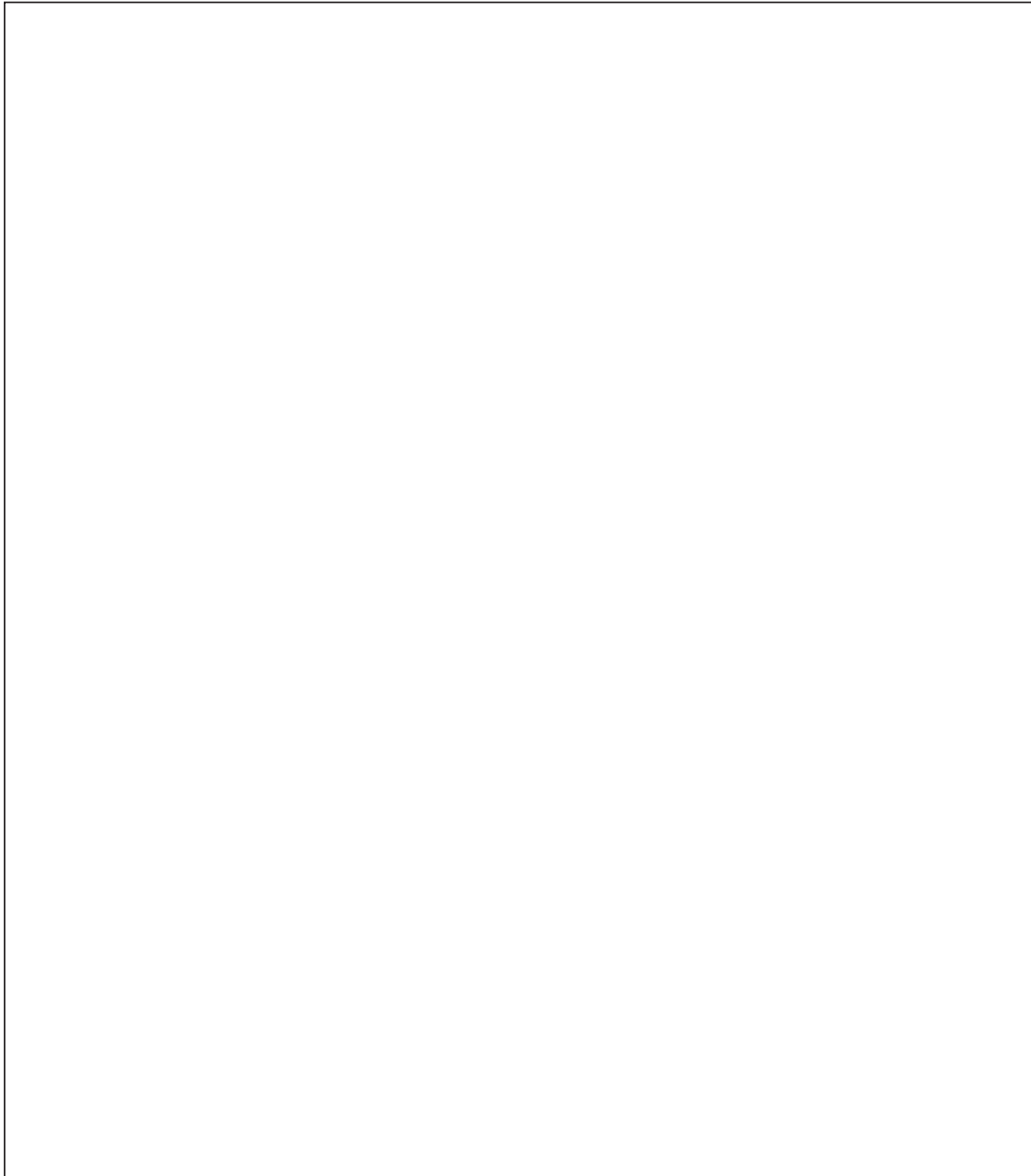
A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for participants to write their brainstorming responses to the question posed above.



## Session 15: Carousel Brainstorming on New Literacies

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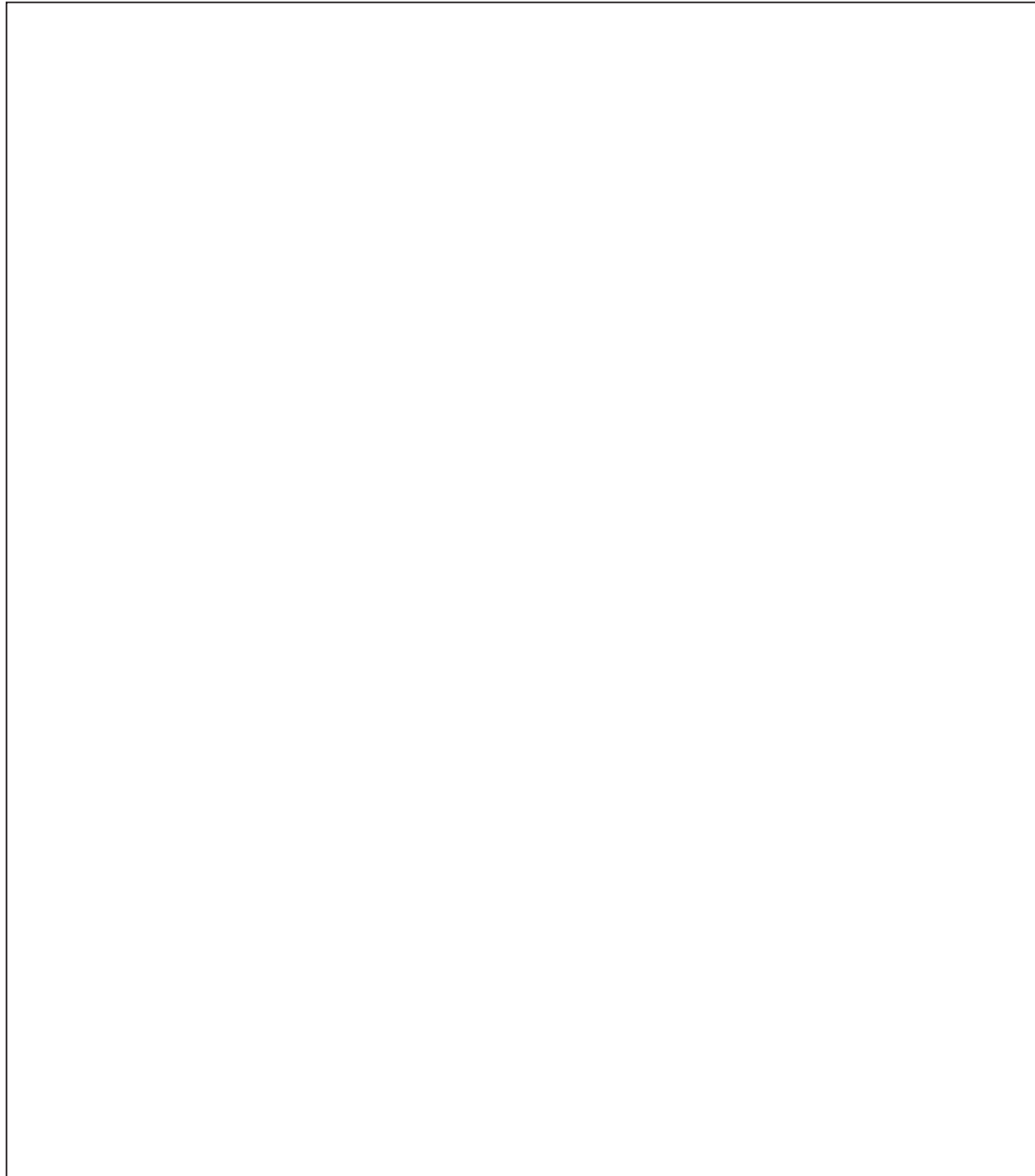
In what ways can teachers align assessment within a framework of new literacies? (refer to text pp. 326–330)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their brainstorming responses to the question above.

## Session 18: Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity

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How can students be motivated to read?



## Session 18: Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity

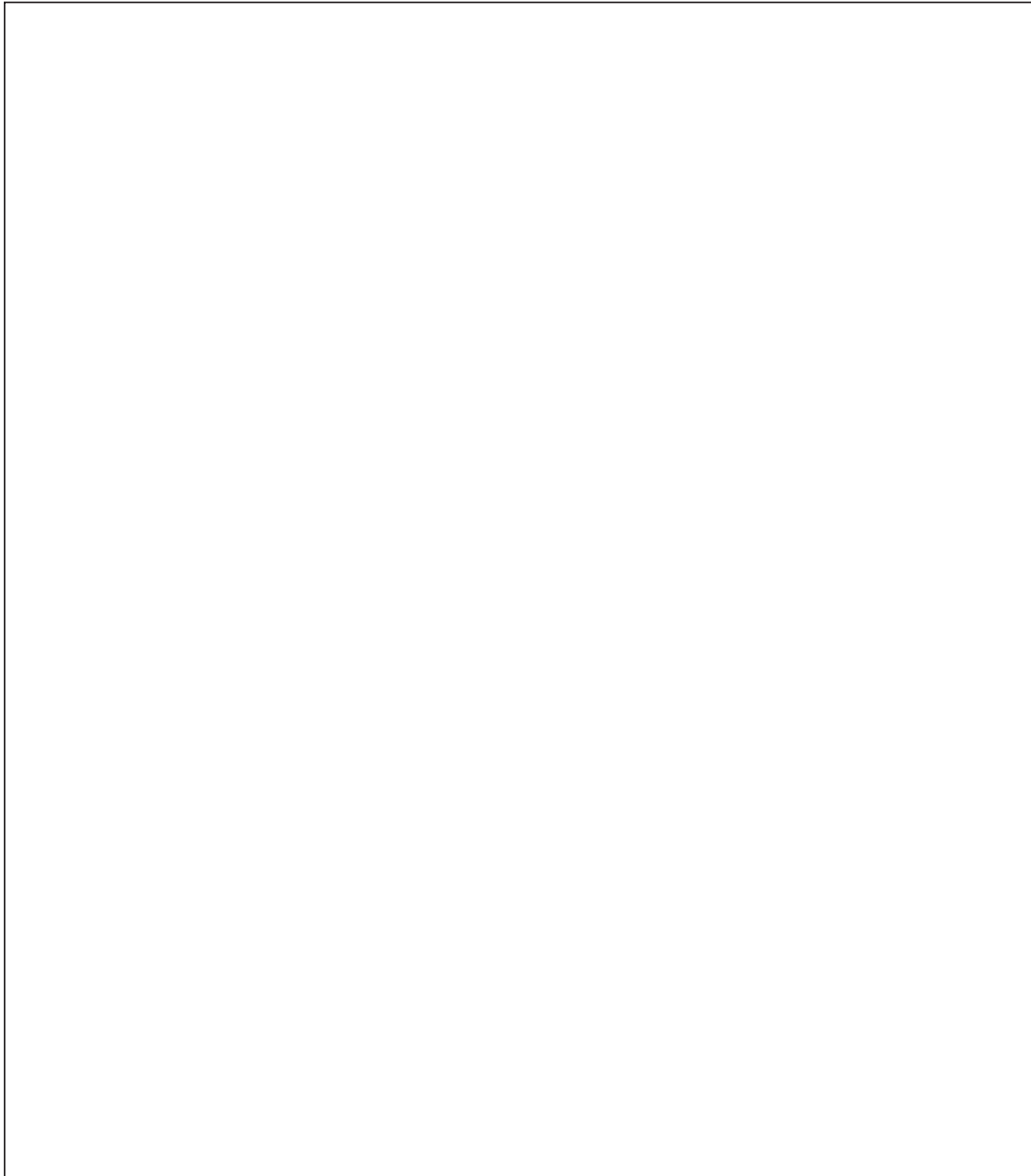
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What are some ways to assist struggling readers?

## Session 18: Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity

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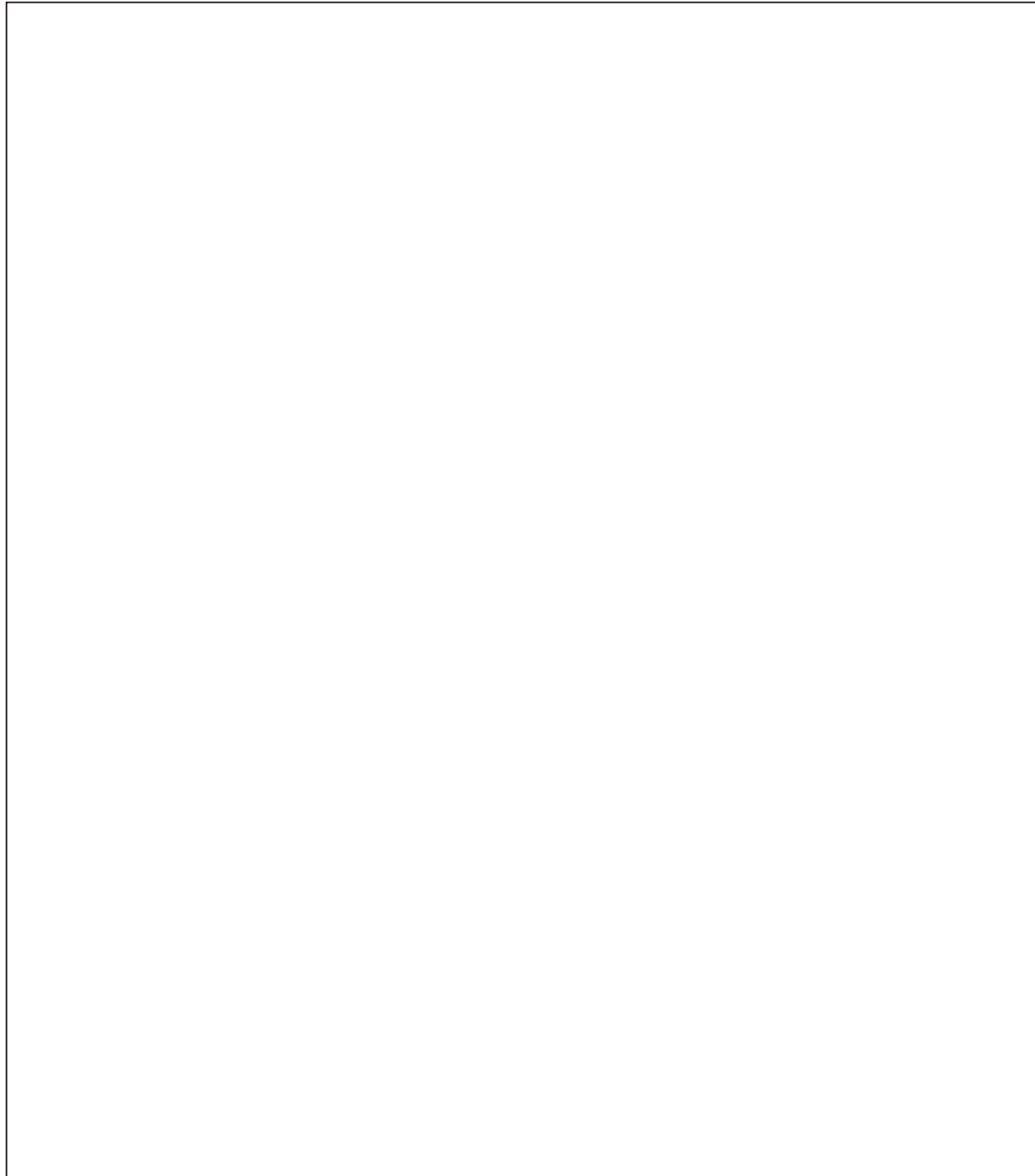
What can be done to support English learners as they learn to read and write in their new language?



## Session 18: Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity

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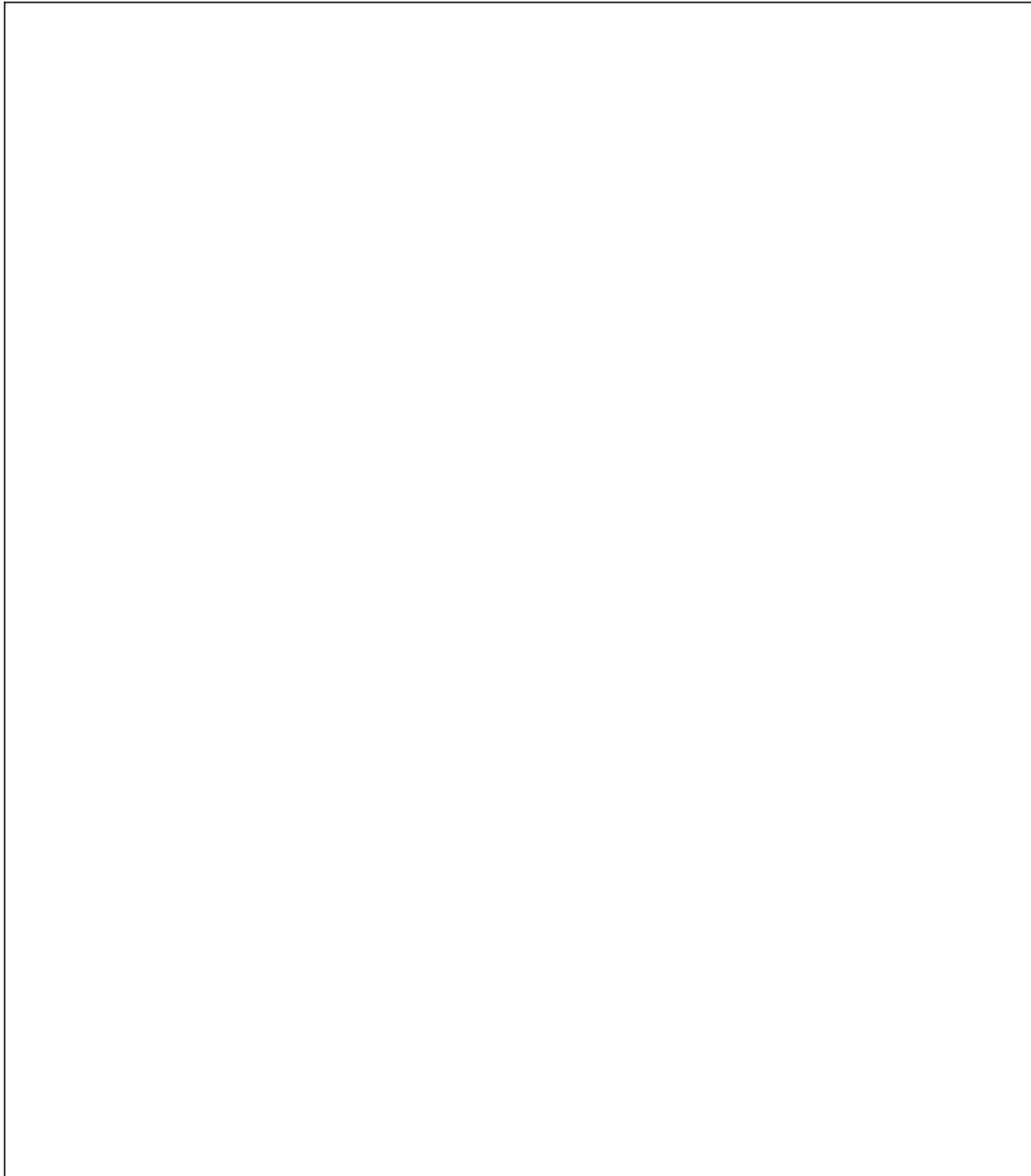
What are ways to teach in a culturally responsive manner?



## Session 18: Carousel Brainstorming on Diversity

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What forms of assessment can provide multiple indicators of students' progress in reading and offer implications for improving instruction?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write their brainstormed ideas in response to the question above.

# Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 1

---

At our first session, we'll talk about what we want to accomplish in the study group over the next few weeks. To get ready, think about

- Why are you participating in the group? What are your personal goals?
- How will we connect this work with our individual professional development plans?
- How will this work correlate with the school's continuous improvement plan?
- How will we connect our learning with improved outcomes for students?
- What data might we need to gather now? Along the way?
- What are the connections between our group study and current policy and legislation (NCLB, RTI, etc.)?
- How will we share our learning?

Most important, we need to have a goal: What do you want to know and be able to do as a result of this study?

You might also want to familiarize yourself in general terms with the book we'll be studying. *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, now in its third edition, has been a popular resource in teacher education and professional development for many years. The editors are Alan Farstrup, past executive director of the International Reading Association (which is also the publisher of the book), and S. Jay Samuels, a professor at the University of Minnesota. The book consists of 17 chapters on critical issues in reading education, each written by an expert or team of experts on the individual topics.

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 2

---

At the next session, we'll be talking about "What Reading Research Says: The Promises and Limitations of Applying Research to Reading Education," the first chapter of *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*. The text describes the disagreement and confusion over the meaning of the term *research-based instruction*. Author Timothy Shanahan advocates for increased thoughtfulness about approaches to and interpretations of research, outlines types and purposes of educational research, and discusses how we can best use research to inform our instruction.

While you're reading the chapter this week in preparation for our group meeting, think about these questions:

- In your own teaching, how do you determine if instruction and instructional tools are "research based"?
- What sort of evidence do you have about instructional effectiveness that you can use to improve instruction and student achievement?
- How are you now applying, or how might you apply, research to practice in your classroom?



## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 3

---

At our next session, we'll talk about "Holistic, Integrated Approaches to Reading and Language Arts Instruction: The Constructivist Framework of an Instructional Theory" by Brian Cambourne. In a holistic, integrated, language arts learning environment, children are actively engaged in learning to read, learning about reading, and learning through reading. They construct knowledge as they think critically and speculatively, monitor their understanding, and negotiate meaning through social interaction. Cambourne describes the theoretical underpinnings of this "constructivist" approach to literacy instruction, outlines contrasting views, and suggests that researchers make clear their ideological positions in order to advance discussion and debate.

In the next week, give these questions some thought:

- How do the ends relate to the means in the constructivist theory?
- How do you create conditions in your classroom that engage all learners in literacy?

Leave some extra time for reading before our next session! Besides Cambourne's chapter, we'll be going over his earlier article, "Toward an Educationally Relevant Theory of Literacy Learning: Twenty Years of Inquiry."

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 4

---

In “Home and School Together: Helping Beginning Readers Succeed,” Jeanne Paratore talks about parents’ roles in children’s literacy learning. It’s well known that research has validated the importance of storybook reading at home to children’s early literacy success. But research also tells us that, even when mainstream literacy practices (such as storybook reading) are absent, there are other language and literacy practices in children’s lives that teachers can build on. Teachers also need to keep in mind that language, culture, and social class influence children’s and parents’ literacy use and their expectations about school.

While you’re reading this chapter, consider these questions:

- What factors should be considered when you work with families?
- How does research support our understanding of the role parents play in their children’s school success?
- What are effective and appropriate ways to involve families in children’s literacy learning?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 5

---

Research indicates that children who experience difficulty learning to read in the early grades may not want to practice reading and writing and, as a result, they are put on a path of continuing academic struggle. It's important that we identify children who are struggling early so that we can help them avoid this spiral. In "The Importance of Effective Early Intervention," author Dorothy Strickland describes some successful approaches and outlines the components of successful programs.

To prepare for this session, read the chapter—but also do a little background reading on the intervention approaches in place in our school and district. Find out about Response to Intervention (RTI) and how it is (or isn't) being implemented. Then, think about the following:

- What are the essential components of a successful prevention or intervention program?
- How can we apply research-validated practices to support students who are experiencing difficulty in school?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 6

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Beginning readers need phonetic awareness and decoding abilities, and they should be given opportunities to apply phonics skills. It's important to realize, however, that research does not support one particular approach to phonics teaching over another. In "What We Know About How to Teach Phonics," Patricia and James Cunningham describe principles of effective teaching that apply across the curriculum and discuss application to phonics instruction and early literacy learning.

Read this chapter and think about your own teaching of phonics and decoding (or, if you're an upper-grade teacher, what you know about phonics). Keep these questions in mind:

- According to the research findings described in this chapter, how should phonics be taught?
- Why are multifaceted and multilevel instructional principles essential in teaching phonics?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 7

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“The Role of Phonemic Awareness in Learning to Read” presents a comprehensive definition of phonemic awareness, distinguishing it from phonological awareness and phonics. Authors Linnea Ehri and Simone Nunes review a variety of studies that report strong relationships between phonemic awareness and learning to read, highlighting instructional approaches that have proven successful. They also review the U.S. National Reading Panel’s meta-analysis of phonemic awareness studies.

Here are some things to think about while you’re reading this chapter before our next meeting:

- What are the differences between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and phonics?
- According to the studies presented in this chapter, what is the relationship between phonemic awareness and learning to read?
- How can and should this research be applied to classroom practice?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 8

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We know from research that students who have rich vocabularies are more likely to read with comprehension and be successful in school. In “The Place of Word Consciousness in a Research-Based Vocabulary Program,” Michael Graves and Susan Watts-Taffe make a case for the importance of caring about words, of being aware of and interested in words and their meanings. They also provide numerous suggestions for teaching strategies to foster vocabulary growth with learners of all ages.

How “word conscious” are you? What do you demonstrate to your students about how you feel about words? As well as keeping your personal vocabulary use in mind, think about these things as you read:

- What evidence can demonstrate that students are developing word consciousness?
- How can teachers foster word consciousness in the classroom?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 9

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Fluent readers recognize printed words quickly, effortlessly, and almost unconsciously. Fluency reduces the need to spend time decoding and identifying words and so allows the reader to attend actively to comprehension. In “Reading Fluency: Its Development and Assessment,” author Jay Samuels stresses the importance of supporting children’s development of fluency and describes repeated readings, a strategy designed to increase automatic identification and recognition of words. He concludes with tips on assessing students’ levels of fluency.

Set aside some extra time for reading this week so you can become familiar with Valerie Ellery’s chapter on fluency from the book *Creating Strategic Readers*. Then, before our next session, think about the following:

- How do readers become fluent?
- What are good ways to assess fluency?
- Why is time spent reading vital to reading fluency?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 10

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Teachers across subject areas share the responsibility of ensuring that students receive high-quality, appropriate reading instruction throughout the school years. In outlining thinking about content area literacy and providing a detailed review of research and strategies in the field, “Making a Difference in Adolescents’ School Lives: Visible and Invisible Aspects of Content Area Reading” by Richard Vacca makes a strong case for increased attention to adolescents’ literacy needs.

If you work at the middle or secondary level, or if you are preparing students for the increasing challenges they’ll face with texts in the upper grades, think about these things as you read:

- Why is it essential for teachers to have an understanding of the needs of adolescent readers?
- What makes up “visible instruction” in the development of reading strategies?
- Why is it important to make reading an invisible and seamless part of content area curricula?



## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 11

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In “Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension,” Nell Duke and David Pearson outline instructional models and approaches and provide an overview of numerous strategies. They review the supporting research and conclude with thought-provoking questions about possibilities for future study.

As you read, think about the following:

- How can you support students in acquiring the strategies and processes used by good readers and improve their overall comprehension of text?
- What supportive classroom features need to be present for comprehension instruction to “take hold and flourish” (p. 207)?
- Which “well-taught, well-learned strategies” (p. 233) can you apply in your classroom to model effective comprehension?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 12

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“Reading Comprehension Strategies and Teacher Preparation” claims that successful teachers of reading comprehension are created through teacher training and professional development. Joanna Williams describes four studies that investigated how specific teacher-training approaches later affected children’s achievement in comprehension. Think back to your own teacher education program. How well did it prepare you to help students comprehend text?

As well as remembering your own experience, think about these general questions as you read this week:

- How can you teach comprehension strategies more effectively in order to have lasting effects on students’ future reading?
- What characteristics of effective reading instruction presented in this chapter demonstrate a positive effect on reading comprehension?
- What characteristics of instructional delivery have proven most effective in comprehension instruction?
- How can you apply these effective instructional approaches and strategies in your classroom?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 13

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According to author Richard Allington, definitions of reading and learning disability are remarkably inconsistent and have shifted significantly over the years. Despite the ambiguities in definitions, research indicates that some interventions may prove effective with children who struggle to learn to read. "Research on Reading/Learning Disability Interventions" summarizes research on preventive and acceleration designs and on more systemic, longer term approaches. Allington concludes that a reconceptualizing of reading/learning disability is needed to achieve the goal of improved reading achievement for all children.

Besides reading the chapter in preparation for our next session, brush up your background knowledge on interventions in place in our school and on RTI. Think about these things:

- How can educators determine which students are experiencing reading difficulties and which may have learning disabilities?
- What constitutes an effective intervention?
- How can schools provide a comprehensive literacy intervention program?
- How is RTI affecting our classrooms today?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 14

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Michael Pressley makes the point that skilled readers actively use a variety of comprehension strategies while they read, that these strategies should be taught beginning in the earliest grades, and that these strategies are often not taught at all. From this perspective, “Metacognition and Self-Regulated Comprehension” explores the nature of effective comprehension instruction, focusing particularly on the role of metacognition—or “thinking about thinking.”

To guide your own thinking, consider these questions as you read:

- What applications for classroom practice can be gleaned from both the older and more contemporary research studies described in this chapter?
- What is specifically metacognitive about skilled, self-regulated reading?
- What are effective practices of a “metacognitively sophisticated” reading teacher? Are you such a teacher?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 15

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Around the world, schools are working to prepare students to meet the challenges of a competitive global economy. In many states and districts, information and communication technologies (ICTs) are being infused into curricula. In “The New Literacies: Research on Reading Instruction With the Internet,” Donald Leu discusses research on technology in education and the implications for teacher education and staff development, and he advocates embracing change in the interest of preparing children for their futures.

After reading the chapter, spend some time online—reading things you’re interested in and also looking for great literacy-related websites and digital resources. Then think about these things before our next session, in terms of both your students’ and your own use of digital technology:

- What are new literacies?
- Why are new literacies important?
- What do we know about new literacies?

We’re getting close to the end of the book—and to winding down this book-study project. It’s time to start thinking about next steps: What have you learned so far from your participation in the group? Are you meeting your goals? Has anything changed in your classroom over the past weeks? What ideas do you have about sharing your learning with your colleagues?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 16

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“Standards, Assessments, and Text Difficulty” examines definitions of text difficulty and how they are expressed in standards and assessments. Elfrieda Hiebert reviews work on readability and lexiles and describes how models of text difficulty have replaced readability formulas. She goes on to discuss the treatment of text difficulty in U.S. national and state standards and how it is used in assessments that attempt to determine whether those standards have been met.

In addition to reading the chapter, brush up on what you know about readability formulas and text leveling. Think about these things:

- Is there a match between the curricular materials identified in our district as appropriate for use in meeting state or national standards and the texts used in assessment? Why or why not?
- What criteria need to be considered when determining text difficulty?

Keep thinking about next steps this week: What have you learned so far from your participation in the group? Are you meeting your goals? Has anything changed in your classroom over the past weeks? What ideas do you have about sharing your learning with your colleagues?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 17

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With increased calls for accountability, schools and districts are increasingly making use of the results of “high-stakes” tests to demonstrate student achievement and school improvement. In “Preparing Students for High-Stakes Test Taking in Reading,” John Guthrie examines the characteristics of these high-stakes tests; describes the responses of teachers, administrators, and students to them; and offers recommendations for preparing students for testing.

Take a look at the high-stakes tests in place in our school and district. Think about these things while you read this chapter:

- How can a teacher allocate time to the essential phases of test preparation (format practice, strategy instruction, and integrated curriculum for engaged reading)?
- What are the potential hazards of high-stakes test preparation in classrooms and schools?
- What are research-validated components of instruction for preparing students to take high-stakes reading tests?

Keep thinking about next steps this week: What have you learned so far from your participation in the group? Are you meeting your goals? Has anything changed in your classroom over the past weeks? What ideas do you have about sharing your learning with your colleagues?

## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 18

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“Multicultural Factors and the Effective Instruction of Students of Diverse Backgrounds” discusses students who differ from the mainstream in terms of ethnicity, primary language, or social class. These students may face challenges in acquiring high levels of literacy, and they frequently perform less well on measures of achievement. Kathryn Au reviews the research regarding ways to improve teaching and learning for these students, focusing on motivation, struggling readers, second-language learners, cultural responsiveness, and assessment.

While you’re reading, think about the range of students in your classroom and our school. Consider these questions:

- How can you win all your students over to schooling and reading?
- What are some things you can do to help English learners with reading and writing?
- Why do you think efforts to raise standardized test scores rarely have a positive effect on students’ learning to read?

Next week is the last session! What have you learned so far from your participation in the group? Are you meeting your goals? Has anything changed in your classroom over the past weeks? What ideas do you have about sharing your learning with your colleagues?



## Coming Up: Get Ready for Session 19

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The essential question at this point is, Where do we go from here? Our next steps will be determined by the original goal of our group: Why did we embark on this study in the first place?

Come to this session ready to share some ideas about next steps—and to congratulate yourself and your colleagues on everything we've done in the group!

# Recommended Reading

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You might like to investigate selections from the list below to extend and refine your learning on the topic of each chapter.

## Sessions 1 and 2

*Evidence-based reading instruction: Putting the National Reading Panel report into practice.* (2002). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

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Shanahan, T., & Neuman, S.B. (1997). Literacy research that makes a difference. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 32(2), 202–210.

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## Session 3

Cambourne, B. (1995). Toward an educationally relevant theory of literacy learning: Twenty years of inquiry. *The Reading Teacher*, 49(3), 182–190.

## Session 4

Allen, J. (2007). *Creating welcoming schools: A practical guide to home–school partnerships with diverse families.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

International Reading Association. (2002). *Family–school partnerships: Essential elements of literacy instruction in the United States* (Position statement). Newark, DE: Author.

## Session 5

Allington, R.L. (2006). Critical factors in designing an effective reading intervention for struggling readers. In C. Cummins (Ed.), *Understanding and implementing Reading First initiatives: The changing role of administrators* (pp. 127–138). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L.S. (2006). Introduction to Response to Intervention: What, why, and how valid is it? *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(1), 93–99.

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## Session 6

Phillips, L.M., Norris, S.P., & Steffler, D.J. (2007). Potential risks to reading posed by high-dose phonics. *Journal of Applied Research on Learning*, 1(1), 1–18.

White, T.G. (2005). Effects of systematic and strategic analogy-based phonics on grade 2 students' word reading and reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40(2), 234–255.

## Session 7

Manyak, P.C. (2008). Phonemes in use: Multiple activities for a critical process. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(8), 659–662.

Pokorni, J.L., Worthington, C.K., & Jamison, P.J. (2004). Phonological awareness intervention: Comparison of Fast ForWord, Earobics, and LiPS. *Journal of Educational Research*, 97(3), 147–157.

Strickland, D.S., & Schickedanz, J.A. (2009). *Learning about print in preschool: Working with letters, words, and beginning links with phonemic awareness* (2nd ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

## Session 8

Bromley, K. (2007). Nine things every teacher should know about words and vocabulary instruction. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 50(7), 528–537.

Graves, M.F. (2006). *The vocabulary book: Learning & instruction*. New York: Teachers College Press; Newark, DE: International Reading Association; Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

## Session 9

Ellery, V. (2009). Fluency. In *Creating strategic readers: Techniques for developing competency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension* (2nd ed., pp. 95–128). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Kuhn, M.R., & Stahl, S.A. (2003). Fluency: A review of developmental and remedial practices. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95(1), 3–21.

Samuels, S.J., & Farstrup, A.E. (Eds.). (2006). *What research has to say about fluency instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

## Session 10

International Reading Association. (2002). *Supporting young adolescents' literacy learning* (Position statement). Newark, DE: Author.

Lewis, J. (2007). Academic literacy: Principles and learning opportunities for adolescent readers. In J. Lewis. & G. Moorman (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy instruction: Policies and promising practices* (pp. 143–166). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Short, K., Harste, J., & Burke, C. (1996). *Creating classrooms for authors and inquirers* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

## Session 11

Hampton, S., & Resnick, L.B. (2009). *Reading and writing with understanding: Comprehension in grades 4 and 5*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Israel, S.E., & Duffy, G.G. (Eds.). (2009). *Handbook of research on reading comprehension*. New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

Kelley, M.J., & Clausen-Grace, N. (2007). *Comprehension shouldn't be silent: From strategy instruction to student independence*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

### **Session 12**

International Reading Association. (2003). *Investment in teacher preparation in the United States* (Position statement). Newark, DE: Author.

International Reading Association. (2007). *Teaching reading well: A synthesis of the International Reading Association's research on teacher preparation for reading instruction*. Newark, DE: Author.

### **Session 13**

Allington, R.L. (2008). *What really matters in Response to Intervention: Research-based designs*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

(See also readings for session 5.)

### **Session 14**

Boulware-Gooden, R., Carreker, S., Thornhill, A., & Joshi, R. (2007). Instruction of metacognitive strategies enhances reading comprehension and vocabulary achievement of third-grade students. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(1), 70–77.

Fordham, N.W. (2006). Crafting questions that address comprehension strategies in content reading. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 49(5), 390–396.

Marcell, B. (2007). Traffic Light Reading: Fostering the independent usage of comprehension strategies with informational text. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(8), 778–781.

### **Session 15**

Leu, D.J., Jr., Kinzer, C.K., Coiro, J., & Cammack, D.W. (2004). Toward a theory of new literacies emerging from the Internet and other information and communication technologies. In R.B. Ruddell & N.J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 1570–1613). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Mesmer, H. (2008). *Tools for matching readers to texts: Research-based practices*. New York: Guilford.

## Session 16

Boyd-Batstone, P. (2004). Focused anecdotal records assessment: A tool for standards-based, authentic assessment. *The Reading Teacher*, 58(3), 230–239.

Rouse, C.E., & Krueger, A.B. (2004). Putting computerized instruction to the test: A randomized evaluation of a “scientifically based” reading program. *Economics of Education Review*, 23(4), 323–338.

## Session 17

Assaf, L. (2006). One reading specialist’s response to high-stakes testing pressures. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(2), 158–167.

Barrentine, S.J., & Stokes, S.M. (Eds.). (2005). *Reading assessment: Principles and practices for elementary teachers* (2nd ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

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## Session 18

Ehri, L.C., Dreyer, L.G., Flugman, B., & Gross, A. (2007). Reading Rescue: An effective tutoring intervention model for language minority students who are struggling readers in first grade. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44(2), 414–448.

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## About the Editors and Authors

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**Alan E. Farstrup** and **S. Jay Samuels** are coeditors of several books in the *What Research Has to Say* series, including the text highlighted here and additional works on vocabulary and on fluency. Alan, who holds a doctorate in reading curriculum and instruction, served as executive director of the International Reading Association in Newark, Delaware, from 1992 to 2009. Jay is a professor of educational psychology at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He holds a doctorate from the University of California, Los Angeles.

**Valerie Ellery**, coauthor of this facilitator's guide, has served the field as a National Board–certified teacher, curriculum specialist, staff developer, and consultant. She holds a master's degree in reading from the University of South Florida and is the author of the bestselling *Creating Strategic Readers* (International Reading Association, 2009, now in its second edition).

**Jennifer Rosenboom**, coauthor with Valerie of this guide, has been an educator for more than 25 years. She has worked at elementary, middle, and high school levels, and as a district administrator, staff developer, and adjunct professor. She earned a doctorate in curriculum and instruction in 2003.

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