The National Reading Panel Report
After extensive review of scientific research, the National Reading Panel, convened by Congress in 1998, concluded that the most effective way to teach reading is through a combination of instructional methods that focus on the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These five areas, often referred to as the essential components of reading, form the basis of the federal government’s Reading First initiative.

Why is Reading First significant?
The Reading First initiative has set a clear course for reading instruction in the United States—a course that all teachers will be urged to follow in the years ahead. As educators, we must accurately assess students’ reading abilities and utilize proven instructional practices to address each student’s needs. Specific methods and materials may vary, but one idea will remain unquestioned: In order to participate fully in our rapidly changing society, all of America’s children must be able to read well.

Meeting the Challenges of Reading First
With over 35 years of experience in education, Literacy Specialist Linda Cornwell has served as a classroom teacher, school library media specialist, staff developer, educational consultant, and conference presenter. We spoke with Ms. Cornwell about the implications of the National Reading Panel report and the role that books can play in meeting the challenges of Reading First.

Q: What makes Reading First different from other education initiatives?
A: This initiative is different in several ways. The first is accountability. Reading First requires educators to be much more intentional and strategic in our approach to reading instruction. We’re being asked to measure more specific outcomes than in the past—and there are real repercussions for not demonstrating sufficient progress.

Reading First is also more research-based than previous initiatives, and it defines research in a much narrower way. Teachers must now base their decisions on scientifically-designed, empirical research, rather than on qualitative case studies. It’s no longer enough to teach or assess reading in a general way. We’re being asked to target the particular aspects of reading that need to be addressed in our classrooms and to identify research-based methods that will make a difference in those areas.

Q: How can teachers use fiction and nonfiction books to address the essential components of reading as identified in Reading First?
A: Children need to practice all of their reading skills in order to become proficient readers—and books are the tools that provide that practice. The more authentic the literature, the more authentic the practice. It’s fine for kids to...
be introduced to basic skills through tightly controlled reading experiences—but they need to extend these experiences to real-world texts in order to refine and solidify those skills.

Books are also highly motivational. If children are “hooked” by real books, they’ll want to put all their reading skills to use in order to make sense of what they read. By engaging with meaningful, authentic texts, children can become more active, strategic readers.

**Could you say more about motivation?**

The Reading Excellence Act, which preceded Reading First, defined motivation as the sixth dimension of reading. Without motivation, reading can become a rote task, without any personal meaning. In order to create lifelong readers, we need to encourage a love of reading in all of our students. Kids who learn the five components of reading may become compliant readers, but without that love of reading, they’ll become less than proficient, especially as they move into the upper grades.

Practice and motivation underlie all the other skills. Our aim should be to develop kids who not only can read, but who want to read—and will read throughout their lives.

**Are there any areas beyond Reading First that we should also keep in mind?**

Reading First focuses on at-risk children in kindergarten to grade 3. These years are critical—but we shouldn’t lose sight of older readers who need reading assistance as well. No matter how successful we are in grades K–3, many students will continue to need intensive support as they move into the upper grades. We need to be sure that these older students are gaining the reading skills they’ll need to succeed in high school and beyond.

We also need to remember that basic reading skills are necessary, but not sufficient. Practice and motivation underlie all the other skills. Our aim should be to develop kids who not only can read, but who want to read—and will read throughout their lives.

**Literacy Online: Internet Resources**

**Reading First**
http://www.nclb.gov/start/facts/reading.html
The Reading First initiative builds on the findings of the National Reading Panel and is designed to ensure that children receive effective reading instruction, especially in the early grades.

**National Institute for Literacy**
http://www.nifl.gov/
The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) is an independent federal organization that provides information about literacy and supports the development of high-quality literacy services.

**Scholastic**
http://www.scholastic.com
This Web site includes teacher resources and activities for grades PreK–8, as well as information about a wide range of educational products. Visit the Scholastic Center for Literacy and Learning for online articles related to current reading research.

**Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement**
http://www.ciera.org/
A consortium of five universities, the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) is a national center for research on early reading. CIERA’s Web site provides access to online literacy research, print resources, and links to other literacy-related sites.

**International Reading Association**
http://www.reading.org/
The International Reading Association (IRA) is dedicated to improving the quality of reading instruction, disseminating research and information about reading, and encouraging the development of lifelong readers.

**National Reading Panel**
http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/
This Web site summarizes the work of the National Reading Panel (NRP) and provides free access to NRP materials, including the “Put Reading First” teaching guide and the “Teaching Children to Read” video.

**No Child Left Behind**
http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/
Signed into law on January 8, 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) represents the current administration’s education reform plan.
Fostering Phonemic Awareness
Before children learn how to read, they need to have an awareness of how individual sounds, or phonemes, combine to form spoken words. Reading books that contain rhythm, rhyme, and repetition is an effective way to foster phonemic awareness.

NEW!

READING FIRST COLLECTIONS

Phonemic Awareness K–1
Grades K–1, 10 books total
WVP 945957
List Price: $43.09 You Pay Only: $24.00
Arroz con leche  Jamberry
Barnyard Banter  Miss Mary Mack
Bearobics  My First Action Rhymes
Chicken Soup with Rice  Oink! Moo! How Do You Do?
The Eensy-Weensy Spider  Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Phonemic Awareness 2–3
Grades 2–3, 10 books total
WVP 945959
List Price: $45.54 You Pay Only: $26.00
Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, Brothers
A House Is a House for Me
How Sweet the Sound
The Hungry Thing
In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall
A, My Name Is...
She Sells Seashells
Silly Sally
Tikki Tikki Tembo
Tumble Bumble

MORE PRODUCTS

AlphaTales
AlphaTales is a read-aloud program that builds alphabet-recognition and phonemic awareness skills. The box set includes 26 full-color storybooks, a 128-page teacher's guide, and a sturdy storage unit.
Pre-K–1, 27 books total
WVP 916521
List Price: $64.95 You Pay Only: $49.95

Fun Activities to Build Phonemic Awareness
Includes a 64-page teaching resource book full of activities that prepare children for reading and a selection of trade books to accompany the activities.
Grades K–2, 4 books total
WVP 921850
List Price: $21.80 You Pay Only: $11.95
TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
Jake Baked the Cake
Clap Your Hands
Each Peach Pear Plum

Sound-Matching Practice Kit
Grades K–2, 12 books total
WVP 944810
List Price: $60.00 You Pay Only: $34.95
TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing
Yoko
The Snowy Day
Miss Nelson Is Missing
Where the Wild Things Are
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
Curious George® Rides a Bike
Ten Black Dots
Bread and Jam for Frances
Corduroy
The Wheels on the Bus

Phonemic Awareness
What the Research Shows
- Phonemic awareness helps children learn to read and spell.
- Although phonemic awareness is not the same as phonics, children need phonemic awareness in order to benefit from phonics instruction.
- Phonemic-awareness instruction is most effective when children not only work with the sounds of spoken language, but are taught to use letters as well.
- Phonemic-awareness instruction is not a complete reading program. In order to become successful readers, children need to have a wide range of reading experiences, including listening to and engaging with authentic literary texts.

Additional Resources


Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children, by the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, et al. (National Academy Press, 1998)
Working With Phonics
Phonics instruction helps children understand the relationships between the sounds of spoken language and the letters of written language. Scholastic’s “Reading First: Phonics” collections provide children with the reading experiences they need in order to put this knowledge into practice.

READING FIRST COLLECTIONS

Phonics K–1
Grades K–1, 10 books total
WVP 945960
List Price: $44.58  You Pay Only: $24.00

Animal Action ABC
The Big Bug Dug
David McPhail’s Animals A to Z
“I Can’t” Said the Ant
Inch by Inch
The Itsy Bitsy Spider
Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten
Mrs. McNosh Hangs Up Her Wash
One Duck Stuck
A Pig Is Big

Phonics 2–3
Grades 2–3, 10 books total
WVP 945962
List Price: $44.60  You Pay Only: $24.00

The Boat Alphabet Book
Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain
Bugs! Bugs! Bugs!
Flossie and the Fox
If You’re Not Here, Please Raise Your Hand
Into the A, B, Sea
Meet Danitra Brown
The New Kid on the Block
The War Between the Vowels and the Consonants
The Worrywarts

Phonics instruction can help children understand the alphabetic principle that there are systematic relationships between written letters and spoken sounds.

Systematic phonics instruction is most effective when it begins in kindergarten or first grade.

Children should be given opportunities to apply their knowledge of phonics by reading and writing actual words.

Phonics instruction is not a complete reading program. In addition to engaging in phonics-related activities, beginning readers should be listening to and reading texts (both out loud and silently), as well as writing letters, words, sentences, and stories.

Word Family Tales
Word Family Tales are humorous read-aloud stories created to build early phonics skills. The box set includes 26 full-color storybooks, a 128-page teacher’s guide, and a sturdy storage unit.
Grades Pre-K–1, 27 books total
WVP 926246
List Price: $77.95  You Pay Only: $58.46

Strategic Phonics Pack
A 176-page teaching guide provides a balanced look at how to incorporate a phonics program into reading instruction. Accompanied by a selection of 12 popular paperbacks.
Grades K–3, 13 books total
WVP 944808
List Price: $62.10  You Pay Only: $36.95

TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
A House for Hermit Crab
A New Coat for Anna
Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain
Caps for Sale
Clifford’s Puppy Days
Everybody Cooks Rice
Inch By Inch
Jamaica’s Find
School Bus
The Little Red Hen
The Ugly Duckling
The Wheels on the Bus

Teaching Phonics and Word Study in the Intermediate Grades
A complete sourcebook to teaching the word skills your middle- and upper-grade students need: concise background in linguistics, ready-made lessons for teaching phonics, syllabification, and root words, extensive word lists, and more.
Grades 4–8, Teaching Resource Book, 300 pages
WVP 916352
List Price: $19.95  You Pay Only: $14.96

Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom, by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (Heinemann, 1998)

Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers, by Louisa Cook Moats (Paul H. Brooks, 2000)
Developing Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read quickly and accurately, with natural phrasing and expression. By reading aloud to children, adults can provide powerful models of fluent reading. Scholastic’s “Listening Libraries for Fluency” have been carefully selected to provide these essential listening experiences.

Year-Round Read-Alouds
This wide selection of favorite fiction titles will help you develop students’ fluency skills throughout the school year.

Grades K–3, 20 trade books
WVP 944715
List Price: $91.20 You Pay Only: $55.95

TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
Frankin Goes to School
This Is the Way We Go to School
What Will the Weather Be
Like Today
It Takes a Village
A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus
Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message
Sarah Morton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl
Winter Poems
Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year
I Have a Dream: The Story of Martin Luther King
Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky
Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra
Super-Fine Orchestra
Phoebe and the Spelling Bee
The Story of Ruby Bridges
The Reason for a Flower
Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, Brothers: A Collection of Family Poems
A Summery Saturday Morning
The Summer My Father Was Ten
Birthday Basket for Tia

Building Fluency: Lessons and Strategies for Reading Success
Grades 2–6, Teaching Resource Book, 80 pages
WVP 928838
List Price: $11.95 You Pay Only: $8.96

Fluency

What the Research Shows

- Fluent readers can decode words and comprehend the meaning of a text at the same time. Less fluent readers focus their attention on decoding individual words, leaving little attention available for making meaning out of the text.
- Fluency develops over long periods of time and through many opportunities to practice reading with a high degree of success.
- Repeated and monitored oral reading builds fluency and strengthens the reading abilities of all students throughout the elementary years.
- By reading aloud daily to students, teachers can provide a model of fluent reading and heighten children’s interest in books.

Listening Library for Fluency I
Grades K–3, 15 audiocassettes and 2 copies each of 15 trade books
WVP 56059
List Price: $215.00 You Pay Only: $148.00

Bear Shadow
Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain
Caps, Hats, Socks, and Mittens
Chicken Soup with Rice
Corduroy
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
Is Your Mama a Llama?
Jamberry

Listening Library for Fluency II
Grades K–3, 15 audiocassettes and 2 copies each of 15 trade books
WVP 56058
List Price: $215.00 You Pay Only: $148.00

Chickens Aren't the Only Ones
City Mouse - Country Mouse
Click, Clack, Moo
Clifford's Family
Doctor De Soto
The Doorbell Rang
Henny Penny
A House Is a House for Me
How Much Is a Million?

Additional Resources

Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children, by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (Heinemann, 1996)
Building Vocabulary
Students’ vocabulary skills grow when they listen to adults read to them and when they read extensively on their own. Scholastic’s “Reading First: Vocabulary” collections are designed to build children’s vocabulary knowledge through engaging experiences with literature.

MORE PRODUCTS

Building Vocabulary
A 96-page teaching guide provides mini-lessons designed to strengthen word knowledge. Accompanied by a classroom trade pack that includes fiction, nonfiction, and student resource books.
Grades K–1, 10 books total
WVP 945963
List Price: $50.68 You Pay Only: $27.00

Vocabulary K–1
1001 Things to Spot in the Town
All About Things People Do
Career Day
Gathering the Sun/Cosecha de Sol
Guess Whose Shadow?
I Hate English!
Quick as a Cricket
Roar!
Round Is a Mooncake
This Is the Way We Go to School

Vocabulary 2–3
Grades 2–3, 10 books total
WVP 945964
List Price: $46.13 You Pay Only: $26.00

Amelia Bedelia
Click, Clack, Moo
Do Stars Have Points?
The Earth Is Mostly Ocean
House Mouse, Senate Mouse
Oceanlife
The Reason for a Flower
A River Ran Wild
Tar Beach
Too Many Tamales

Teaching Reading and Writing With Word Walls
This invaluable resource book offers easy lessons and fresh ideas for building children’s vocabulary skills throughout the year.
Grades K–1, Teaching Resource Book, 128 pages
WVP 10390
List Price: $14.95 You Pay Only: $11.21

Vocabulary
What the Research Shows
- Most vocabulary is learned indirectly, through engaging with oral and written language in meaningful contexts.
- Direct instruction can be used to teach specific words and to help students develop word-learning strategies, including the use of dictionaries, word parts, and context clues.
- Reading aloud to children of all ages is an effective way to introduce new vocabulary and concepts.
- Children expand their vocabularies by reading extensively on their own. The more children read, the more their vocabularies will grow.

Additional Resources

Words, Words, Words: Teaching Vocabulary in Grades 4–12, by Janet Allen (Stenhouse Publishers, 1999)
Teaching Word Recognition, Spelling, and Vocabulary: Strategies from the Reading Teacher, edited by Timothy V. Rasinski et al. (International Reading Association, 2000)
Improving Comprehension

Reading comprehension means not only decoding, but making meaning out of text. Teachers can help students learn to use comprehension strategies in natural learning situations, through active engagement with meaningful texts—such as the well-written titles in Scholastic’s “Reading First: Comprehension” collections.

Using Beloved Classics to Deepen Reading Comprehension

A 144-page teaching guide describes how to use classic children's literature to deepen reading comprehension. Accompanied by four classic literary texts.

- Grades 3–6, 5 books total
- WVP 944888
- List Price: $31.89  You Pay Only: $18.95

TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
- Alice in Wonderland
- Charlotte's Web
- The Trumpet of the Swan
- The Wizard of Oz

Comprehension 3–6

Grades 3–6, 10 books total
WVP 945966
List Price: $41.64  You Pay Only: $24.00

The Day I Saw My Father Cry
Desert Giant
How Much Is a Million?
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
Jamaica's Find
Lon Po Po
Somebody and the Three Blairs
The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears
Why the Banana Split

Comprehension 1–2

Grades 1–2, 10 books total
WVP 945965
List Price: $41.58  You Pay Only: $24.00

Come On, Rain
Have You Seen My Duckling?
How Many Feet? How Many Tails?
How Much Is That Doggie in the Window?
Is Your Mama a Llama?
Jump, Frog, Jump!
Mama, Do You Love Me?
My First Riddles
Who Said Red?
Who Took the Farmer's Hat?

Comprehension K–1

Grades K–1, 10 books total
WVP 945965
List Price: $41.58  You Pay Only: $24.00

Come On, Rain
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How Many Feet? How Many Tails?
How Much Is That Doggie in the Window?
Is Your Mama a Llama?
Jump, Frog, Jump!
Mama, Do You Love Me?
My First Riddles
Who Said Red?
Who Took the Farmer's Hat?

Improving Comprehension with Think-Aloud Strategies

A 176-page resource book and a collection of ready-to-go reproducibles teach students to make meaning out of text. Accompanied by three popular paperback titles.

- Grades 3–8, 5 books total
- WVP 944844
- List Price: $39.34  You Pay Only: $21.95

TRADE PACK INCLUDES:
- The Great Gilly Hopkins
- Number the Stars
- Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

Comprehension Instruction, edited by Cathy Collins Block and Michael Pressley (Guilford Press, 2001)
I Read It, But I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers, by Ellin Oliver Keene and Cris Tovani (Stenhouse, 2000)
Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop, by Ellin Oliver Keene and Susan Zimmermann (Heinemann, 1997)

Improving Comprehension

What the Research Shows

- Reading-comprehension instruction can help students recall, understand, and communicate with others about what they have read.
- Students of all ages can be taught to use specific comprehension strategies, which include comprehension monitoring, using graphic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, and summarizing.
- By “thinking aloud” about their own reading processes, teachers can help students develop effective comprehension skills.
- Comprehension strategies are a means to an end. Students should apply these strategies in natural learning situations—while studying content areas such as social studies and science, for example, or while reading a wide range of literary texts.
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