

EDUCATION NEWS & NOTES

The Science of Reading—What Parents Should Know

(NAPS)—Parents and teachers generally agree: Literacy is one of the cornerstones of educational fairness and crucial for lifelong success.

Yet, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the largest nationally representative test of student learning, most fourth- and eighth-graders in 2024 performed below Proficient in reading.

Why An Increase In

Science Of Reading Legislation

Reading is one of the most difficult tasks students must master throughout their educational careers. The good news is, we know how to teach reading and do it successfully – by following the science of reading, which says all students must be explicitly taught to reach basic reading proficiency.

Every day in the U.S., school district leaders realize that the way districts have been teaching reading needs to change. According to the Nation's Report Card (NAEP), only 31% of fourth grade students and 30% of eighth grade students performed at or above Proficient in reading in 2024. Yet 95% of students are capable of learning to read proficiently when taught with a curriculum based on the science of reading. As a result, during the last few years, 40 states and the District of Columbia have implemented or strengthened science-of-reading legislation, emphasizing phonics-based instruction and structured literacy approaches. Yet making sure that educators have the resources and knowledge that aligns to the science of reading, is critical.

The science of reading provides evidence-based guidance for teaching reading skills to students of all ages. By applying the research findings from this field, educators can design effective reading instruction that helps all students develop strong reading skills and reach their full potential.

What is Science of Reading

The science of reading encompasses a broad and comprehensive body of research that integrates findings from psychology, cognitive science, linguistics, and education. It helps identify evidence-based practices proven to enhance reading instruction. Breaking down the science of reading into a set of components might seem logical but actually reflects a misunderstanding.

There are no components to the science of reading simply because it is not an approach or philosophy. Instead, the phrase “science of reading” represents decades of gold-standard research



While learning to speak is an innate process, neuroscience research tells us that learning to read is not.

demonstrating the science behind how the human brain learns to read.

What many people think of as the components of the science of reading are the skills and instructional methods that have been proven effective in teaching reading. A skill such as decoding is key to literacy, and the science of reading is the body of research that proves the importance of explicitly teaching this skill.

Effective reading instruction involves more than just phonics; it includes vocabulary development, reading comprehension strategies, and the ability to make inferences, just to name a few. Teachers equipped with this knowledge can tailor their instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to become a proficient reader.

Why Your Schools Should Be Implementing It

It can all be summed up as a simple formula called the Simple View of Reading: Decoding (Phonology, Orthography, Morphology) times Linguistic Comprehension (Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics, Discourse) equals Reading Comprehension.

Through the science of reading, teachers can better understand how people learn to read, what skills are involved in reading, and how those skills work together. This research also helps educators best target their instruction to ensure all students can learn to read in the way that's best for them, close literacy gaps and help every child learn to read proficiently.

How to Advocate for Your Child

It's important to check with your child's school and district to see if they're implementing science of reading-based curriculum and what tools, if any, they have to help your child on their reading journey. For further facts and stats about learning, parents and teachers can visit Lexia, which offers proven education tools and programs, at www.lexialearning.com.