

Salem-Keizer Public Schools | District 24J

Our Vision: All students graduate and are prepared for a successful life.



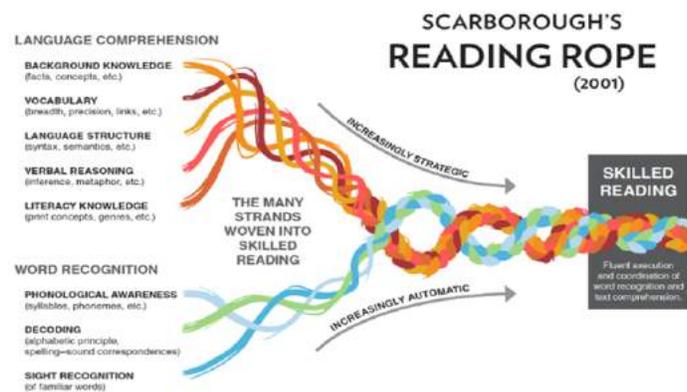
Literacy Development

What is the research on improving literacy skills for elementary students?

The goal of reading is to be able to comprehend text. To do this, children must be fluent readers who can effortlessly recognize printed words and understand the meaning of the words they are decoding.

Schools teach students the mental process that is used to store words for effortless retrieval. Words can be stored with frequent practice of sound-spelling correspondences and phonemic awareness skills, otherwise known as phonics instruction. Once students learn the automaticity of reading sounds that make words, they have mastered the primary skill of a good reader.

Reading comprehension is the product of what we can decode multiplied by that which we can comprehend orally. A student who can recognize words, know the meaning of these words, and who has language comprehension skills will achieve reading comprehension. Both skills of word recognition and language comprehension are essential for reading comprehension. This is also illustrated using Scarborough's Reading Rope,



What are important considerations when teaching reading to English Language Learners (ELLs) / Emergent Bilingual Students (EBSs)?

When it comes to the process of word recognition and English Language Learners, context matters as *meaning* is what aids in anchoring new concepts and language to student's existing schema. ELLs/EBSs won't be able to store words for efficient retrieval if they do not know their meaning in the second language. Literacy instruction for multilingual learners is not a matter of *either/or*. It is *yes/and*. Multilingual learners benefit from many of the components of literacy instruction for monolingual learners--like the *Science of Reading* and rigorous grade level content, and **that is not enough. It is imperative that multilingual learners learn to read and write through an integrated approach of language, literacy, and content.** These are the language comprehension strands found in Scarborough's Rope which are necessary for multilingual learners as they are reading at an emergent or developing level in the second language (English), a notable difference from monolingual English speakers, whose English language comprehension levels are at higher levels.

Additionally, for ELLs/EBSs, language and literacy learning occur within the context of the presence and development of two (or more) languages. The cross-language implications, the available linguistic resources to draw upon, and the potential of proficient bilingualism and biliteracy must be addressed and incorporated as **essential defining elements of an effective model of literacy instruction** of ELLs/EBSs. Essential elements of literacy instruction include reading foundational skills, oral language development, vocabulary across content areas, comprehension and meaning-making, cross-linguistic connections and metalinguistic development, writing, active engagement with text, as well as English language development instruction. In summary, effective literacy

development for ELLs/EBSs **embraces a second language development pedagogy and acknowledges the language duality of their brains and cultural backgrounds--this is how it is different from literacy development for monolingual English speakers.**

Critical Considerations

- 25% of the Salem-Keizer Public School elementary student population are current English learners.
 - 25% *does not include* students who passed ELPA due to lowered state "proficiency" requirements.
 - 25% *does not include* for Ever English Learners.
- Students need, on average, four to seven years to acquire academic English proficiency.
- The grade 3 reading OSAS assesses students only in English.
 - Many of our English learners are proficient readers in their heritage or other languages.
 - Most grade 3 students in our dual language programs are proficient readers of Spanish.
- Our state assessments are biased, which is one reason why they are no longer required for graduation from high school.

Fast Facts

- 11,623 (29%) students speak a language other than English at home.
- 7,703 students are current English learners.
- 118 languages are spoken in our school community.
- 376 newcomer students (students learning English who are between the ages of 3-21, born outside the United States, and enrolled in U.S. schools for fewer than three academic years).
- 65% of students are considered economically disadvantaged.