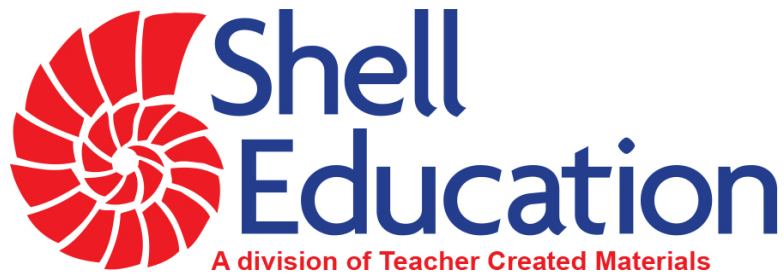


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# Literacy Strategies

for Secondary  
Grades



Laura Keisler

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# INTRODUCTION

## What the Science of Reading Says

This book is one in a series of professional resources that provide teaching strategies aligned with the Science of Reading. The term the *Science of Reading* pervades the national conversation around the best literacy instruction for all students. The purpose of this series is to close the gap between the knowledge and understanding of what students need to become literate humans and the instructional practices in our schools. This gap is widely acknowledged yet remains intact. While research is available, journals are not easy to navigate. However, with concise resources that build understanding of the body of research and offer strategies aligned with that research, teachers can be equipped with the logical steps to find success. This book will help you navigate the important Science of Reading research and implement strategies based on that research in your classroom.

What is meant by the *Science of Reading*? The Science of Reading is the collection of research that leads to the understanding of how students learn to read. Research dedicated to understanding how we learn to read and write has been conducted for more than 50 years. This research has explored topics ranging from the skills needed to read and write, to the parts of the brain involved in reading development, to the best way to teach children how to read. The research clearly demonstrates the following: 1) the most effective early reading instruction includes an explicit, structured, phonics-based approach to word reading; and 2) reading comprehension relies on word reading (being able to decode individual words) and language comprehension (being able to understand what words and sentences mean).

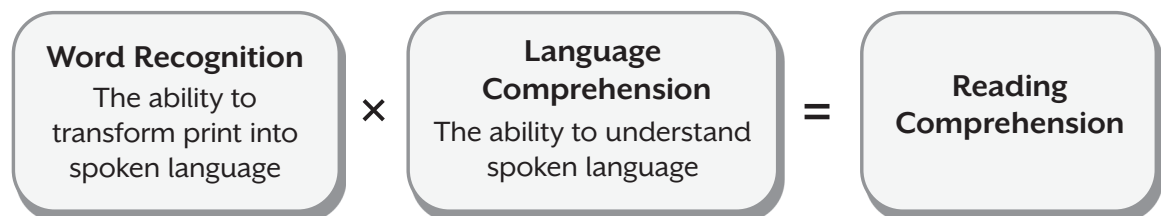
The Science of Reading is the collection of excellent research that leads to the understanding of how students learn to read.

According to the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000), a comprehensive literacy program should contain explicit skills instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading and language comprehension. In addition, effective literacy instruction includes writing instruction. Ideally, this will occur in classrooms that emphasize and facilitate motivation for and engagement in reading through the use of a variety of authentic texts, authentic tasks, cooperative learning, and whole- and small-group instruction that connects reading to students' lived realities. Motivation and engagement are important considerations in our teaching. Cultural and linguistic relevance and responsiveness are essential. Authentic opportunities for speaking, listening, and writing are critical. Gradual release of responsibility is necessary to build independence and is an integral part of promoting a culture of literacy students will embrace and take with them once they leave our care. Let us explore more closely what we can learn from the Science of Reading.

## The Science of Reading: Models of Reading

The widely accepted model of the Simple View of Reading (SVR) proposed by Gough and Tunmer (1986) and later refined by Hoover and Gough (1990) depicts reading comprehension as the product of word recognition and language comprehension. This model of reading offers educators a simple, comprehensible way of organizing their understanding of the constructs that can predict successful literacy outcomes (Snow 2018). Hoover and Tunmer (2018) describe these constructs as:

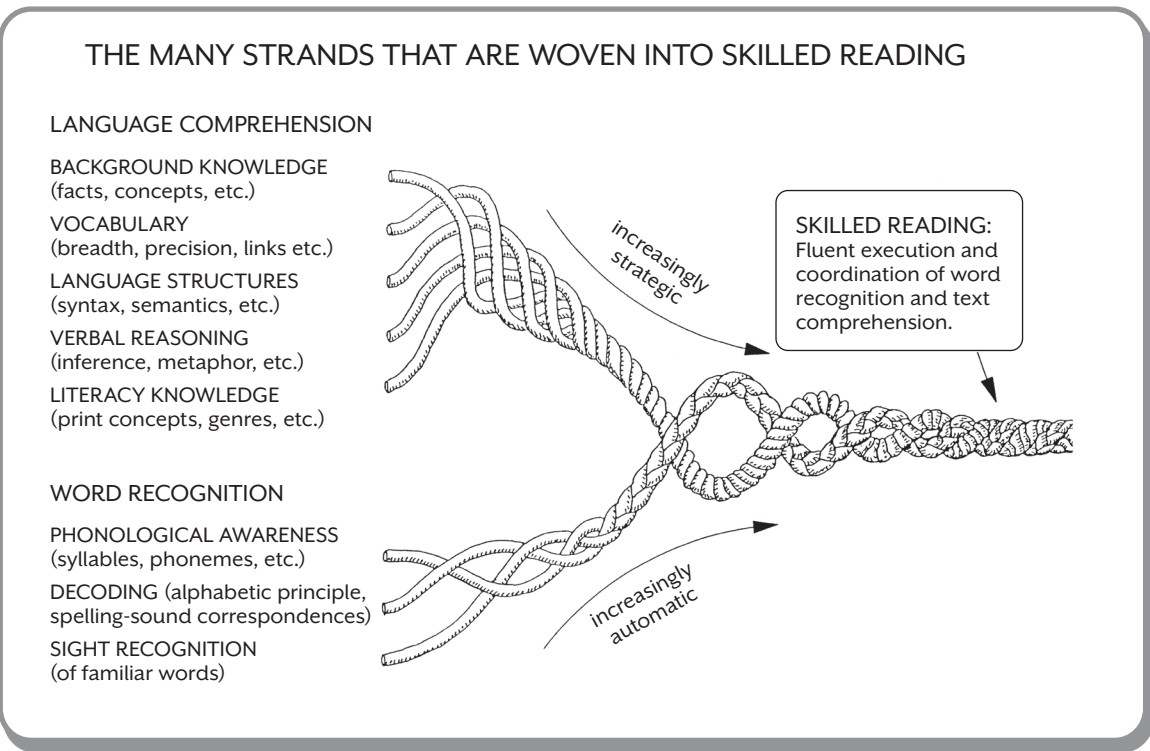
- **Word recognition:** the ability to recognize printed words accurately and quickly to efficiently gain access to the appropriate word meanings contained in the internal mental lexicon.
- **Language comprehension:** the ability to extract and construct literal and inferred meaning from speech.
- **Reading comprehension:** the ability to extract and construct literal and inferred meaning from linguistic discourse represented in print.



**The Simple View of Reading**



Later work (Hoover and Tunmer 2020; Scarborough 2001) further describes the crucial elements within each of these constructs by incorporating the best of what science tells us about how we read. Scarborough’s Reading Rope identifies the underlying skills required for effective and efficient word recognition and language comprehension.



**Scarborough’s Reading Rope**

Credit: Hollis Scarborough, “Connecting Early Language and Literacy to Later Reading (Dis)abilities: Evidence, Theory, and Practice” in *Handbook of Research in Early Literacy*, edited by Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson © Guilford Press, 2001.

Wesley Hoover, William Tunmer, Philip Gough, and Hollis Scarborough are psychologists who dedicated their research to understanding what reading is and what must be present or learned for reading to occur. They have described SVR as simple because it is intended to focus our attention on what is important in reading but NOT to explain the process of *how* reading happens. Similarly, Scarborough expanded on SVR to focus attention on more specific details of language comprehension and word recognition such as prior knowledge and phonological awareness, attempting to include space for process with the addition of automaticity and strategy. Both SVR and the Reading Rope are models—hypotheses that attempt to explain the phenomena of reading. The models describe necessary but not sufficient conditions for reading. Many teachers know that decoding skills can be present, language comprehension can be apparent, and yet comprehension can be impeded. These foundational models do not account for motivation, development, social emotional considerations, linguistic differences, and a host of other factors relevant to literacy teaching and learning.

## SECTION I:

# Word Recognition and Language Knowledge

The strategies in this section correspond with key competencies identified in the What the Science of Reading Says series (Jump and Johnson 2023; Jump and Kopp, 2023; Jump and Wolfe 2023). These research-based instructional strategies will help teachers bridge the gap between the science of literacy instruction and classroom practice.

Strategy	Skills and Understandings Addressed			
	Fluency	Vocabulary Knowledge	Morphology	Syntax and Semantics
Whole-Class Choral Reading				
Partner Reading				
STRIVE Vocabulary Map				
List-Group-Label				
Word Nerd				
Sort It Out				
Word Matrix				
DISSECT				
Sentence Combining				
Grammar Rants				



# Word Nerd

## Objectives

- Acquire and accurately use general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

## Background Information

Word Nerd is a strategy for developing independent word learning and word consciousness in older readers. Developing word consciousness involves (1) recognizing semantic relationships between words, (2) understanding that some words have multiple meanings, and (3) noticing when and how new words are used (Watts-Taffe, Gwinn, and Forrest 2018). With Word Nerd, students create personal word journals by recording interesting words that catch their attention while reading, viewing, or listening. Students can record words they are unfamiliar with, words they find interesting, and words taught in class or otherwise selected by the teacher. Research suggests that keeping word journals is a highly effective strategy for developing deeper vocabulary knowledge (McCrostie 2007; Walters and Bozkurt 2009). Devoting one page in the Word Nerd journal to each word, students practice defining words in context, using reference sources to look up definitions, and connecting words to other known words and concepts. These ongoing word journals can be used as a reference during writing and other response activities.

## Materials

- spiral notebook or composition book, one for each student
- *Word Nerd* (page 39)
- text selection

## Process

1. Prepare for the introductory lesson by selecting a short paragraph from a grade-level text that contains one or more words that would be good candidates for selection into the Word Nerd journal.
2. Introduce the Word Nerd journal by providing each student with a spiral notebook. Explain the purpose of the journal to students.
3. Model how to use the journal by reading aloud the selected passage, thinking aloud as you come across the word you have selected for the demonstration. Display a copy of the *Word Nerd* activity sheet and model how to complete the sheet. Elicit information about related words and definitions in context from students.

4. Distribute copies of the *Word Nerd* activity sheet. Direct students to read a short passage in a textbook or other class reading material and select words to use to practice. Have students complete the *Word Nerd* activity sheets using the words they select.
5. Have students share their selection and completed page with partners.
6. Provide students with clean copies of the *Word Nerd* activity sheet to tape in the front of their journals as a guide. They can add new words directly to the journal pages. Make Word Nerd journals a regular part of the classroom reading routine. Encourage students to record at least one word each time the class reads, and allow time at the end of the lesson or class period for this, or assign it as an independent homework activity. Teachers may wish to incorporate time in the week for students to share with peers the words they have included in their journals that week.
7. In addition to having students record words in their journals, create a class “Word Nerd Word Wall” that students can contribute to as they find new or interesting words in their reading.

## Differentiation

While the Word Nerd journal activity is still new, teachers may scaffold the process of learning to keep a word journal by providing students with a few pre-selected words each week and having students add the words to separate pages in their journals. Students then complete all or some of the information for each word independently. Encourage advanced readers to make connections between the words they record and other words they may know such as words that share the same base/root.

# Word Nerd Example

<b>Word</b> exhilaration	
<b>Sentence that uses the word</b> Her hands were a little shaky and the boots felt a bit tight, but the familiar exhilaration of gliding over the snow returned immediately once she pushed off the lift.	
<b>Definition</b> Feeling extremely excited	<b>Other info (multiple meanings, antonyms, drawings)</b> Antonyms: depression, unhappiness
<b>Related words</b> elation excitement thrill	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Word Nerd

**Directions:** Choose a new or interesting word from the text or discussion. Write about it.

The form is a spiral-bound notebook page with a 'Word Nerd' template. It is divided into five sections:

- Word:** A small rounded rectangular box at the top.
- Sentence that uses the word:** A large rounded rectangular box below the word box.
- Definition:** A rounded rectangular box on the left side, below the sentence box.
- Other info (multiple meanings, antonyms, drawings):** A rounded rectangular box on the right side, below the sentence box.
- Related words:** A rounded rectangular box at the bottom left, below the definition box.

# Word Matrix

## Objectives

- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.

## Background Information

Word Matrix (Bowers, Kirby, and Deacon 2010) is a generative morphology strategy to familiarize students with roots, which are important tools for understanding words. As students become more advanced readers, they will acquire a large store of prefixes and suffixes, and knowledge of Greek and Latin bases. Using this knowledge to read the many complex multisyllabic words found in text at the middle and secondary level and to build vocabulary knowledge is highly effective. Recognizing the word parts and associating words as part of word families that share common bases promotes this vocabulary development, can improve fluency, and has positive impacts on spelling. Finally, much of the content-area vocabulary in math, social studies, and science contains Greek or Latin roots, so knowledge of them enhances learning content vocabulary and related concepts.

## Materials

- *Word Matrix* (page 47)

## Process

1. Select a base word for the lesson.
2. Explain to students that most multisyllabic words are made up of different parts (morphemes or roots). We know these are affixes (prefixes and suffixes) and base words. These are the smallest parts of words that carry meaning and cannot be broken into smaller words or word parts. We can make new words by combining these parts in different ways and can figure out the word meanings by analyzing the parts.
3. Provide each student with a *Word Matrix* activity sheet. Provide the base word and have students write it in the middle section of the matrix. Review its meaning and pronunciation. Ask the students to share affixes that can be used with the base word and have students write prefixes in the left section and suffixes in the right section.
4. Model combining the word parts to make a new word. Discuss the meaning of the new word based on knowledge of the meaning of the word parts.
5. Have students work individually or in pairs to create lists of new words.

6. Review the new words as a class. Write them on the board so students can add any words they may not have made to their activity sheets. Select a few words and determine the meanings by examining the parts.
7. Encourage students to choose three of their words and write sentences that reflect the appropriate meaning. Have students share their sentences with partners.

## Differentiation

You may wish to provide students with a completed *Word Matrix* to assist them in making lists of new words. If using a completed matrix, review the affixes and the base word during step 2. As students become more familiar with using the matrix, have them fill in the affix sections of the matrix on their own. After students are familiar with common affixes, introduce less common Latin prefixes, number prefixes, and assimilated prefixes. It is not necessary to fill out all the sections. Their use will depend on the word being studied. Word Matrix can also be used to make words with multiple prefixes and suffixes.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Word Matrix

**Directions:** Write the base word, prefixes, and suffixes. Use the word parts to create new words. List the new words. Choose three words and write a sentence using each one.

<b>Common prefixes</b>	<b>Greek/Latin base word</b>	<b>Common inflectional suffixes</b>
<b>Less common prefixes</b>		<b>Common derivational suffixes</b>

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Sentences

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Text Analysis Pyramid

## Objectives

- Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of ideas.

## Background Information

Analyzing text structure helps students focus on the most important ideas in a text and enhances comprehension of a text. Text structure refers to the way authors organize information in text. This includes the arrangement of ideas and concepts and the relationships between them. Awareness of text structure includes an awareness of how language is used to express ideas, concepts, and relationships within a given text structure. Students who analyze information text for structural elements are more likely to learn from text (RAND 2003).

## Materials

- text that models a specific text structure
- *Text Analysis Word Pyramid* (page 81)

## Process

1. Choose a text that models an expository text structure. Short paragraphs are appropriate for practice, though older students may be able to navigate longer text selections.
2. Review the idea that informational texts follow patterns of organization known as text structures. There are several common text structures, and awareness of these can help readers understand and learn from the text.
3. Introduce the text structure students will examine in this lesson. Provide students with the *Text Analysis Word Pyramid*.
4. Display the sample text. Preview it with the students and ask students to identify important words or phrases. Have students choose a word or phrase and write it in the top section of the organizer. Invite a few volunteers to share what they wrote.
5. Repeat for the remaining sections of the pyramid, scaffolding the process of identifying the following: clues about the author's purpose, signal words that provide clues to the text structure, words that are important to the main idea, and words that indicate the mood or tone of the text.

6. Have students share their completed pyramids with partners.
7. Repeat the lesson over time for the other text structures.
8. After students have been taught to use the *Text Analysis Word Pyramid*, it may be used with other texts to support reading comprehension.

## Differentiation

Students may benefit from repeated practice analyzing paragraphs or shorter pieces of text before moving on to textbook selections or other content area reading materials. Students may also benefit by working with small groups or partners to analyze a text.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Text Analysis Word Pyramid

**Directions:** Identify important words and phrases from the text. Record them in the organizer.

