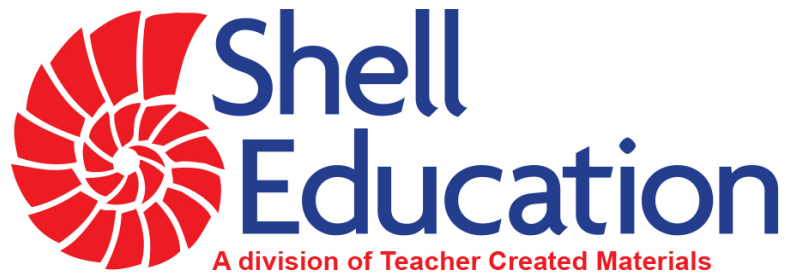


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# Literacy Strategies

for Grades  
1-2



Erica Bowers

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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 phrase *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 fifty 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).

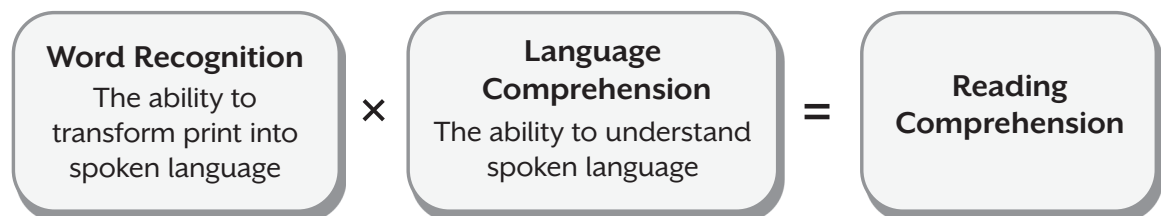
The Science of Reading is the collection of excellent research that leads to the understanding of how students learn to read.

According to the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000), a comprehensive program of literacy instruction should contain explicit skills instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading and language comprehension. Effective literacy instruction includes explicit instruction in all five of the components of reading plus writing. 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 that 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

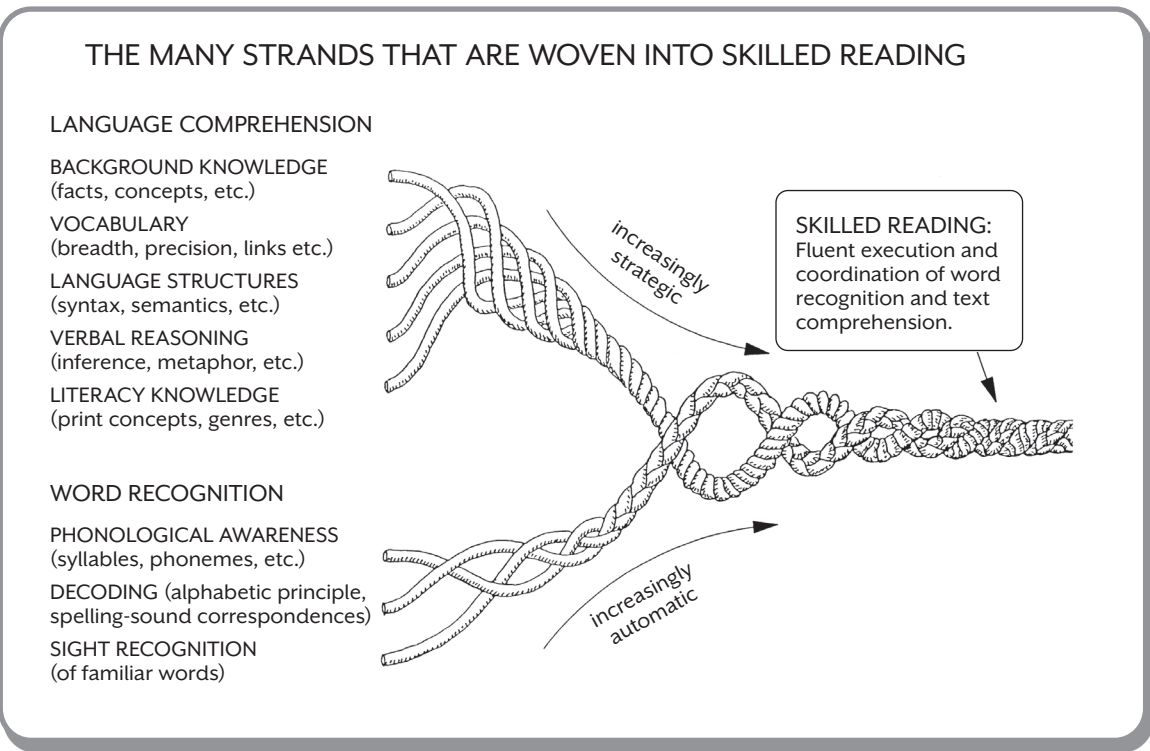
The widely accepted model of the Simple View of Reading (SVR) proposed by Gough and Tunmer (1986) and later refined by Hoover and Gough (1990) depicts reading comprehension as the product of word recognition and language comprehension. This model of reading offers educators a simple, comprehensible way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

- **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 the SVR as *simple* because it is intended to focus our attention only on what is important in reading, not to explain the process of *how* reading happens. Similarly, Scarborough expanded on the 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 the 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.

## How to Use This Book

This book includes a variety of strategies that can be integrated into any language arts curriculum to improve students' reading and writing skills: promoting word consciousness, analyzing word parts, activating and developing knowledge through vocabulary development and content learning, using think-alouds and monitoring comprehension, questioning, summarizing, using visual representations and mental imagery, using text structure and text features, incorporating mentor text, using graphic organizers, and modeling writing. These research-based instructional strategies will help teachers bridge the gap between the science of literacy instruction and classroom practice.

The strategies are presented in three sections: I) Word Recognition; II) Reading Comprehension and Content Knowledge; and III) Writing. These three sections correspond with three professional resources: *What the Science of Reading Says about Word Recognition* (Jump and Johnson 2023), *What the Science of Reading Says about Comprehension and Content Knowledge* (Jump and Kopp 2023), and *What the Science of Reading Says about Writing* (Jump and Wolfe 2023).

Each section opens with an overview of research in that area to emphasize the importance of that particular component. There is a clear and detailed explanation of the component, suggestions for instruction, and best practices. This information provides teachers with the solid foundation of knowledge to provide deeper, more meaningful instruction to their students.

Following each overview are a variety of instructional strategies to improve students' reading and writing. The strategies in the book include the following:

- background information that includes a description and purpose of the strategy and the research basis for the strategy
- the objective of the strategy
- a detailed description of how to implement the strategy, including any special preparation that might be needed
- suggestions for differentiating instruction

When applicable, the strategy includes one or more activity sheets as reproducibles in this book and in the digital resources. Grade-level examples of how the strategy is applied are also included when applicable. For more information about the digital resources, see page 180.



## SECTION I:

# Word Recognition

The strategies in this section correspond with key competencies identified in *What the Science of Reading Says about Word Recognition* (Jump and Johnson 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				
	Phonological Awareness	Phonics	Beyond Foundational Phonics	Sight Word Automaticity	Fluency
Elkonin Boxes					
What Do I See?					
Word Challenge					
Word Ladders					
Word Sort					
Scrambled Words					
Making Words Tree					
Word Part Detective					

Strategy	Skills and Understandings Addressed <i>(cont.)</i>				
	Phonological Awareness	Phonics	Beyond Foundational Phonics	Sight Word Automaticity	Fluency
Shades of Meaning					
Sight Word Bingo					
Heart Words/Letters					
Word Show					
Making Phrases					
Punctuation Matters!					

# What Do I See?

## Objectives

- Orally blend and segment sounds (phonemes) of single-syllable spoken words.

## Background Information

Phonological and phonemic awareness develop step by step. Students move from hearing individual words in sentences to identifying each word in a compound word to counting syllables in words. The goal of *What Do I See?* is for emergent readers to orally blend sounds to produce the name of an item that the teacher has identified. Ultimately, we want students to hear and manipulate individual sounds in words. Students need practice to hear a word and segment it into its individual sounds. They need many opportunities to practice blending sounds into a word.

## Materials

- *What Do I See? Picture Cards* (pages 32–34)

## Process

1. Cut apart and display the *What Do I See? Picture Cards*.
2. Choose one of the images to be the mystery picture, for example, *map*. Read the poem below and for the last line, orally segment the word by separating it into individual sounds. For *map*, segment like this: /m/ /ă/ /p/.
 

What do I see?  
What can it be?  
Listen, listen,  
Listen to me  
I see a \_\_\_\_\_ (segmented word).
3. Have students repeat the sounds you made, blending them together and determining the word is *map*. Ask them to point to the picture of the map.
4. Continue the activity with other words.
5. Have students practice with partners. Be sure at least one in the pair can independently segment words.
6. Ask the partner who can segment to select a mystery picture and say the rhyme, segmenting the word for the last line.

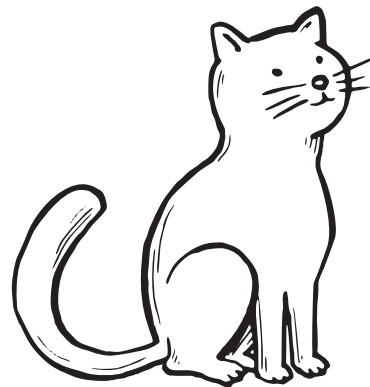
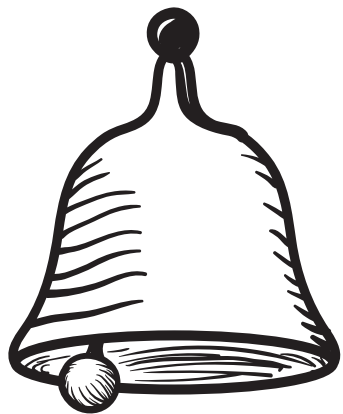
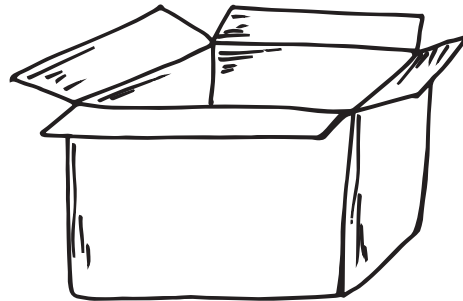
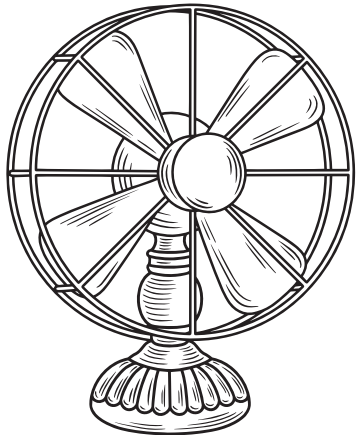
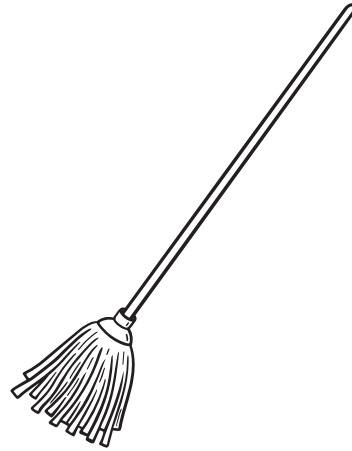
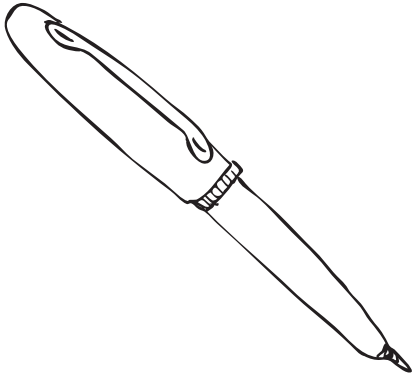
7. Have the child listening repeat the sounds, blend, and point to the picture of the segmented word.

## Differentiation

**Before the Lesson:** Ensure English language learners know the name of each picture.

**During the Lesson:** Select words to segment and blend based on student ability. The *What Do I See? Picture Cards* include pictures of words with three phonemes (pen, mop, fan, box, bell, cat, pig, bat, can) and pictures of words with four phonemes (brush, desk, slide, clock, flag, frog, sled, plug, clip). An alternate activity is to identify actual items in the classroom and use them as mystery items.

# What Do I See? Picture Cards



# Word Ladders

## Objectives

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text.

## Background Information

When acquiring strong phonics skills, students need opportunities to play with the sounds within words (Adams 1994; Bear et al. 2020). With Word Ladders, students use their analytical letter-sound skills to build new words. This reinforces their knowledge of initial, medial, and final sounds/spellings. Students begin with a word on the bottom rung of the ladder and manipulate individual phonemes and graphemes within the word to generate new words until they reach the top rung of the ladder.

## Materials

- list of six words (see Word Ladder Words, page 39)
- *Three-Letter Word Ladder*, *Four-Letter Word Ladder*, or *Five-Letter Word Ladder* (pages 41–43)

## Process

1. Determine whether students will use three-letter, four-letter, or five-letter words, and make copies of the corresponding activity sheet.
2. Distribute the activity sheets. Provide the start word, and have students write it on the bottom rung.
3. Say the next word. Have students determine which sound changes and write the word on the next rung up on the ladder (e.g., bottom rung: *pen*, next rung: *pet*).
4. Continue naming words and having students write them until the top of the ladder is reached.
5. Have students practice reading each word on the word ladder.

## Differentiation

Scaffold the process by working together to complete the ladder as a whole class or in a small group. Write the letter that stays the same on the spaces and let students identify the letter that changes.

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

## Three-Letter Word Ladder

**Directions:** Write the start word at the bottom. Change one letter to make a new word. Write the new word on the next step. Climb the ladder.



# Think and Draw

## Objectives

- Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

## Background Information

Thinking and drawing about a text are strategies that build knowledge and understanding of what is being read (McConnell 1993; Stahl 2014). Prior to reading, the teacher leads a discussion and has students draw pictures of their background knowledge (schema), helping them make connections between what they know and what they will read. During and after reading, students draw what they learn and compare and contrast their initial ideas and questions with the new information. This technique helps new information remain in long-term memory because students have made the connections. All students, but particularly emergent learners, benefit from being provided with another way to express their ideas. Think and Draw walks students through these steps as they closely read a teacher-selected text.

## Materials

- *Think and Draw* (page 89)
- sticky notes
- two text selections

## Process

1. Select two texts—nonfiction works best for this lesson—and give each student a copy of the first. Display the *Think and Draw* activity sheet.
2. Ask students to look at the text and identify the topic. Complete the topic section of the displayed activity sheet.
3. Tell students to close their eyes and allow their minds to make mental pictures of the topic. Have them share their ideas and ask one or two students to draw pictures in the “Before Reading: What I know” section. Repeat this process to complete “Before Reading: What I think and wonder.” Guide students to give ideas or make predictions about what they might learn from reading this text.

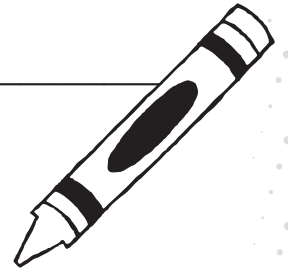


4. Give each student three or four sticky notes. Direct students to read the text. As students read, have them draw pictures of facts or ideas they find on the sticky notes. Allow them to share these with partners, and then add them to the “During Reading” section of the displayed activity sheet.
5. Have students finish reading the text. Ask them to share what they learned, and have a few students write their responses in “After Reading: What I learned.”
6. After completing the process as a whole group, give students their own copies of the *Think and Draw* activity sheet. Have students read a different text selection and complete their activity sheets. When finished, have partners share their thoughts and learnings.

## Differentiation

Carefully select the texts you use for this activity. You may need to introduce key vocabulary to students who are learning English. Rather than having students work independently, you could have them work with partners or small groups. You may want to let most of the class work on their own while doing the group lesson with students who need additional support. Allow students who do not like drawing to sketch simple pictures and add details with text.

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



# Think and Draw

**Directions:** Draw and write about the text.

**Topic:** What I will read about \_\_\_\_\_

**Before Reading:** What I know

**Before Reading:** What I think and wonder

**During Reading:** Facts or ideas from the text

**After Reading:** What I learned