

# Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

November 13, 2025

Session 2



# *Meet the Presenters*

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Illinois State University

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Assistant Professor  
Illinois State University



## *Housekeeping*

- Link to today's slide deck will be dropped in the chat.
- All resources are available in a [our shared folder](#) and archived on ISBE's [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#) after each session.



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Illinois has an **urgent** and **collective responsibility** to achieve **educational equity** by ensuring that **all** policies, programs, and practices **affirm** the **strengths** that each and **every child** brings within their **diverse backgrounds** and **life experiences**, and by delivering the comprehensive **supports, programs, and educational opportunities** they need to **succeed**.

*ISBE Equity Statement*

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## *Shared Norms*

**Empower**

Stay future-focused, work toward solutions, and promote progress in every discussion.

**Engage**

Actively participate by sharing feedback and interacting in both the chat and small groups.

**Uplift**

Encourage diverse perspectives, provide space for everyone to share their ideas, and embrace discomfort to foster growth.

**Unite**

Foster a sense of togetherness and openness, ensuring full participation. Make your video available if possible.

## What Capacity Builders IS

A learning **community** led by those closest to the work, fostering collaboration and real-time solutions.

A practical, **field-driven approach** that meets local schools, districts, and leaders where they are.

A series that focuses on building capacity for **systemic change** in education.

**Interactive** and **participant centered**, focused on shared expertise.



A **one-size-fits-all** training removed from the realities of daily work in schools and districts.

A **top-down initiative** with limited input from practitioners in the field.

A **passive webinar** series where participants are expected to simply consume information.

**Static** or **rigid**, lacking adaptation to the evolving needs of educators.

## What Capacity Builders IS NOT

# *Intended Audience*

This series is designed specifically for **teachers**. The series objectives define what we aim to accomplish together and keep our planning centered on supporting classroom teachers. Each objective reflects the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan and ensures our work connects big ideas to practical strategies, celebrates student assets, and remains grounded in classroom realities.

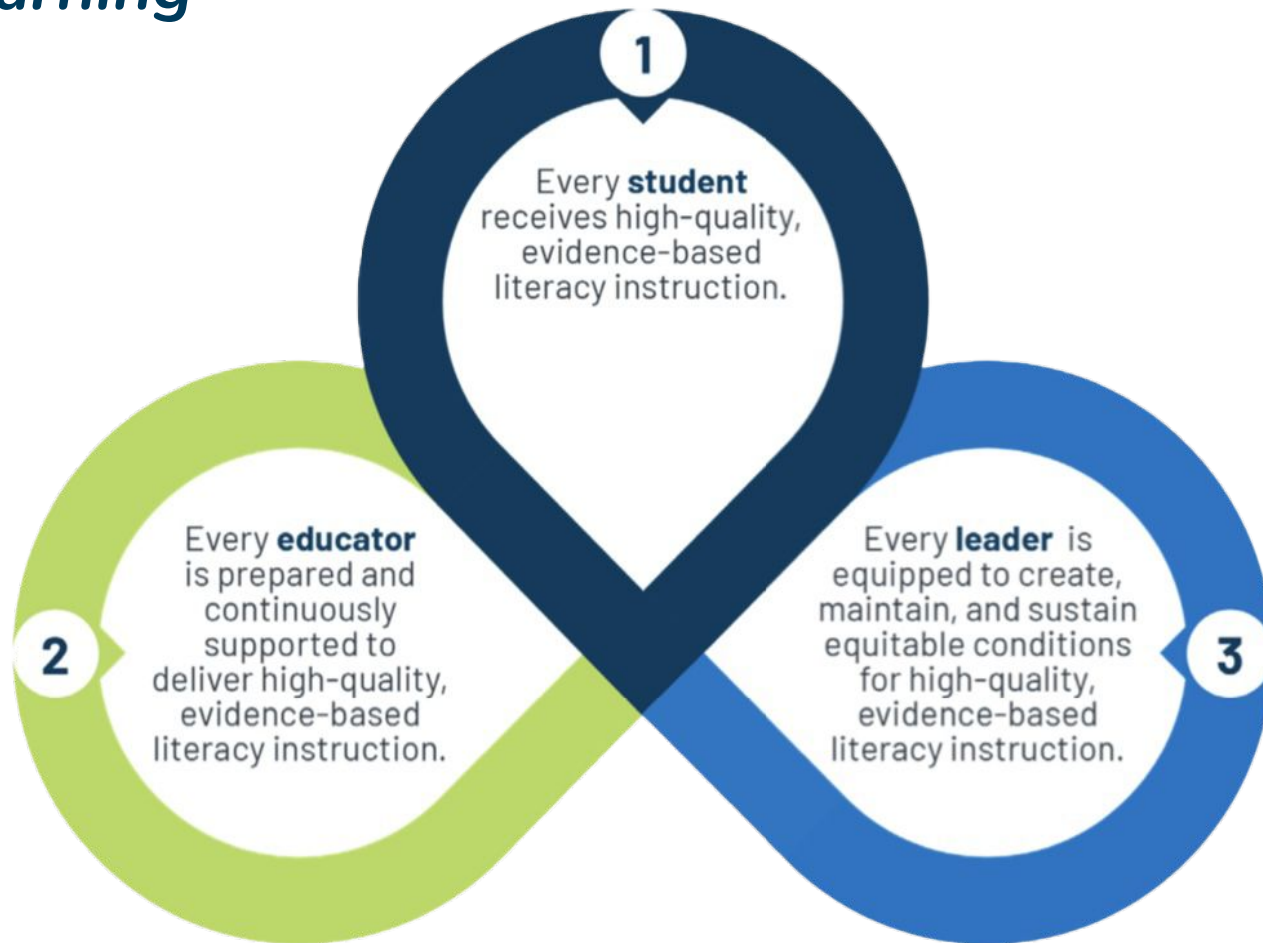
ROE/ISC staff, district and school leaders, coaches literacy specialists, and higher education representatives focused on driving systems-level literacy improvement are also invited and encouraged to attend.

## *Series Objectives*

- **Strengthen Teacher Knowledge and Practice**
- **Connect Big Ideas to Practical Resources**
- **Affirm Linguistic and Cultural Assets**
- **Bridge Research and Classroom Application**
- **Stay Grounded in Classroom Realities**



# Effective & Equitable Literacy Teaching, Leadership, and Learning



# Collective Understandings

## ***Effective & Equitable Literacy Teaching, Leadership, and Learning:***

Involves long-term work

Requires novel and flexible thinking,  
learning, and doing

Values evidence-based instructional practices  
through assets mindsets



# Agenda

1

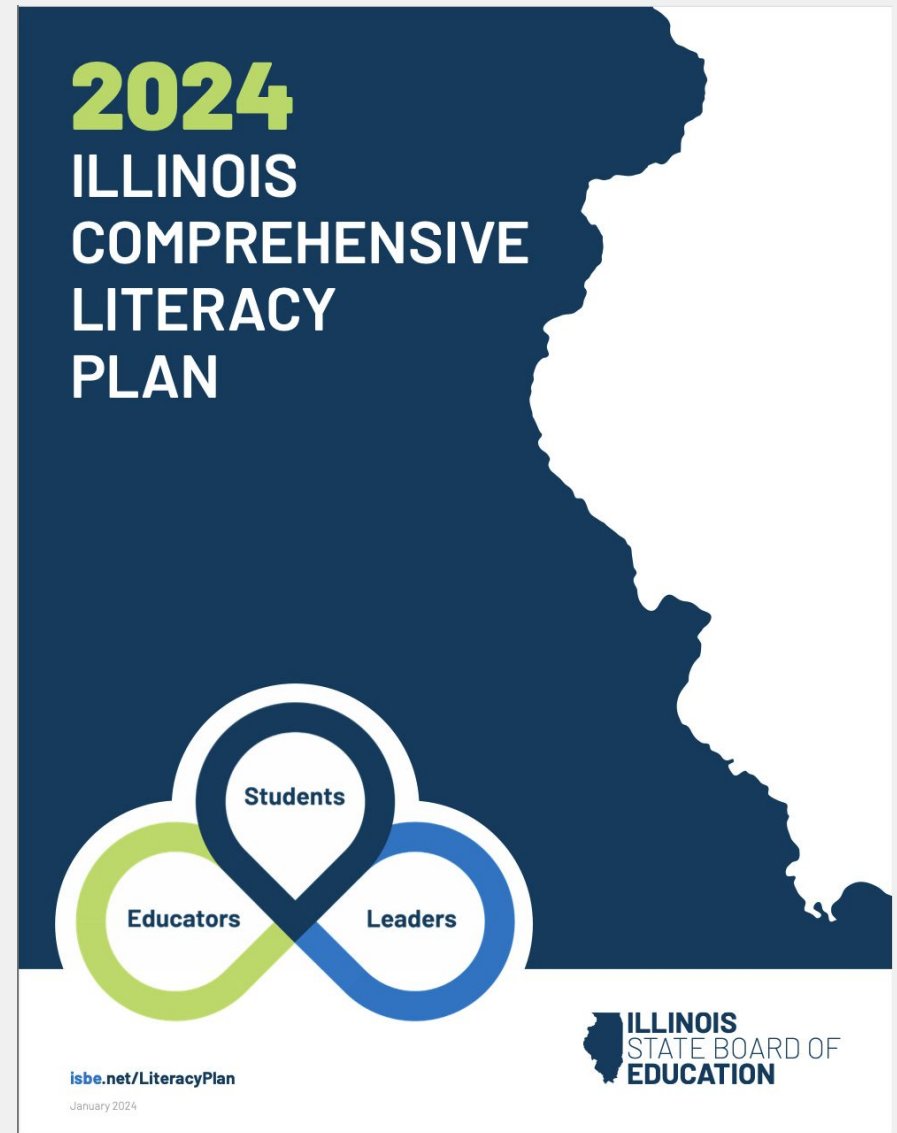
ICLP:  
Literacy Instructional  
Practices

2

Defining and Exploring  
Evidence-Based  
Instructional Practices

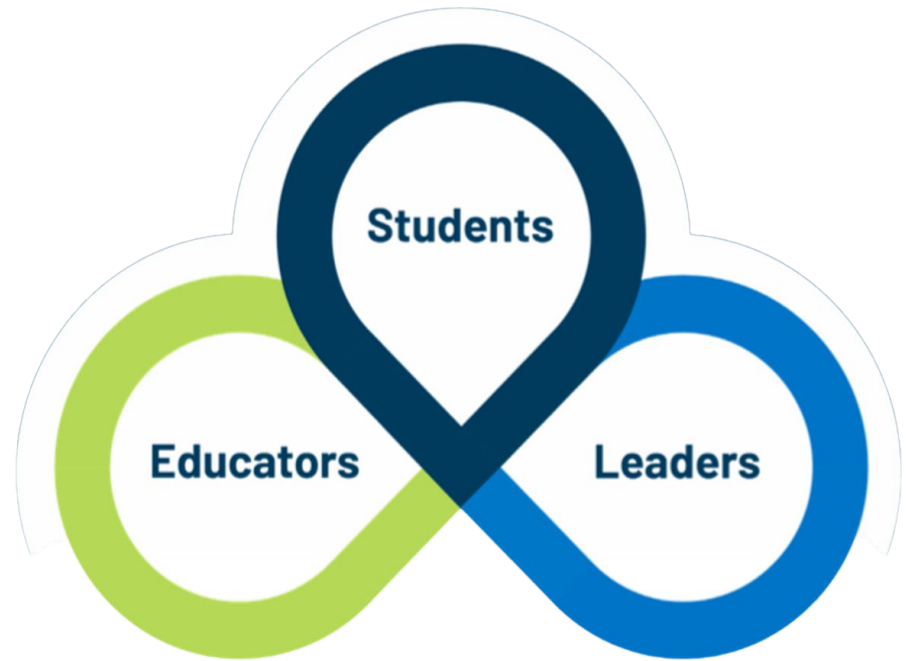
The Illinois State Board of Education adopted the **Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan** on January 24, 2024. This plan serves as a roadmap to enhance and unify core literacy instruction efforts statewide.

The plan, required by [Public Act 103-0402](#), is the result of extensive engagement with educators and stakeholders across the state and a wide range of community members interested in and affected by the final plan.



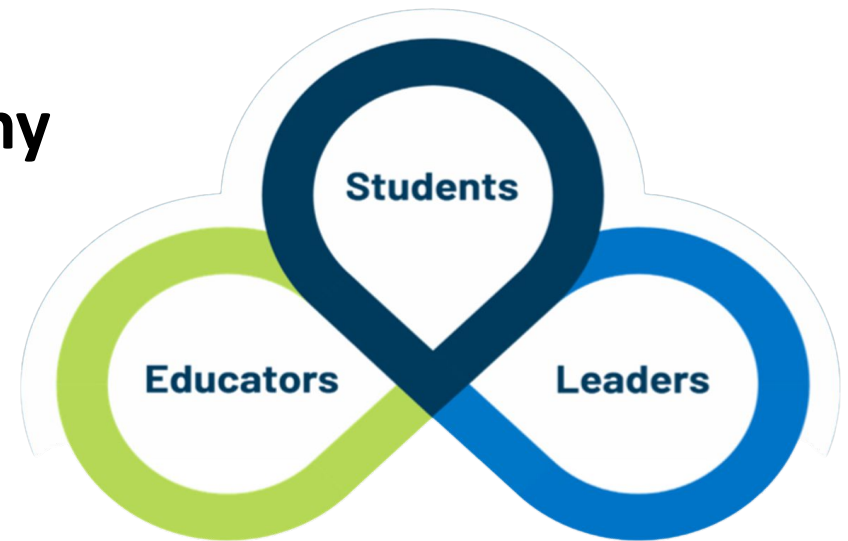
## Vision and Purpose

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) believes literacy is an urgent priority necessary to improve student achievement of lifelong literacy skills for successful civic, educational, occupational, and personal engagement. **The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan (ICLP) acts as a roadmap to enhance and unify core literacy instruction efforts statewide. It is designed to outline necessary supports and resources for literacy reform, ensuring all students receive developmentally appropriate and evidence-based literacy instruction. (ICLP, 2024, p. 8)**



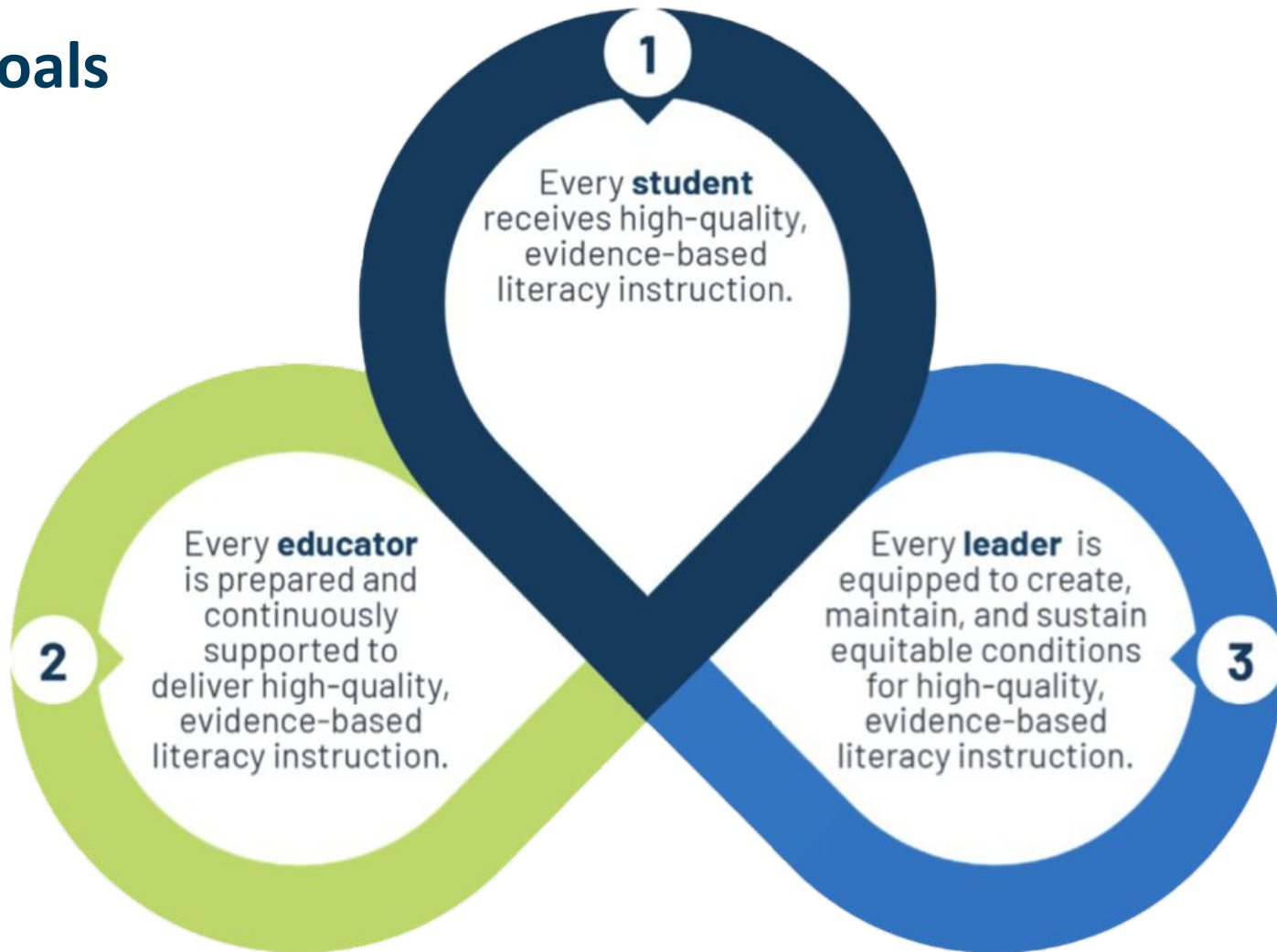
# Flexibility and Local Autonomy

The Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan offers a **flexible approach**, aligning with state standards while allowing district-specific adaptations. It **avoids prescribing specific materials or assessments**, while instead **promoting data-informed choices by districts**. This plan cannot address all district-specific contexts and challenges, and, therefore, ISBE encourages each district to carefully consider district and school-level data as it makes decisions related to literacy instruction.



It is imperative within the context of local control that districts **design local assessment strategies and allocate resources based on their unique demographics and context supported by data and current evidence-based instructional practices.**

# ILCP Goals



**Every learner**  
is capable and has  
the right to equitable  
access to high-  
quality, inclusive,  
differentiated, and  
evidence-based  
literacy instruction.

**Every learner**  
deserves schools that  
nurture their unique  
assets and interests,  
honoring their  
complexity within  
the context of their  
communities.

**Every learner**  
has the right to  
develop literacy in two  
or more languages to  
prepare for success in  
our global world.

**Every learner**  
has the right to reliable  
and valid assessments  
that accurately  
measure their literacy  
skills.

**Every learner**  
has the right to be  
empowered through  
agency to self-  
advocate within  
supportive learning  
environments.

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CALL TO ACTION  
Illinois' Education  
systems must prioritize  
literacy as a fundamental  
goal, recognizing it is  
essential in all aspects of  
students' lives.

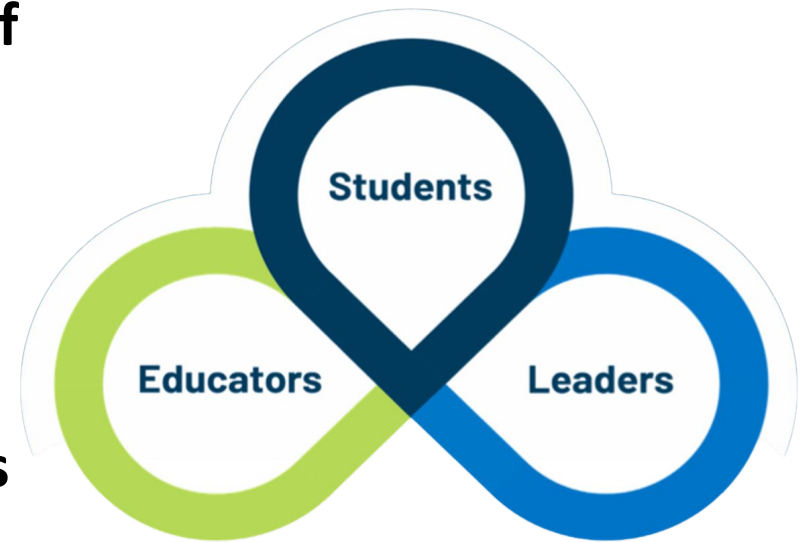
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# Engaging Effective & Equitable Literacy Leadership, Learning, and Instruction

## Literacy

Literacy encompasses a **wide range of skills** and abilities. It is the ability to **read, write, identify, understand, interpret, evaluate, create, and communicate effectively** by using **visual, auditory, and digital materials across disciplines and contexts.**

(ICPL, 2024, p. 14)



# Literacy Modalities

a way or manner through which something occurs or is experienced, expressed, or done.

|                                                                                                                              | Oral Language                                                                                  | Written Language                                                                               | Visual Language                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receptive Comprehension<br><br>Thinking     | <br>Listening | <br>Reading | <br>Viewing               |
| Expressive Composition<br><br>Sharing Ideas | <br>Speaking  | <br>Writing | <br>Visually Representing |

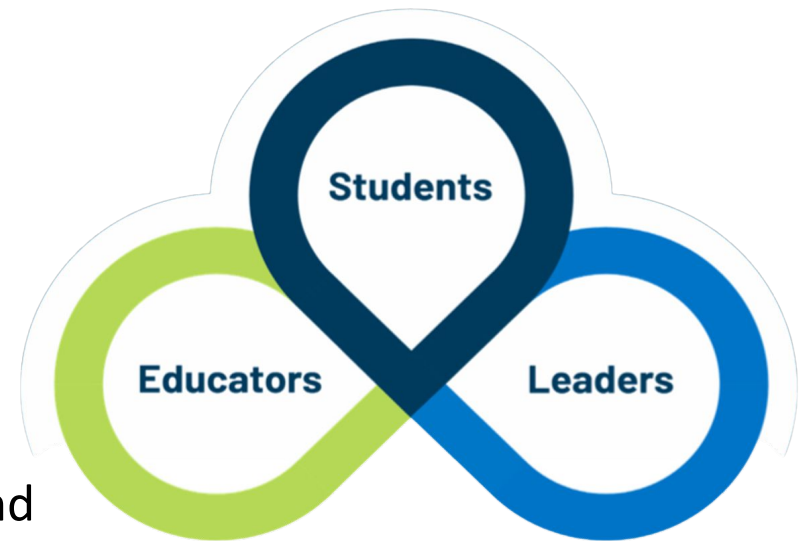
(McAndrews, 2020)

# Engaging Effective & Equitable Literacy Leadership, Learning, and Instruction

## Literacy

Moreover, literacy is the **continuous development** of **multiple skills**. It involves applying these skills in **diverse contexts**, including academic, workplace, community, and personal settings. Literacy is the **bridge** that connects students to the experiences of others, building **empathy** skills. It is a **fundamental right**, an **enjoyable practice**, and a **vital foundation** for lifelong learning, active citizenship, and equitable participation in 21st-century society.

(ICPL, 2024, p. 14)



# Simple View of Reading

(Gough & Tunmer, 1986)



# SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)\*

## Language Comprehension

**BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**  
(facts, concepts, etc.)

**VOCABULARY**  
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

**LANGUAGE STRUCTURE**  
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

**VERBAL REASONING**  
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

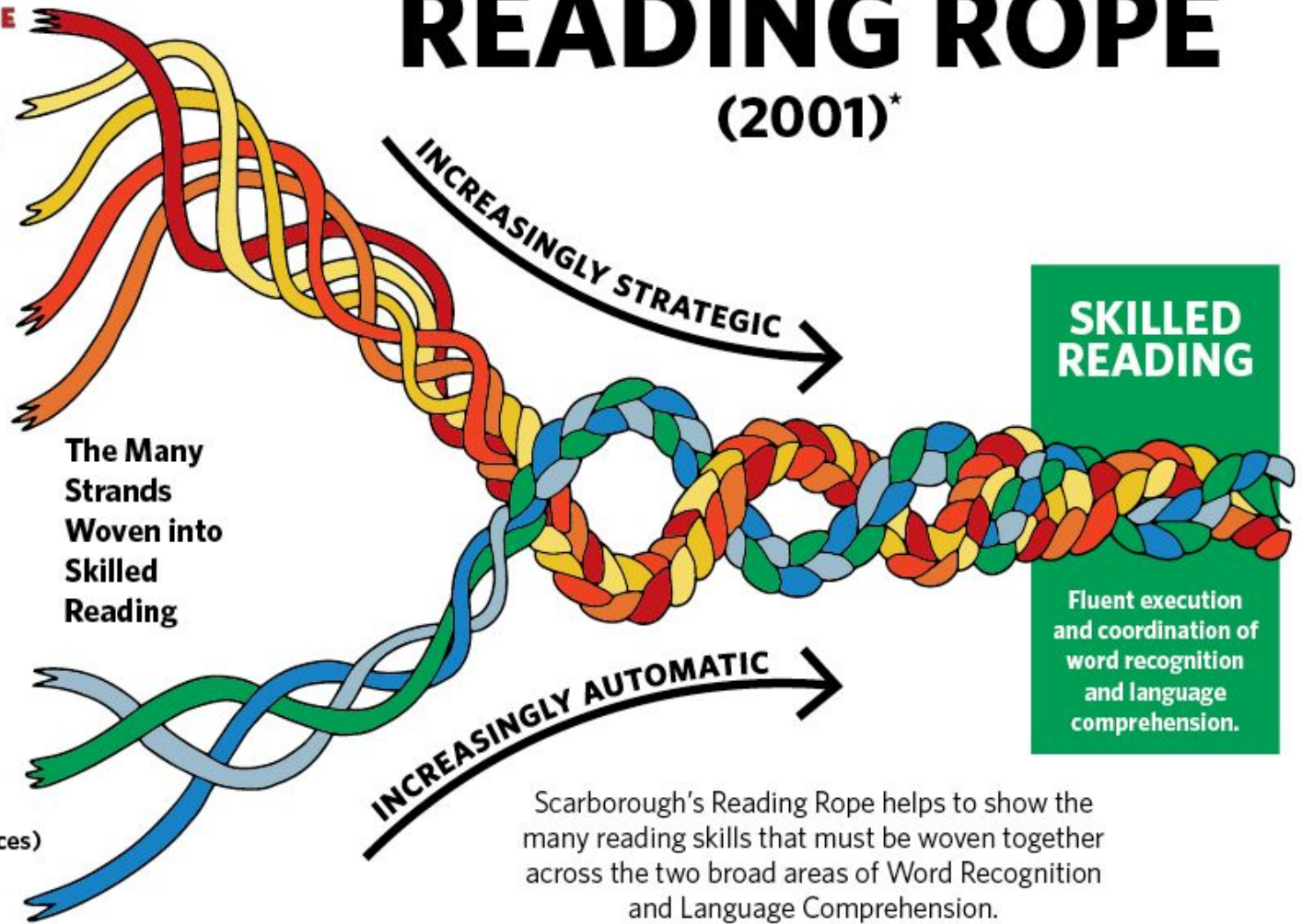
**LITERACY KNOWLEDGE**  
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

## Word Recognition

**PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**  
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

**DECODING**  
(alphabetic principle,  
spelling—sound correspondences)

**SIGHT RECOGNITION**  
(of familiar words)

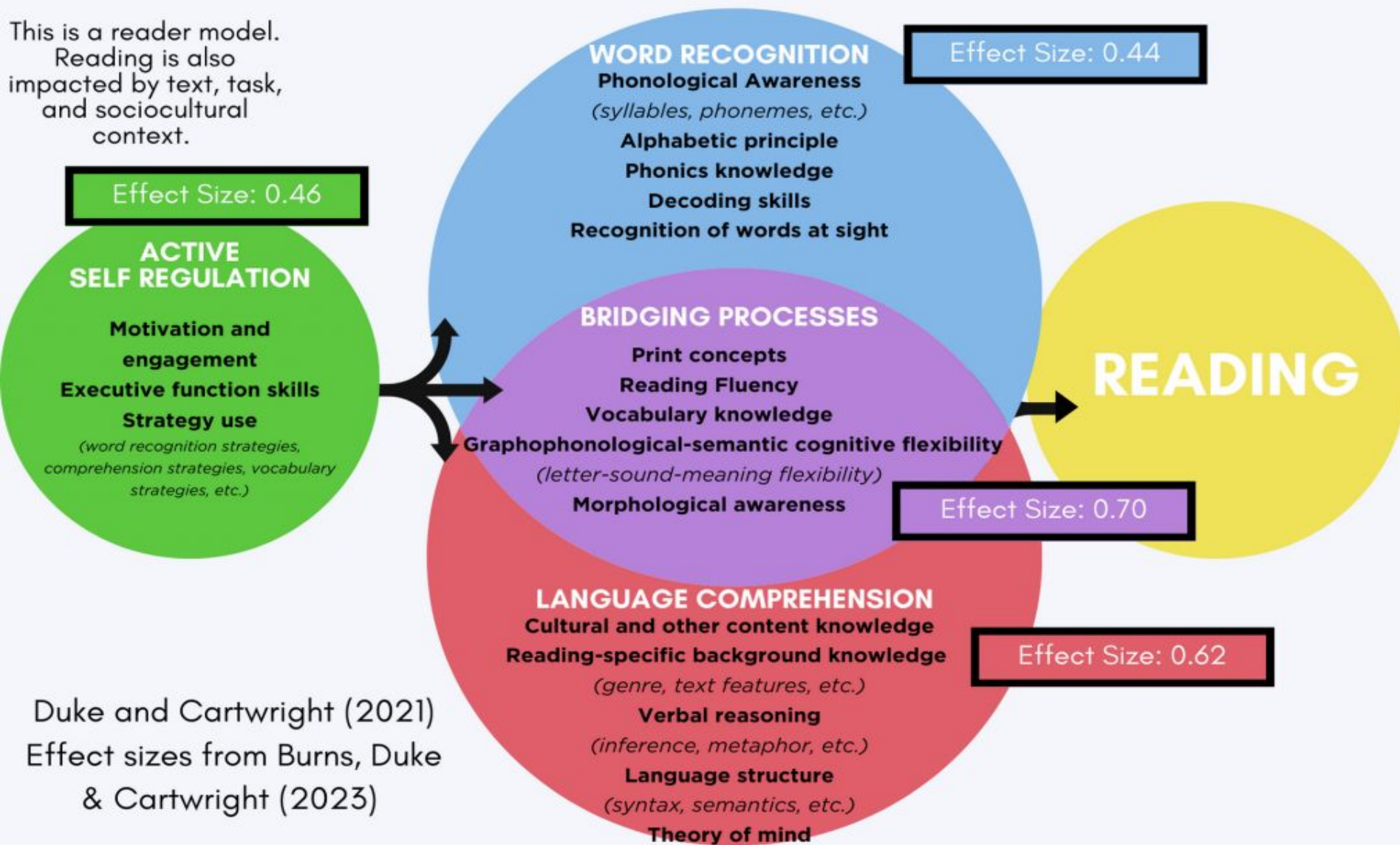


Scarborough's Reading Rope helps to show the many reading skills that must be woven together across the two broad areas of Word Recognition and Language Comprehension.

\*What is the Reading Rope? (n.d.). Braintrust Tutors. March 16, 2023  
<https://braintrusttutors.com/what-is-the-reading-rope/>

# THE ACTIVE VIEW OF READING

This is a reader model.  
Reading is also  
impacted by text, task,  
and sociocultural  
context.



Duke and Cartwright (2021)  
Effect sizes from Burns, Duke  
& Cartwright (2023)

# THE ACTIVE VIEW OF READING

This is a reader model.  
Reading is also  
impacted by text, task,  
and sociocultural

**Effect size** is a quantitative measure of the magnitude of the experimental effect. The larger the effect size the stronger the relationship between two variables.

## WORD RECOGNITION

Phonological Awareness

(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

Alphabetic principle

Orthographic knowledge

Effect Size: 0.44

| Relative size | Effect size | % of control group below the mean of experimental group |
|---------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
|               | 0.0         | 50%                                                     |
| Small         | 0.2         | 58%                                                     |
| Medium        | 0.5         | 69%                                                     |
| Large         | 0.8         | 79%                                                     |
|               | 1.4         | 92%                                                     |

## LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

Cultural and other content knowledge

Reading-specific background knowledge

(genre, text features, etc.)

Verbal reasoning

(inference, metaphor, etc.)

Language structure

(syntax, semantics, etc.)

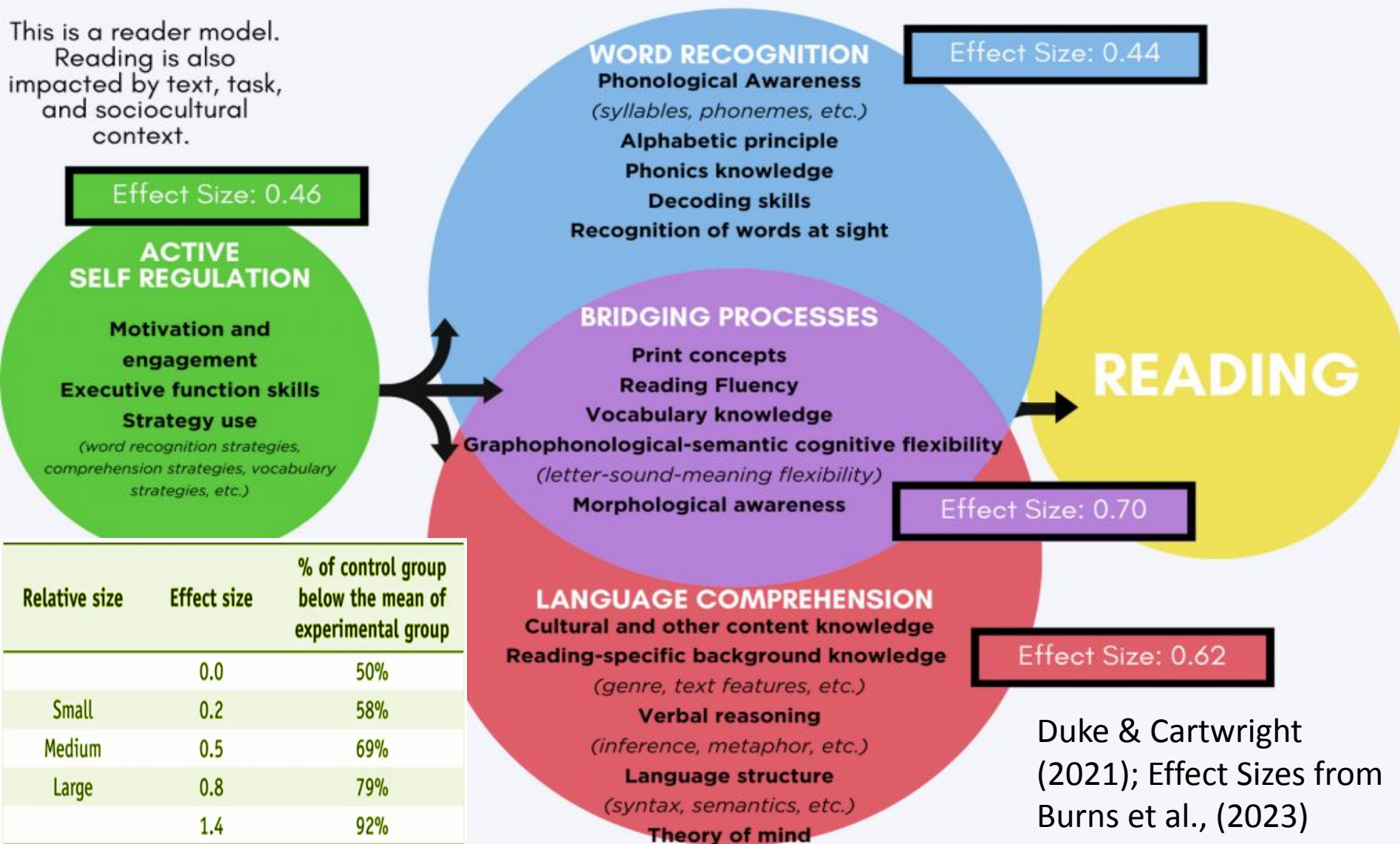
Theory of mind

Effect Size: 0.62

Duke and Cartwright (2021)  
Effect sizes from Burns, Duke  
& Cartwright (2023)

# THE ACTIVE VIEW OF READING

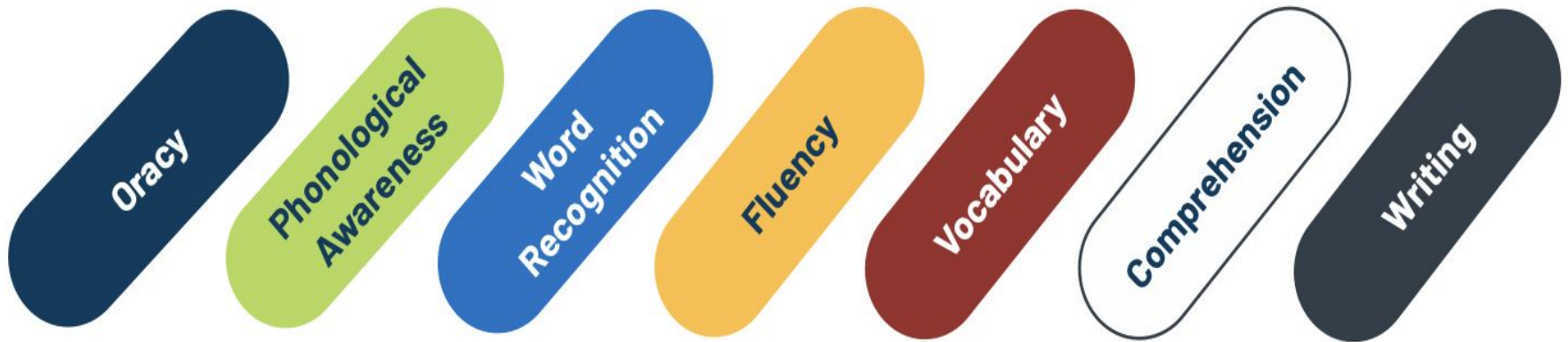
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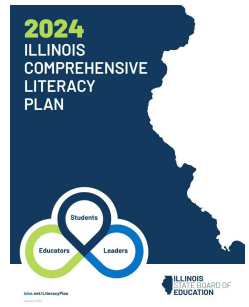
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Duke & Cartwright  
(2021); Effect Sizes from  
Burns et al., (2023)

## 7 COMPONENTS OF LITERACY



[Seven Components of Literacy](#)  
[Seven-Components-Literacy-Poster.pdf](#)



# The Language Literacy Network

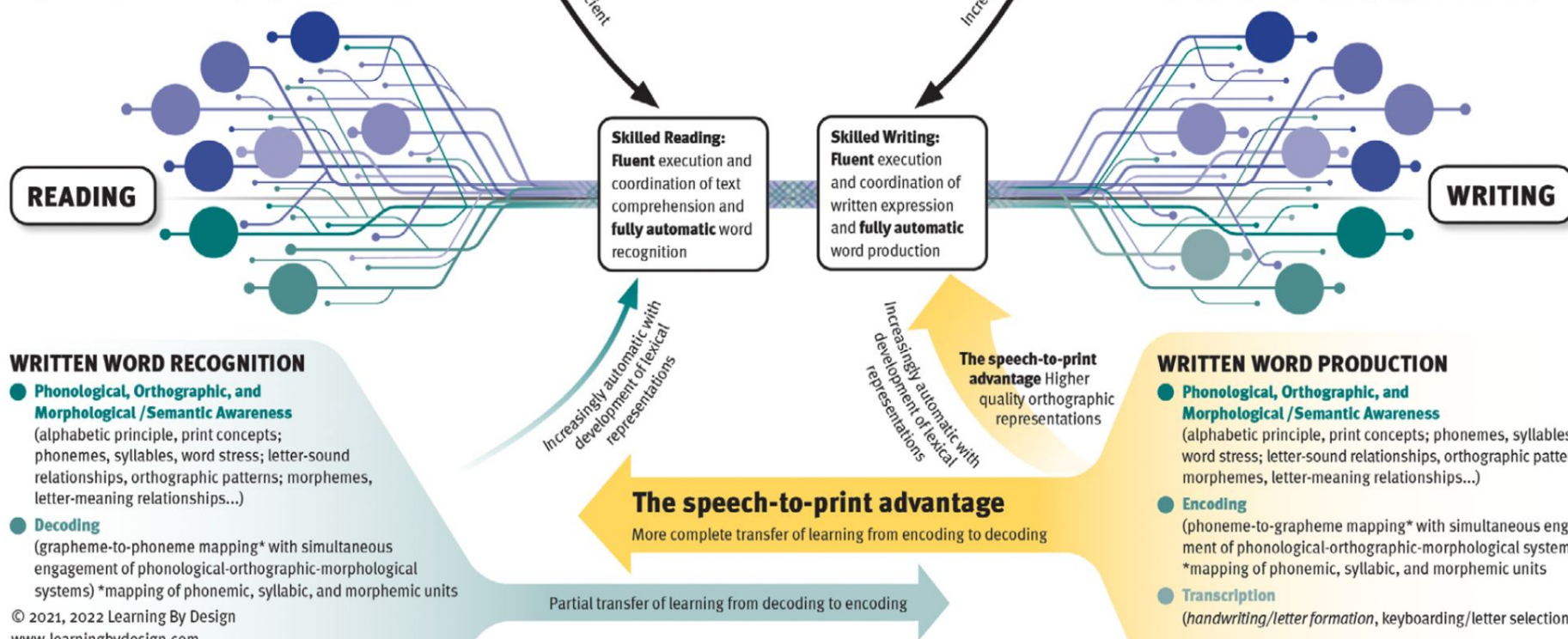
## LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

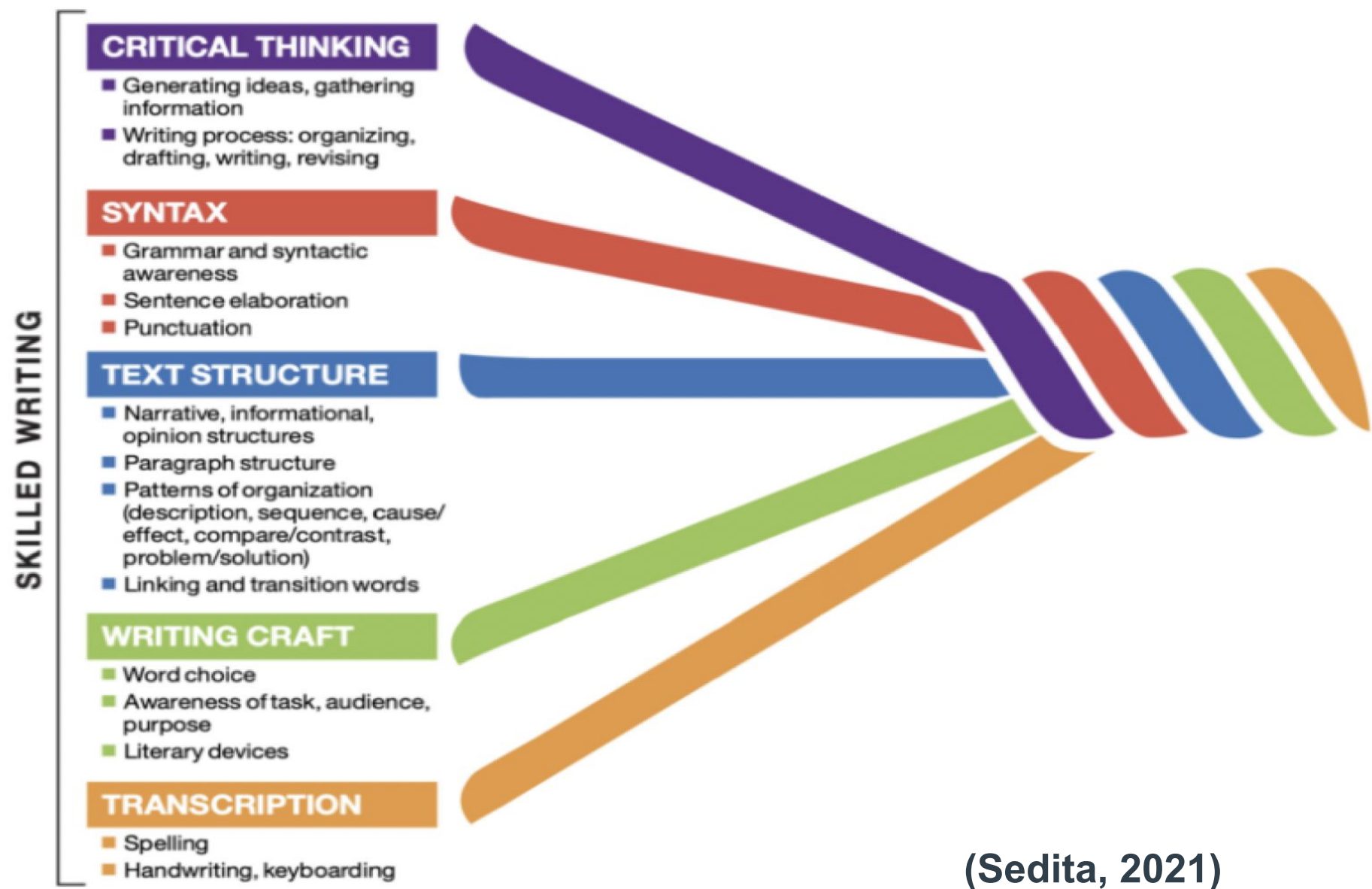
- **Background Knowledge**  
(facts, concepts, schemas...)
- **Vocabulary**  
(breadth & depth; definition, polysemy, related words...)
- **Language Structures**  
(phonology, morphology, word class, syntax, prosody...)
- **Verbal Reasoning**  
(connection of ideas; inference, prediction, metaphor...)
- **Pragmatics**  
(intended audience, purpose...)
- **Literacy Knowledge**  
(print concepts & conventions; text genre & structure...)

The many language components that unify  
into skilled reading and writing  
(Wasowicz, 2021)

## LANGUAGE EXPRESSION

- **Background Knowledge**  
(facts, concepts, schemas...)
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## Language Comprehension

**BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**  
(facts, concepts, etc.)

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(alphabetic principle, spelling—sound correspondences)

**SIGHT RECOGNITION**  
(of familiar words)

# SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)\*

But... Umm...

What about instruction?

What is it we do in our  
teaching?

## THE ACTIVE VIEW OF READING

Effect Size: 0.44

READING

Effect Size: 0.70

Effect Size: 0.62

## LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- **Background Knowledge**  
(facts, concepts, schemas...)
- **Vocabulary**  
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The many language  
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(Wasowicz, 2021)

WRITING

## WRITTEN WORD PRODUCTION

- **Phonological, Orthographic, and Morphological/Semantic Awareness**  
(alphabetic principle, print concepts; phonemes, syllables, word stress; letter-sound relationships, orthographic patterns, morphemes, letter-meaning relationships...)
- **Encoding**  
(phoneme-to-grapheme mapping\* with simultaneous engagement of phonological-orthographic-morphological systems)  
\*mapping of phonemic, syllabic, and morphemic units
- **Transcription**  
(handwriting/letter formation, keyboarding/letter selection...)

## SKILLED WRITING

### SYNTAX

- Grammar and syntactic awareness
- Sentence elaboration
- Punctuation

### TEXT STRUCTURE

- Narrative, informational, opinion structures
- Paragraph structure
- Patterns of organization (description, sequence, cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution)
- Linking and transition words

### WRITING CRAFT

- Word choice
- Awareness of task, audience, purpose
- Literary devices

### TRANSCRIPTION

- Spelling
- Handwriting, keyboarding

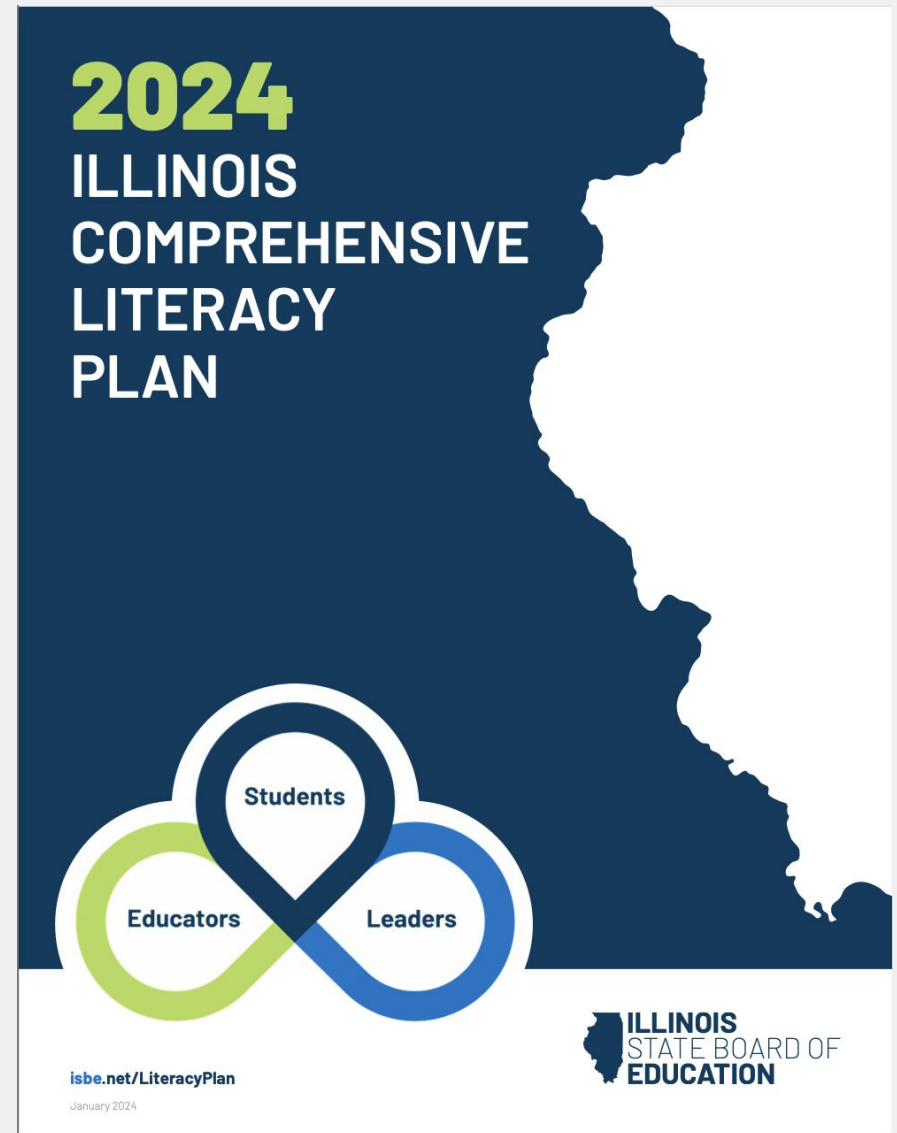
# Let's Pause for a Moment



- What is an instructional practice?
- Which instructional practices do we currently use?
- How do we select the instructional practices that we use?
- How do we know if our instructional practices are effective and equitable?
- What role do curricular materials (e.g., programs) play in our literacy teaching?

**Evidence-based instruction** forms the **cornerstone of the ICLP**, representing a forward-thinking and responsive approach to literacy education. This type of instruction is **grounded in a comprehensive analysis of educational practices** that are **validated** through a **spectrum of studies** ranging from **experimental to correlational**. It's a **dynamic process that continually adapts and evolves in response to emerging educational research and the ever-changing needs of student populations**.

(ICLP, 2024, p. 23)



# Two Notes: Inviting a Comprehensive Approach

The *science of reading* represents decades of interdisciplinary research that collectively informs how proficient reading and writing develop and emphasizes practices demonstrated to be effective through study.

However, some see it as a political agenda and ideology, or a new front in the reading debates.

*Balanced literacy* includes foundational and language comprehension instructional features, such as phonemic awareness and phonics (understanding the relationships between sounds and their written representations), fluency, guided oral reading, vocabulary development, and comprehension.

However, some interpret the term as akin to whole language instruction with little focus on basic skills instruction.

This **ICLP refrains from** referencing the “**science of reading**” or “**balanced literacy**” in favor of **describing current understandings of literacy development and evidence-based instruction.**

# Instructional Practices

## Effective

Engaging in Evidence-Based Practices (think: it works).

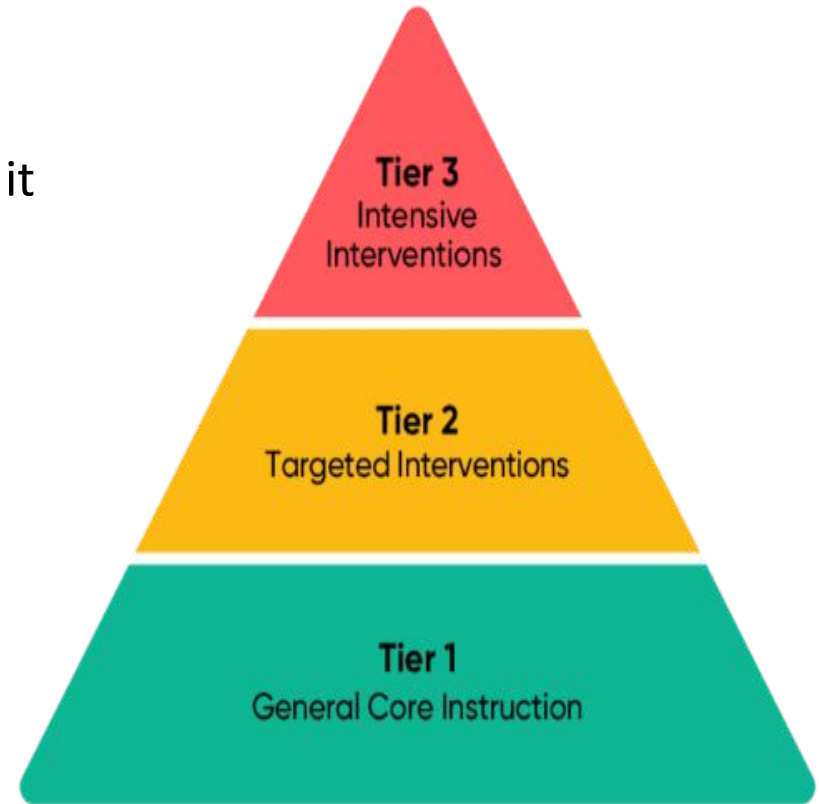
## Equality

Treating Everyone the Same.

## Equity

Giving everyone what they need to be successful.

*Note: Equality aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same levels of support.*



(ICPL, 2024, p. 14)

# Instructional Practices

***Evidence-Based Practices:*** Individual & Collective Instructional Practices

**That include using:**

***Equity-Focused Lens:*** Intentional Cultural Responsiveness and Sustainability through Asset Pedagogies



How might we?



(ICPL, 2024, p. 14)

# Breakout Discussion #1

## Note Catcher

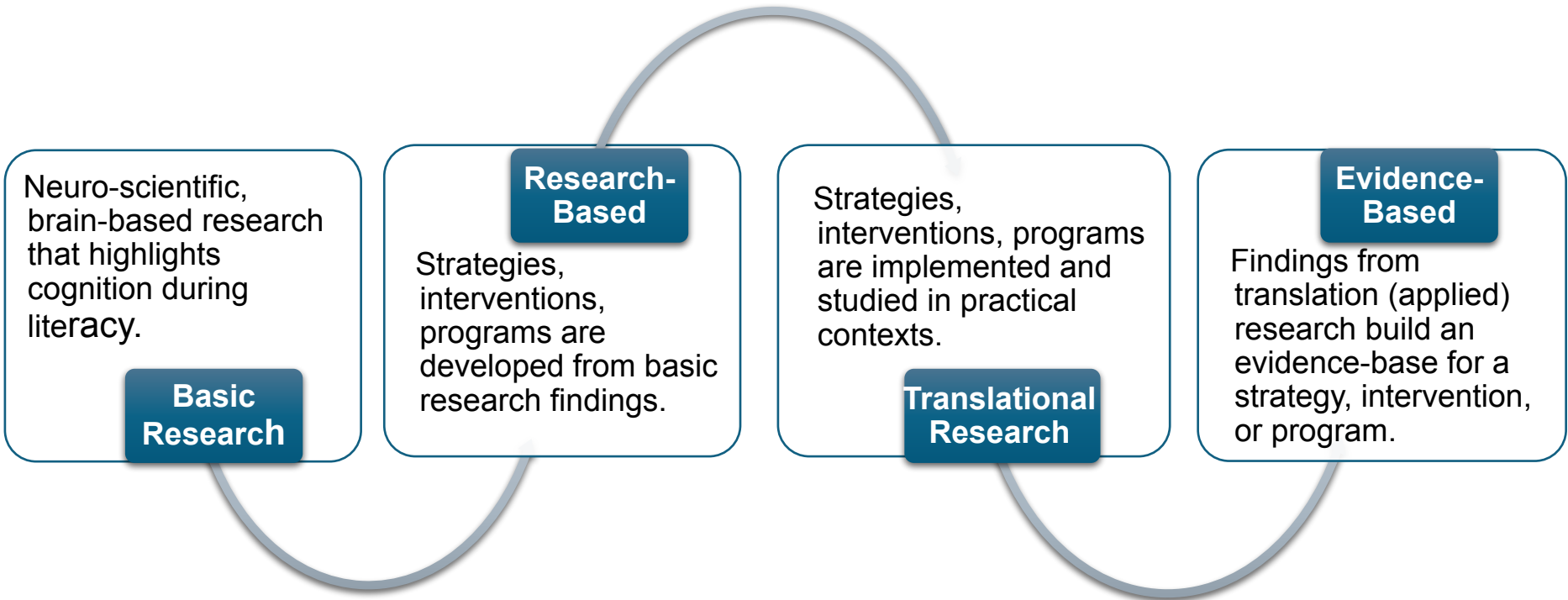


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- How do we know if our instructional practices are effective and equitable?
- What role do curricular materials (e.g., programs) play in our literacy teaching?

- What resonates?
- What challenges your thinking?

# Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

# Research- or Evidence-Based Instruction?



# ICLP Section One

## Framework for Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

| What <b>IS</b> Evidence-Based Instruction?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | What <b>IS NOT</b> Evidence-Based Instruction?                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>A collection of research to inform instruction</b></p> <p>Research about how children learn to read, how to make sure every student learns to read, and what to do when a child encounters difficulty in learning to read continues to expand. The research informs evidence-based instructional practices.</p>                     | <p><b>A program, an intervention, or a product you can buy</b></p> <p>The use of evidence-based instruction is an approach to teaching reading that is based on decades of research and evidence. It is NOT a specific program.</p>        |
| <p><b>Ever- evolving</b></p> <p>There is new research and evidence all the time. As populations, communities, and approaches evolve, so should practice. New research can increase or decrease the weight of evidence. The continuum of rigor and quality for research can help identify the weight of claims stemming from research.</p> | <p><b>Complete and final</b></p> <p>As with any research, it is never complete. More study happens all the time, and researchers, teachers, and families can work together to bring the best evidence-based practices into classrooms.</p> |

ISBE, 2024, p. 23

# ESSA Tiers of Evidence

ICLP, 2024, p. 23



**Tier 1 (Strong Evidence):** This tier represents the highest level of evidence. To qualify for Tier 1, an intervention must be supported by at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study (such as a randomized control trial).



**Tier 2 (Moderate Evidence):** Interventions in this tier are supported by at least one well-designed and well implemented quasi-experimental study. This means the study has a control group, but the participants are not randomly assigned to the control or intervention group.



**Tier 3 (Promising Evidence):** This tier includes interventions backed by at least one well-designed and well implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias. These studies do not reach the rigor of experimental or quasi-experimental designs but still provide some evidence of effectiveness.



**Tier 4 (Demonstrates a Rationale):** This tier is for interventions supported by a rationale based on high quality research findings or positive evaluation that such an intervention is likely to improve student outcomes. These interventions require ongoing efforts to examine their effects.

# Identifying Evidence-Based, Contextually Relevant Instructional Practices and Methods

## Factors to Consider

- For whom is the practice appropriate?
  - Grade level
  - Cultural and linguistic assets
  - Background knowledge/experience
  - Specialized needs
- How often and for how long implementation should last?
- What are the implementation procedures?
- How can we integrate more evidence-based practices into our literacy instruction?
- How will you evaluate and monitor effectiveness of a practice in your context?



# Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction is...



## Explicit Instruction

Encourages active student participation

Emphasizes clear communication that is free of ambiguity and minimizes cognitive overload

Maximizes student/teacher interaction, and offers timely feedback

Enhances long-term retention through purposeful practice techniques

## Systematic Instruction

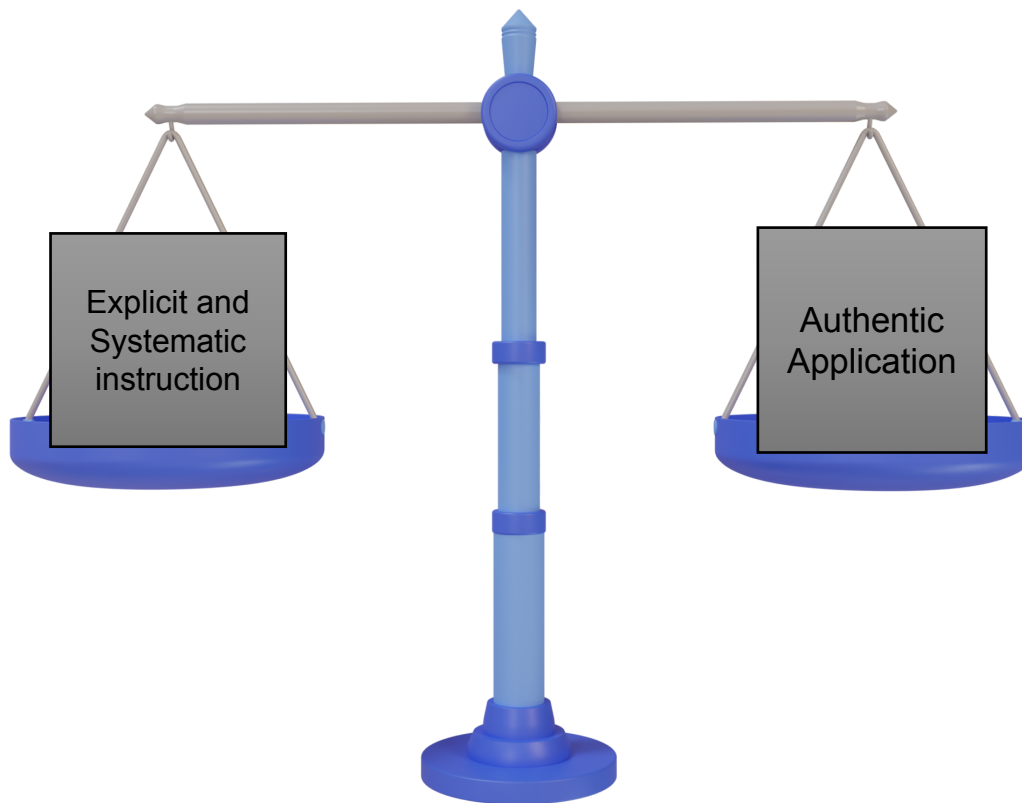
Is cumulative and diagnostic

Scaffolds skills, beginning with those foundational to reading success

Follows a planned scope and sequence of skills that progresses from easier to more difficult

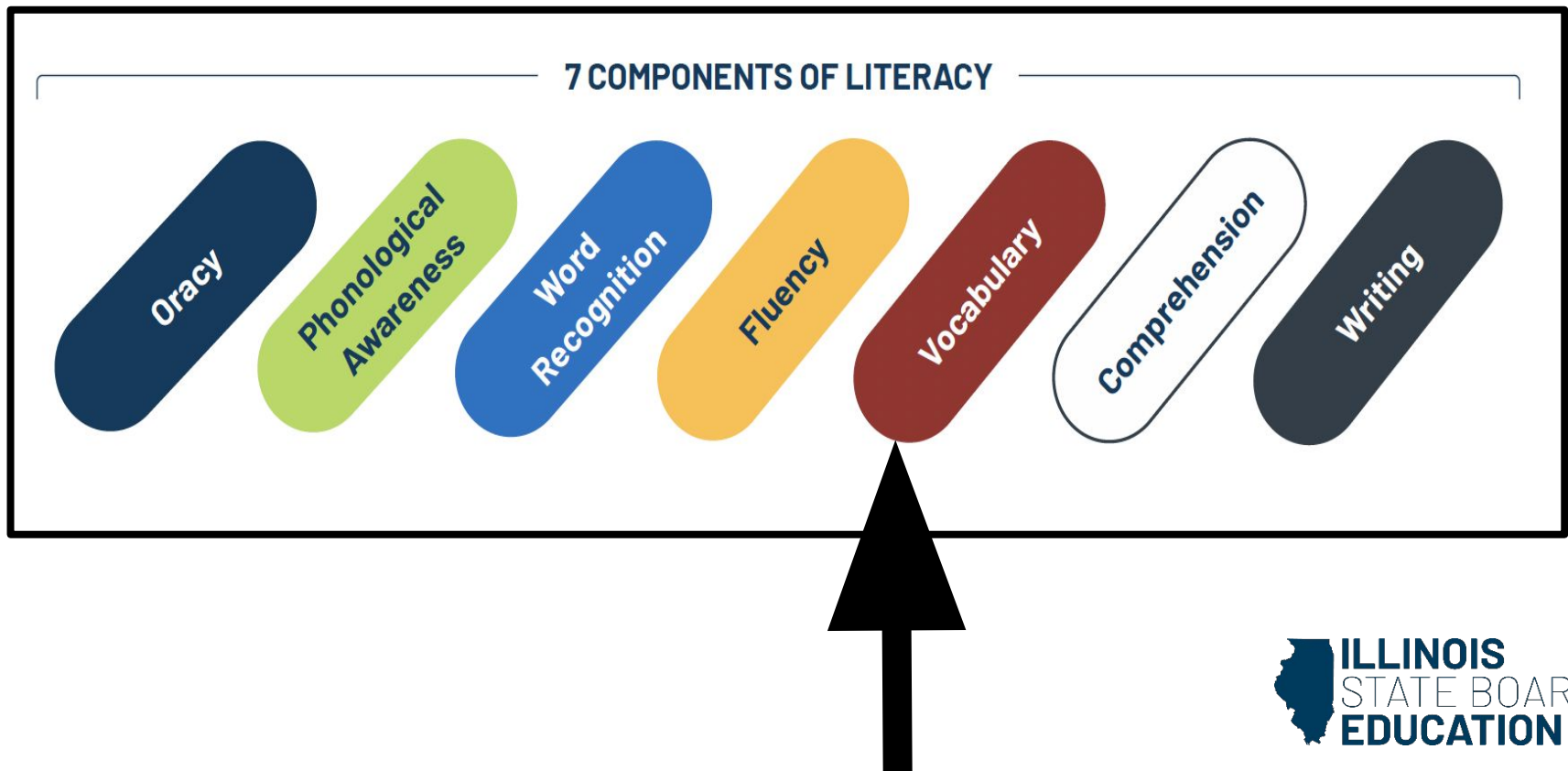
Fosters deeper understanding and proficiency

# Balancing the Scales



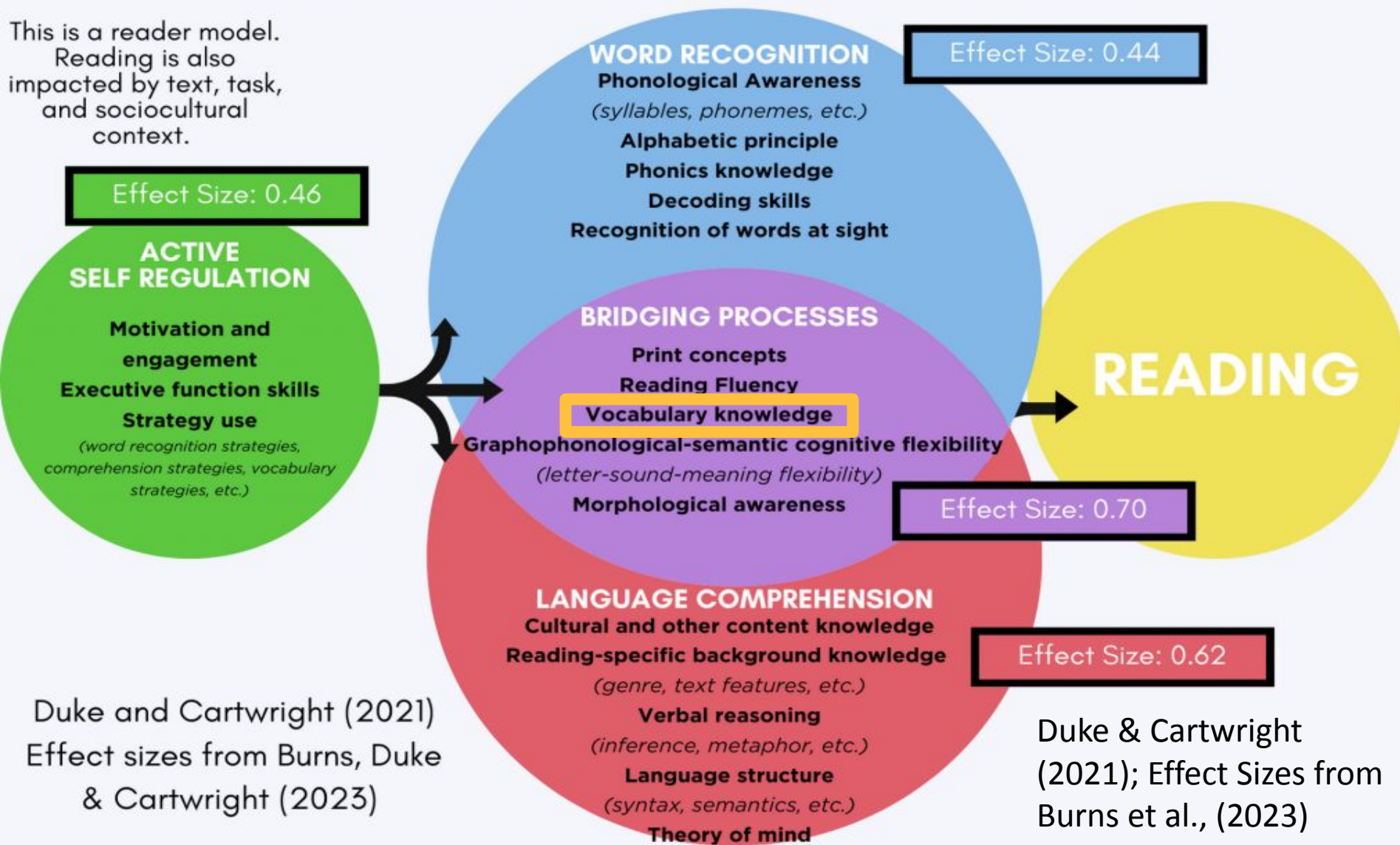
# ICLP Section One

## Framework for Effective Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction



# THE ACTIVE VIEW OF READING

This is a reader model.  
Reading is also  
impacted by text, task,  
and sociocultural  
context.



Duke and Cartwright (2021)  
Effect sizes from Burns, Duke  
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Duke & Cartwright  
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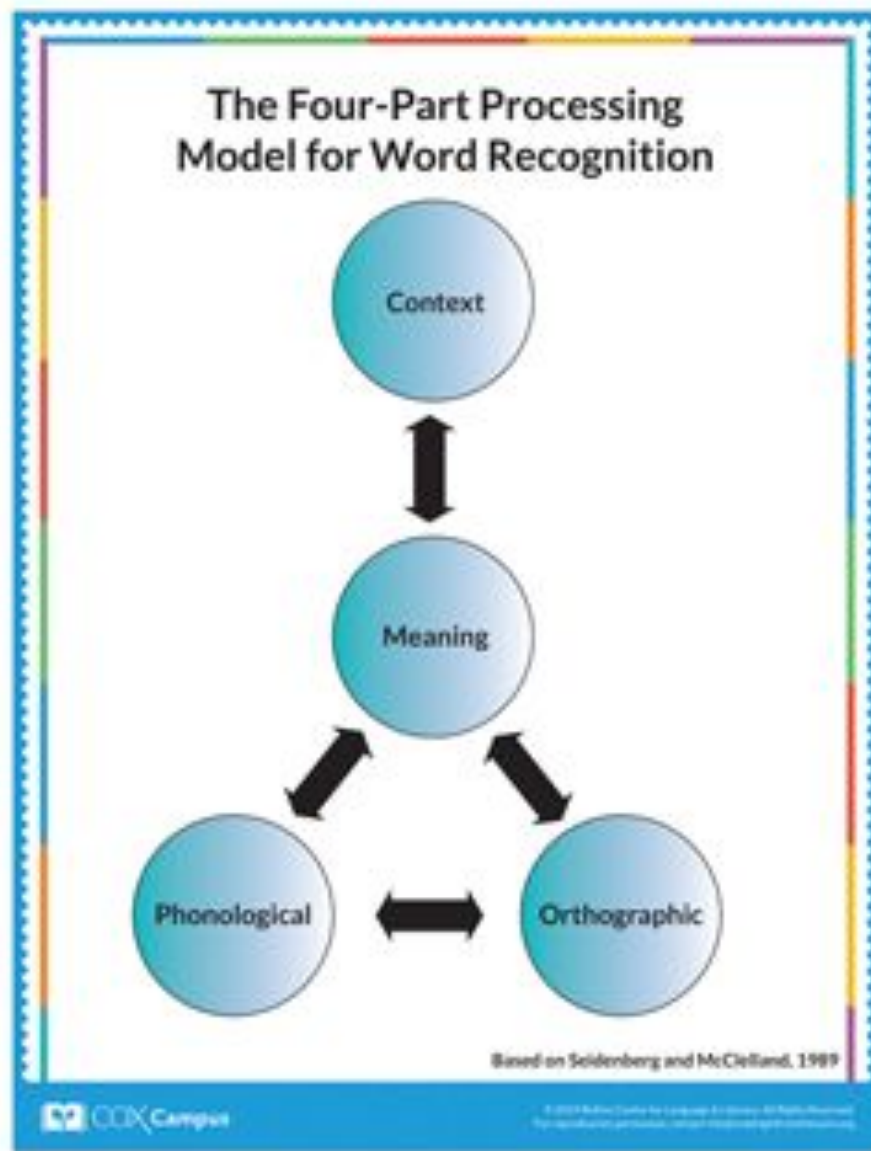
# Why is Vocabulary Important?

**Broad word knowledge provides learners with an academic advantage over time** (Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993).

**It's an indicator of what children know about the natural and social world** (Anderson & Nagy, 1993).

**It's a strong determinant of reading comprehension** (Ricketts, Nation, & Bishop, 2007; Wright & Cervetti, 2017).

**It supports word recognition** (Kearns & Al Ghanem, 2019; Kendeou et al., 2009).



# Principles of Evidence-Based Vocabulary Instruction

1

Teach words in context

2

Teach students how words work

3

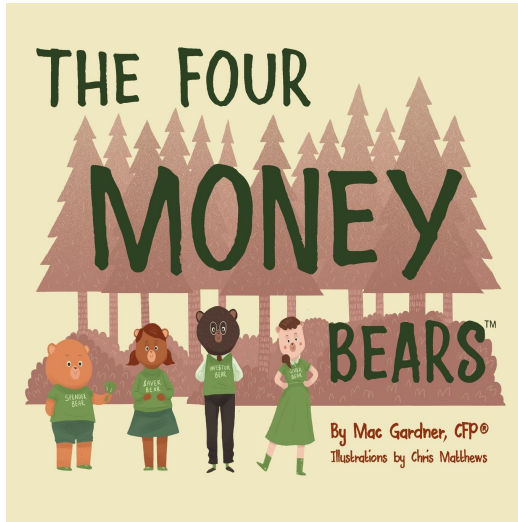
Teach connections between related words

4

Create contexts for students to use words

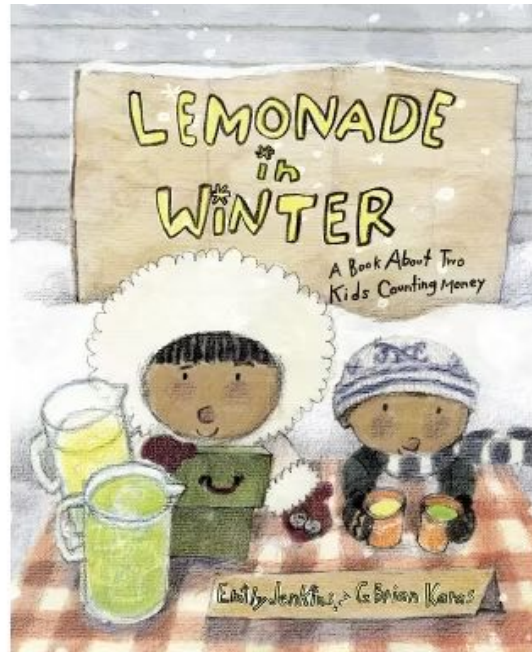
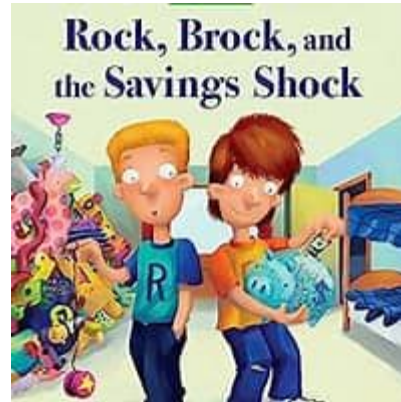
# Context: Building Content Text Sets

advertise



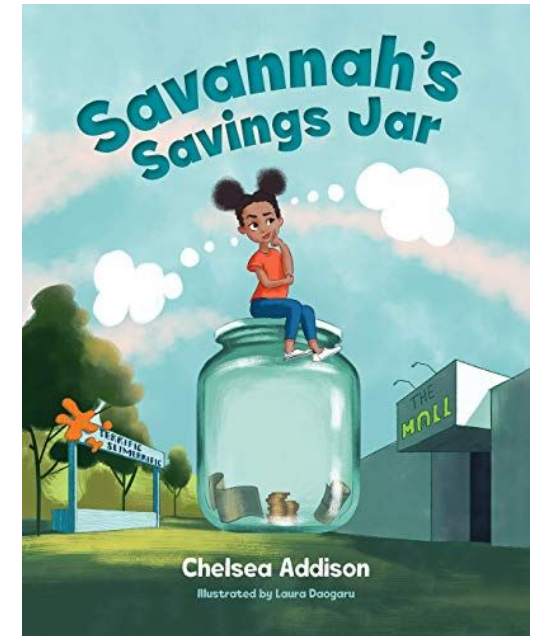
bargain

spend



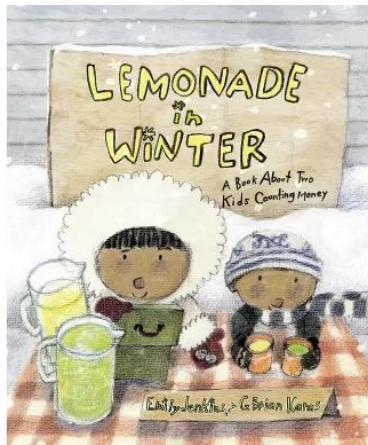
invest

budget



save





# Direct Instruction

**Advertise** - a way to tell people about something, like an event, a person, or an item, so they know about it and might want to buy it, visit it, support it, or learn more about it.



“Maybe we should **advertise**.”



# Word Mapping

## Syllables

ad|vert|ise

## Phonemes

a|d|v|er|t|i|se

## Morphology

**ad-**: This Latin prefix means "to" or "toward".

**-vert-**: This is the root, from the Latin *vertere*, meaning "to turn".

**-ise**: This is a verb-forming suffix.

| 7 Syllable Types |                      |                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                | <b>Closed</b>        | A syllable in which a single vowel is followed by a consonant. The vowel usually starts.                        |
| 2                | <b>Open</b>          | A syllable ending with a single vowel. The vowel usually long.                                                  |
| 3                | <b>Magic e</b>       | A syllable with the long vowel consonant - silent e pattern.                                                    |
| 4                | <b>Vowel Team</b>    | A syllable containing two letters that together make one vowel sound.                                           |
| 5                | <b>r-controlled</b>  | A syllable in which the vowel(s) is followed by the single letter r. The vowel sounds is "controlled" by the r. |
| 6                | <b>Diphthong</b>     | A syllable containing two vowels in which a new vowel sound is formed by the combination of both vowel sounds.  |
| 7                | <b>Consonant -le</b> | An unstressed final syllable containing a consonant and -le.                                                    |

## Morphology

The study of how morphemes are combined to form words.

Words are made up of morphemes:

Prefixes

Roots/Bases

Suffixes

Morphemes are the smallest unit of *meaning*.

un  
"not"

reach  
"able to"

able

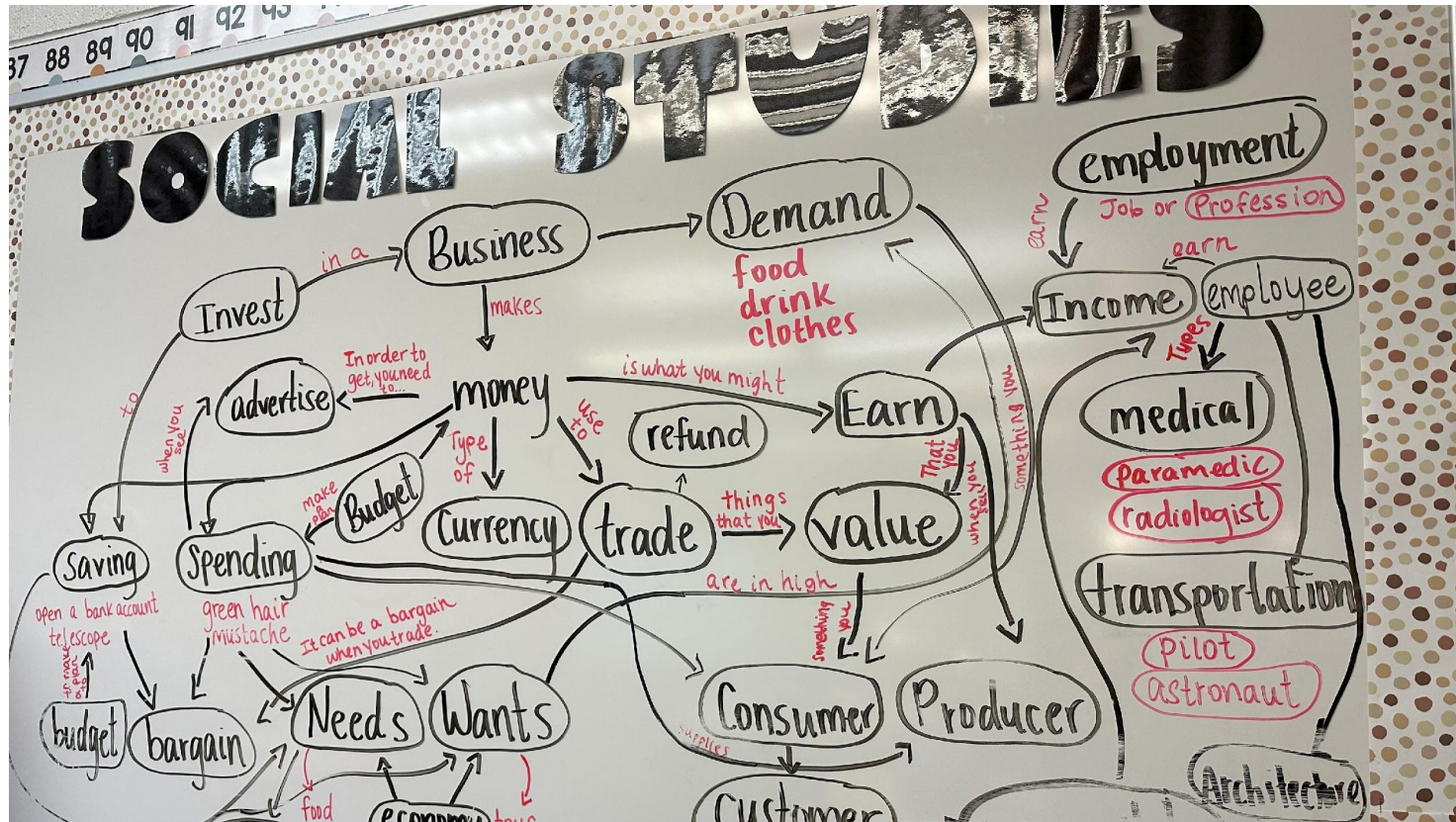
dis  
"away"

tract  
"pull, drag"

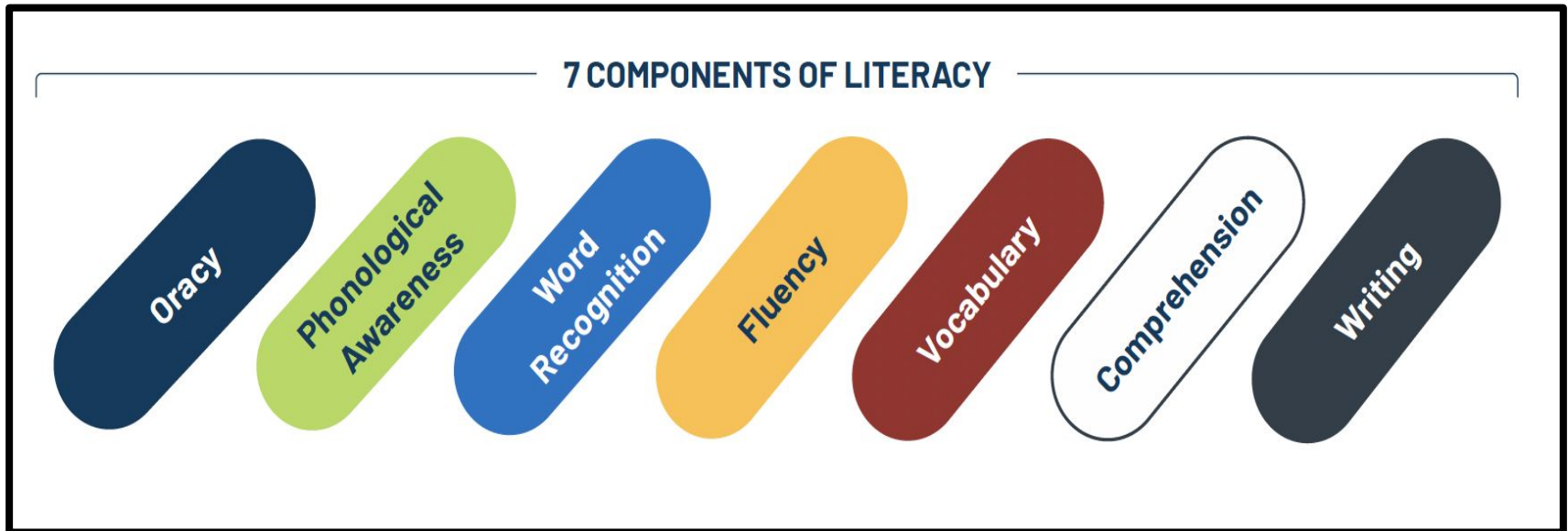
ion  
"state of"

s  
plural

# Concept Mapping



# Integrating Components of Literacy



# Breakout Discussion #2

## Note Catcher

### Evidence-Based Practices

- What other components of literacy were addressed through evidence-based vocabulary instruction?
- How would you define evidence-based instruction?
- How do you identify the practices you use in literacy teaching?

# Evidence-Based Instructional Practice Resources



## Reputable sources for Identifying Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

- [What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- [WIDA](#)
- [International Literacy Association](#)
- [National Council for Teachers of English](#)
- [Iowa Reading Research Center](#)
- [Florida Center for Reading Research](#)
- [Reading Rockets](#)
- [AdLit](#)
- [Reading Universe Taxonomy](#)
- [Colorin Colorado ELL Classroom Strategy Library](#)
- [The Dyslexia Handbook - Ch. 7](#)
- [UFLI Foundations Toolbox](#)
- [PaTTAN - Literacy](#)
- Partnerships with Universities

## Unvetted sources for Identifying Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

- News Media (newspapers, podcasts, blogs)
- Social Media (Facebook, TikTok, X)
- For Profit Companies
- Advocacy Organizations
- Teachers-Pay-Teachers
- Pinterest

## ***Mark Your Calendars: 2025-2026 Capacity Builders***

- 10/30/25 Session 1: Overview of the Series and Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan
- 11/13/25 Session 2: Evidence-Based Instructional Practices
- **12/18/25 Session 3: Writing Instruction**
- 1/22/26 Session 4: Writing Instruction
- 2/19/26 Session 5: Vocabulary Instruction
- 3/19/26 Session 6: Vocabulary and Disciplinary Literacy
- 4/16/26 Session 7: Adolescent and Disciplinary Literacy
- 5/21/25 Session 8: Assessment and Instructional Decision-Making



# Evaluation

[Evaluation | Session 2: Evidence-Based Instructional Practices – Fill out form](#)

**Evaluation | Session 2: Evidence-  
Based Instructional Practices**



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# Questions



thank you