# Key Literacy Strategies and Concepts

March 13, 2025

Session 6

**ILLINOIS
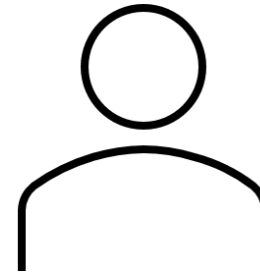STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

# Meet the Presenters
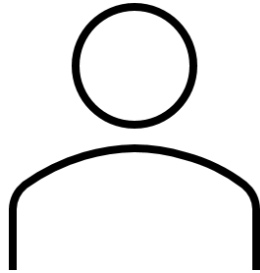
## Michael J. Young

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# *Housekeeping*

- Please **complete the registration form** for this event.
- Today's slide deck can be accessed here:
- All resources are available in [our shared folder](#) and archived on ISBE's [Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan webpage](#) after each session.

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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How do we ensure that our **literacy leadership**:

- **affirms** the **strengths** that each and **every (*each*) child** brings within their **diverse backgrounds** and **life experiences?**

  **AND**

- provides the comprehensive **supports** and **educational opportunities every (*each*) child** need to **succeed?**

# *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.

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# *Mark Your Calendars:  2024-2025 Capacity Builders*

- 10/17/24 Session 1: Overview of the Series and Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan

- 11/14/24 Session 2: Understanding Literacy Data

- 12/5/24 Session 3: Making Sense of Data Overload

- 1/23/25 Session 4: Local Control and Data Utilization

- 2/13/25 Session 5: Evaluating Curriculum and Instructional Practices

- **3/13/25 Session 6: Key Literacy Strategies and Concepts**

- **4/10/24 Session 7: Disciplinary Literacy and Supporting Adolescent Readers ([Register Here](#))**

- 5/8/25 Session 8: Monitoring Progress and Leveraging Resources

- 6/5/25 Session 9: Revising and Sustaining Literacy Plans

# Outcomes

- Reflect on curriculum evaluation as a part of a process for local, data-informed decision making for equity-centered literacy leadership

- Review key concepts and considerations in defining effective literacy instruction

- Explore factors, resources, and processes for identifying evidence-based, contextually relevant instructional practices and literacy strategies

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# Curriculum

## Explicit Curriculum

Overt learning opportunities *students* experience that are stated or printed in documents typically drawn from standards, policies, and related guidelines

## Implicit Curriculum or Hidden Curriculum

Learning opportunities *students* experience that may be intended or unintended, but not stated or written down

## Null Curriculum

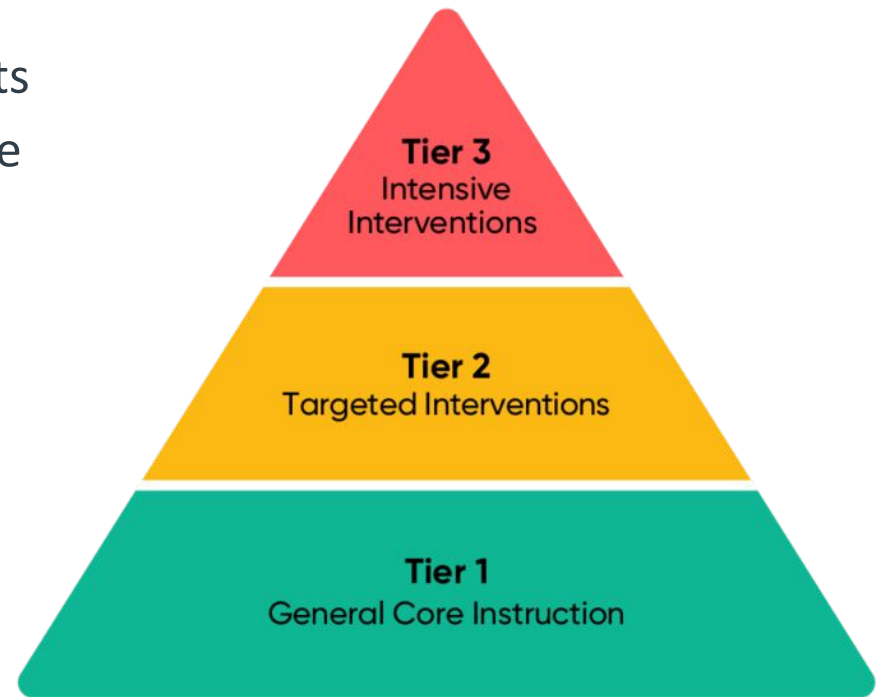What *students* do not have the opportunity to learn

(Eisner, 1994)

# Core Instructional Practices

Practices outlined across components of th the 2024 Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan are designed for Core Instruction.

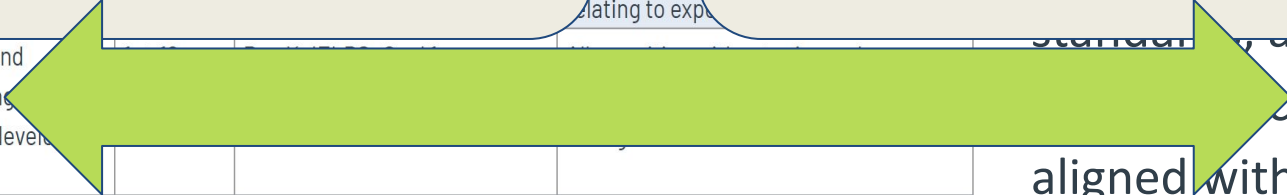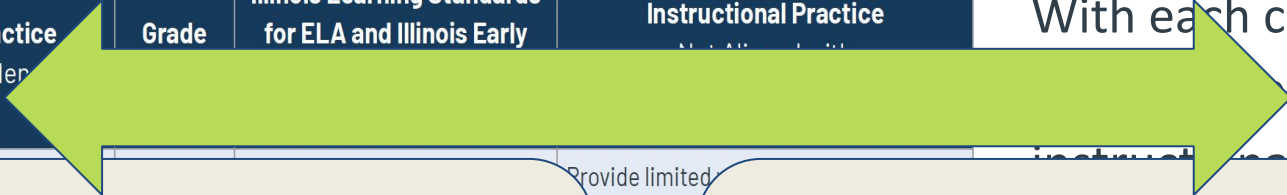Each and every student should have access to core instruction.

**Tier 3**
Intensive Interventions

**Tier 2**
Targeted Interventions

**Tier 1**
General Core Instruction

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# Rather than a Binary, Consider a Progression

| Core Instructional Practices | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Instructional Practice** Aligned with Evidence | **Grade** | **Illinois Learning Standards for ELA and Illinois Early** | **Instructional Practice** Not Aligned with |
| Foster structured discussions to develop oral language skills | | | Provide limited verbal discourse opportunities |
| Engage students in language activities vocabulary, comprehension and improve | | | emphasize ro... |
| Utilize read-aloud storytelling to develop oral language and | | | interactive elements relating to exp... |
| Promote oral planning and discussion before writing to organize thoughts and develop language skills. | | | |
| Encourage providing and receiving feedback on oral presentations or discussions to refine speaking and listening abilities. | K-12 | Pre-K: IELDS: Goal 1 K-12: CCRA.SL.3 | Focus solely on presentation content, neglecting oral communication feedback. |

**Aligned with Evidence**
Foster structured discussions to develop oral language skills.

**vs.**

**Not Aligned with Evidence**
Provide limited verbal discourse opportunities.

With each component, identifies a.) instructional practices evidence, extended levels, to standard, and d.) practices not aligned with evidence.

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# Building a Capacity for Leadership in Literacy

**Leaders capacity to lead for literacy begins with a solid base of knowledge and expertise.**

At its core, effective leadership in literacy instruction is about creating an environment where every student has the opportunity to become a proficient reader and a skilled communicator.

This **foundational knowledge is the bedrock** upon which leaders can construct such an environment, and it serves multiple critical purposes.

(Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, 2024, p. 131)

# ICPL Section 3: Effective Literacy Leadership

*Literacy Leaders* have several important **responsibilities**:

- Maintain and uphold the current **standards** and **practices** in literacy instruction.
- Develop a **forward-looking vision** for the institution, focusing on achieving literacy excellence.
- Possess a **comprehensive understanding** of the key **processes** and **practices** essential for literacy success.
- **Inspire and motivate teams** to **work collaboratively** towards **common literacy goals**.
- **Organize and lead teams in a cohesive manner**, ensuring aligned efforts towards improving literacy outcomes.
- **Manage and coordinate support and resources** for effective implementation of literacy programs and initiatives.

(Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, 2024, p. 131)

# Leadership Levers

- Cultivate a Passion for Literacy
- Prioritize Tailored Professional Development
- Encourage Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- Strengthen Data-Informed Decision-Making Skills
- Undertake Equity Appraisals
- Champion Culturally Sustaining Literacy Instruction
- Benchmark Performance
- Engage in Continuous Feedback and Sustained Support
- Align Leadership

(ICLP, 2024, p. 133-134)

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# ICPL Section 3: Strategic Literacy Leadership

**Identify pathways for developing and implementing strategic literacy leadership in support of continuous improvement**

1. What is resonating from our explorations of curriculum evaluation, literacy instructional practices, and literacy leadership?
2. What actions have you pursued (or are anticipating) for developing and implementing strategic literacy leadership?

**Resources:**

ICLP

Seven Components Poster

Curriculum Evaluation Tool

Literacy Curriculum Evaluation Rubric

# Outcomes

- Reflect on curriculum evaluation as a part of a process for local, data-informed decision making for equity-centered literacy leadership

- **Review key concepts and considerations in defining effective literacy instruction**

- Explore factors, resources, and processes for identifying evidence-based, contextually relevant instructional practices and literacy strategies

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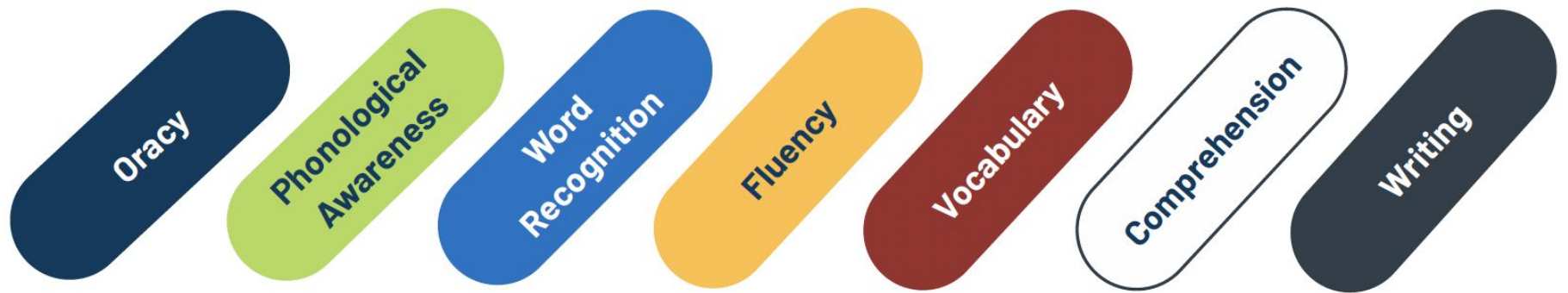
# Defining Literacy Instruction

What is effective literacy instruction?

What might it look like?

What might it sound like?

# Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

**7 COMPONENTS OF LITERACY**

Oracy  Phonological Awareness  Word Recognition  Fluency  Vocabulary  Comprehension  Writing

Individual practices or programs supported by scientific evidence. This evidence exists within a continuum of rigor, in which some well-studied practices are highly supported while others may be promising or emerging.

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# Maintaining an Equity-Focused Lens
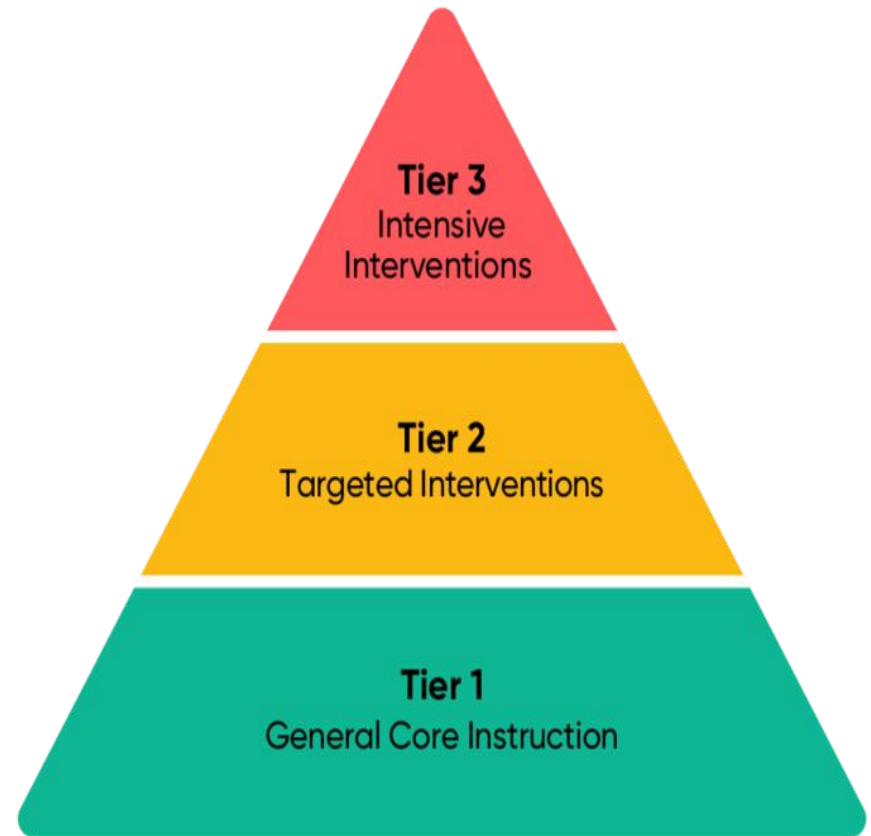
## Equity

**Giving everyone what they need to be successful.**

## Equality

**Treating Everyone the Same.**

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.**



Tier 3
Intensive Interventions

Tier 2
Targeted Interventions

Tier 1
General Core Instruction

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# Maintaining an Equity-Focused Lens

## Cultural Responsiveness

**The _deliberate_ recognition and inclusion of all forms of student diversity as a pool of resources from and toward which curriculum, instruction, and all aspects of school policy should be designed.**

**In practice, it means the alignment of curriculum and instruction with students' backgrounds, life experiences, and cultures.**

(ICLP, 2024, p. 183)

# Asset Pedagogies

| Culturally Relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1992; 1995) | Culturally Responsive (Gay, 2010) | Culturally Sustaining (Paris & Alim) |
|---|---|---|
| • **Academic Success** (instead of behavior and classroom management)<br>• **Cultural Competence** (instead of cultural assimilation)<br>• **Sociopolitical Consciousness** (instead of school-based tasks with no out-of-school application) | • Maintaining **high expectations** for all students<br>• Bridging any gaps between home and school practices<br>• Aiming to educate the **whole child**<br>• Identifying and **leveraging student strengths**<br>• Engaging students' **cultural knowledges**, practices, perspectives, and experiences<br>• **Critically questioning** normative schooling practices, curriculum, and assessments | • **Disrupting whiteness, ableism, patriarchy, homophobia,** and other **dominant systems of oppression**<br>• Recognizing **culture** as **complex**, intergenerational, constantly shifting, and situated in local communities<br>• Engaging in loving critique and **critical reflexivity** of our actions and beliefs<br>• Imagining, sustaining, and revitalizing a more socially just, pluralistic society<br>• Take up **joy** and **love** alongside **pain**<br>• Sustaining and reviving the lives and spirits of young people |

# Defining Literacy Instruction

**Effective Literacy Instruction**

Evidence-Based Practices: Individual & Collective Practices

**AND**

Equity-Focused Lens: Intentional Cultural Responsiveness through Asset Pedagogies

# Outcomes

- Reflect on curriculum evaluation as a part of a process for local, data-informed decision making for equity-centered literacy leadership

- Review key concepts and considerations in defining effective literacy instruction

- **Explore factors, resources, and processes for identifying and supporting evidence-based, contextually relevant instructional practices and methods**

# Important Terms

**Curriculum** - Curriculum is a set of academic content, instructional methods, and assessments that guide students' learning and development. It outlines what students should know and be able to do at each stage of their education.

**Program** - A structured set of activities and instruction designed to improve skills and knowledge.

**Instructional Practice** - how information is delivered, received, and experienced by students. It encompasses various approaches, including both teacher-directed and student-centered methods. Effective instructional practice aims to create meaningful learning experiences.

*"Structure active engagement with texts through discussions and reflective writing" (ICLP, p.57)*

**Instructional Method/Strategy/Technique** - a planned approach or specific action a teacher uses to deliver information and facilitate learning in a classroom, aiming to guide students towards acquiring knowledge and skills effectively; essentially, it's a deliberate way to teach a concept or subject matter.

Listen-Read Discuss Strategy, Paragraph Shrinking Strategy

# Factors to Consider

- **Identifying evidence-based, contextually relevant instructional practices and methods**
    - For whom is the practice appropriate (grade level, cultural and linguistic background)?
    - How often and for how long implementation should last?
    - What does implementation look/sound like?

- **Supporting evidence-based, contextually relevant instructional practices and methods**
    - How are teachers trained to implement practices?
    - How do teachers continue to develop their implementation?

# Training and Professional Development

Training

Purpose - Implement a practice/program

- Short term
- Direct instruction
- Systematic and explicit
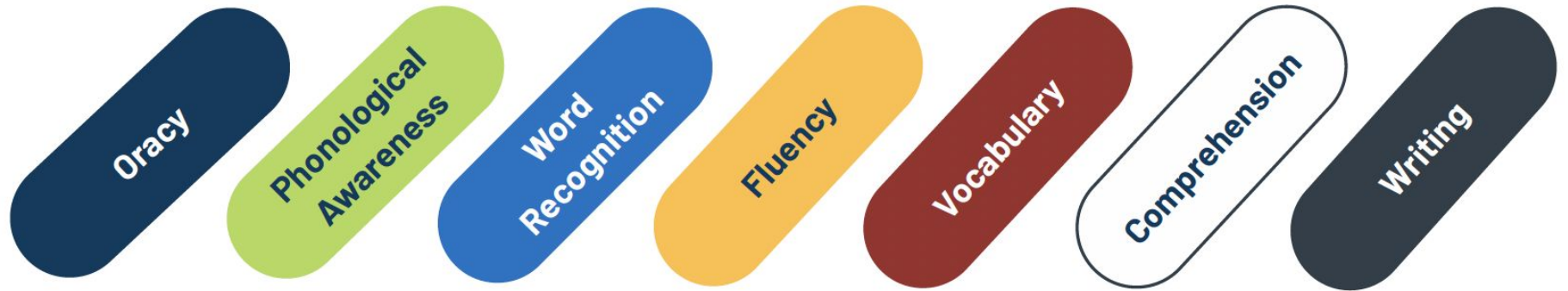- Scaffolded

Professional Learning

Purpose - Knowledge development and decision-making

- Long term
- Practice
- Discussion/Reflection
- Cycles of implementation

# Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

**7 COMPONENTS OF LITERACY**

Oracy | Phonological Awareness | Word Recognition | Fluency | Vocabulary | Comprehension | Writing

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# Evidence-Based Instruction

| What **IS** Evidence-Based Instruction? | What **IS NOT** Evidence-Based Instruction? |
|---|---|
| **A collection of research to inform instruction**<br>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. | **A program, an intervention, or a product you can buy**<br>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. |
| **Ever- evolving**<br>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. | **Complete and final**<br>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. |

ICLP, 2024, p. 23

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# Research- or Evidence-Based Instruction?

| Basic Research | Research-Based | Translational Research | Evidence-Based |
|---|---|---|---|
| Neuro-scientific, brain-based research that highlights cognition during reading.. | Strategies, interventions, programs are developed from basic research findings. | Strategies, interventions, programs are implemented and studied in practical contexts. | Positive findings from translation (applied) research build an evidence-base for a strategy, intervention, or program. |

# ESSA Tiers of Evidence

- **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.

**ICLP, 2024, p. 23**

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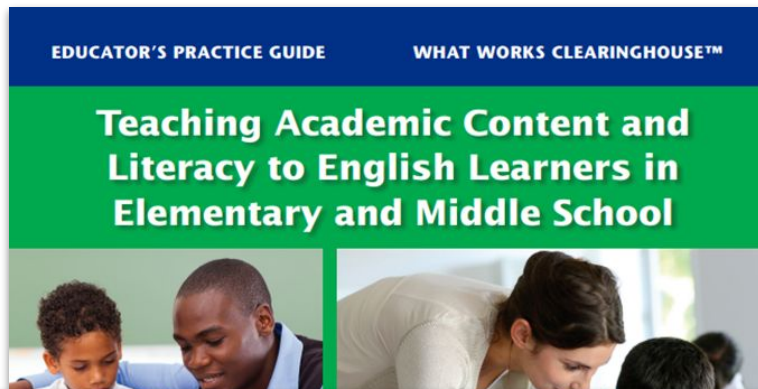**EDUCATION**

# 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
- 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

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# What Works Clearinghouse

**EDUCATOR'S PRACTICE GUIDE**     **WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE™**

## Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School

**Recommendation 1.** Teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across days using a variety of instructional activities . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

**Recommendation 2.** Integrate oral and written English language instruction into content area teaching . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

**Recommendation 3.** Provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

**Recommendation 4.** Provide small-group instructional intervention to students struggling in areas of literacy and English language development . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . **59**

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### How to Carry Out the Recommendation

1. Choose a brief, engaging piece of informational text that includes academic vocabulary as a platform for intensive academic vocabulary instruction.

After selecting the instructional objectives for the lesson, identify content-rich informational material—such as magazine or newspaper articles, letters to the editor, Op-Ed columns, informative or provocative website entries, or brief excerpts from texts or trade books used in the school—for anchoring in-depth instruction in academic vocabulary.[23] The panel believes that choosing accessible, yet content-rich material is fundamental to providing deep instruction in academic vocabulary. This position is also consistent with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, which call for rich informational text to serve as a platform for anchoring instruction about words and structured conversations involving the abstract language of academic disciplines.[24]

Choose a text that[25]

- Is brief, interesting, and engaging for the students;
- Contains a variety of target academic words to focus on;
- Connects to a given unit of study and builds the students' knowledge of a topic;
- Provides sufficient detail and examples for students to be able to comprehend the passage; and
- Contains ideas that can be discussed from a variety of perspectives.

The panel recommends using text at grade level even though some of the students in the class

23. Carlo et al. (2004); Lesaux et al. (2010); Lesaux et al. (in press).
24. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers (2010).
25. Carlo et al. (2004); Lesaux et al. (2010); Lesaux et al. (in press); Silverman and Hines (2009).

### Recommendation 1

*Teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities.*

- Choose a brief, engaging piece of informational text that includes academic vocabulary as a platform for intensive academic vocabulary instruction.
- Choose a small set of academic vocabulary for in-depth instruction.
- Teach academic vocabulary in depth using multiple modalities (writing, speaking, listening).
- Teach word-learning strategies to help students independently figure out the meaning of words.

# Reading Rockets

# Breakout

## Individually (3 minutes)

- Explore an unfamiliar resource from Slide 28
- Consider how it could be used to complement curriculum and support teacher knowledge and instructional practice

## Join a Breakout Room (7 minutes)

- Discuss what you found and how it could be used in your context to complement curriculum and support teacher knowledge and instructional practice

# ICPL Section 3: Effective Literacy Leadership

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- **Possess a comprehensive understanding of the key processes and practices essential for literacy success.**
- Inspire and motivate teams to work collaboratively towards common literacy goals.
- Organize and lead teams in a cohesive manner, ensuring aligned efforts towards improving literacy outcomes.
- Manage and coordinate support and resources for effective implementation of literacy programs and initiatives.

(Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan, 2024, p. 131)

# Develop a Process

Do you have/need a process in place for:

- Monitoring research to identify evidence-based instructional methods?
- Introducing new instructional methods, training teachers, and supporting ongoing development?
- Aligning evidence-based instructional methods with curriculum and programs?
- Assessing the effectiveness of evidence-based instructional methods in your context?

# Breakout

- What processes do you have in place to access and support evidence-based and contextually-relevant instruction?
- What processes do you want to develop to access and support evidence-based and contextually-relevant instruction?

# *Evaluation*

**Evaluation | Session 6: Key Literacy Strategies and Concepts**



Please complete the evaluation form for this session:

https://forms.office.com/r/SnGsZzH0n3

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# *Capacity Builders: ICLP Lead Team*

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Director of Professional Learning | South Cook ISC

**Dara Carr**
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ELA Principal Consultant| Illinois State Board of Education

**Jill Donnel**
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**Melissa Jones-Bromenshenkel**
Professor, Dept of Special Education|Eastern Illinois University
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# FY 2025 District Literacy Plan Implementation Grant

**This grant supports school districts in developing and implementing their Comprehensive Literacy Plans, enhancing literacy instruction, and expanding access to high-quality literacy interventions.**

## *Applications Opening Soon in IWAS*

**Supports Districts & ROEs in:**
✔ Developing & implementing **Comprehensive Literacy Plans**
✔ Enhancing literacy instruction & interventions
✔ Addressing local literacy needs with flexible funding

**Eligibility:** All public school districts & ROE/ISCs

**Requirement:** Complete the **District Literacy Plan survey** in IWAS

**Deadline: April 30, 2025** – Final deadline; risk of deobligation after this date

**Funding Allocations:** Based on student enrollment. View the allocations on **our website**

✉ Questions? **Email: literacy@isbe.net**

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# Questions

thank you