

RESEARCH-BASED PRINCIPLES



Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction

The National Institute for Literacy, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the US Department of Education sponsor The Partnership for Reading site, www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading. Described as a place that brings “scientific evidence to learning,” the Partnership offers detailed evidence of principles and practices for creating reader profiles, and teaching alphabetic, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. There is also information on the use of technology in the teaching of reading.

The Partnership offers a link to the detailed report on ABE reading instruction published in 2002. It both surveys the available research about reading instruction for adults and explains which K-12 principles and practices are most applicable to the teaching of adults. The entire report is available, but it is organized in sections so that you may easily choose to read only a section if you wish. A second link takes you to a section on ABE reading instruction practices. Here are short summaries of the research and statements of principles, trends or comments for procedures in the classroom. No detailed lesson plans are offered.

If you feel woefully unprepared to teach reading, this site is helpful because it offers a quick and thorough summary of the state of research as it is applied to adult education classrooms. This site emphasizes the theory behind actions in the classroom, though, not specific lesson plans for literacy. Still, it provides an accessible list of ideas, many of which will affirm your experiences in the classroom and offer you that weighty scientific evidence helpful in petitioning for needed classroom changes or enhancements.

SUMMING IT UP

Phonemic Awareness

- Phonemic awareness is
- the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds—phonemes— in spoken words.
- Phonemic awareness is important because
- it improves student’s word reading and reading comprehension.
 - it helps children learn to spell.
- Phonemic awareness can be developed through a number of activities, including asking children to
- identify phonemes,
 - categorize phonemes,
 - blend phonemes to form words,
 - segment words into phonemes,
 - delete or add phonemes to form new words, and
 - substitute phonemes to make new words.
- Phonemic awareness
- when children are taught to manipulate phonemes by using the letters of the alphabet.
 - when instruction focuses on only one or two rather than several types of phoneme manipulation.

Phonics Instruction

- Phonics instruction
- helps children learn the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
- Phonics instruction is important because
- it leads to an understanding of the alphabetic principle — the systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds.
- Programs of phonics instruction are effective when they are
- **systematic**—the plan of instruction includes a carefully selected set of letter-sound relationships that are organized into a logical sequence.
 - **explicit**—the programs provide teachers with precise directions for the teaching of these relationships.

Effective phonics programs provide

- ample opportunities for children to apply what they are learning about letters and sounds to the reading of words, sentences, and stories.

Systematic and explicit phonics instruction

- significantly improves children’s word recognition, spelling, and reading comprehension.
- is most effective when it begins in kindergarten or first grade.

Fluency

Fluency is

- the ability to read a text accurately and quickly.

Fluency is important because

- it frees students to understand what they read.

Reading fluency can be developed

- by modeling fluent reading
- by having students engage in repeated oral reading.

Monitoring student progress in reading fluency

- is useful in evaluating instruction and setting instructional goals
- can be motivating to students.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to

- the words we must know to communicate effectively.
- **Oral** vocabulary refers to words that we use in speaking or recognize in listening.
- **Reading** vocabulary refers to words we recognize or use in print.

Vocabulary is important because

- beginning readers use their oral vocabulary to make sense of the words they see in print.
- readers must know what most of the words mean before they can understand what they are reading.

Vocabulary can be developed

- **indirectly**, when students engage daily in oral language, listen to adults read to them, and read extensively on their own.
- **directly**, when students are explicitly taught both individual words and word learning strategies.

Text Comprehension

Text comprehension is important because

- comprehension is the reason for reading.

Text comprehension is

- purposeful.
- active.

Text comprehension can be developed

- by teaching comprehension strategies.

Text comprehension strategies can be taught

- through explicit instruction.
- through cooperative learning.
- by helping readers use strategies flexibly and in combination.

Source: www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading