Structured Literacy™ in the General Education Classroom

Zoe Ann Alvarez and Tawnya Yates

Objectives:

- Understand the elements and principles of Structured Literacy™
- Distinguish research based instruction from evidence based instruction
- Become informed, knowledgeable consumers equipped to evaluate curriculum to best meet the needs of all students

"The most important tool in the classroom is a really knowledgeable teacher" (David Paige quoted by Emily Hanford, 2020).

Percentage of U.S. students proficient in reading

[Chart showing percentage of U.S. students proficient in reading]
2/14/20

A. All first grade students shall be screened for dyslexia.

B & C. Students (all) with characteristics of dyslexia shall receive appropriate evidence-based interventions with progress monitoring.

E. Districts and Charter Schools shall develop and implement a literacy professional development plan that includes a detailed framework for structured literacy training by a licensed and accredited teacher preparation provider and training in evidence-based reading.

F. School districts and charter schools shall train school administrators and teachers who teach reading to implement appropriate evidence-based reading interventions. School districts and charter schools shall train special education teachers to provide structured literacy for students who are identified with dyslexia as a specific learning disability and who are eligible for special education services.
GOOD NEWS!
Most reading difficulties can be resolved or greatly diminished
Four facts underscore an urgent need to act

1. About 35% of US 4th graders read below the basic level

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) consistently finds that about 35% of US 4th graders read at a level that is below basic. So, in an average class of 15 4th graders, about 5-6 students cannot read at a basic level. Most are capable of learning to read at higher levels.

2. Children with dyslexia are in every classroom

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) estimates that 10-20% of the population as a whole may have symptoms of dyslexia. Even using IDA’s conservative estimate (10%), as many as 3-6 students in the 4th grade class may have symptoms of dyslexia. Most probably are among those reading below basic. However, some students with dyslexia may read above basic and may not be identified for Special Education. They may be capable of much more, but struggle just to keep up.
Evidence Based vs. Research Based

Dr. Sally Shaywitz explains before Congress the meaning of evidence based. To say that something is "evidence-based" means that there have been unbiased studies evaluating the effectiveness of the program.
“Explicit teaching of alphabetic decoding skills is helpful for all children, harmful for none, and crucial for some” (Snowling, Hulme, Snow and Juell 2005).

Structured Literacy™

- Prepares students to decode words in an explicit and systematic manner and is marked by several elements
  - Phonology
  - Sound-Symbol Association
  - Syllable Instruction
  - Morphology
  - Syntax
  - Semantics
Structured Literacy™ instruction is marked by several elements:

**Phonology**
- **Phonology** is the study of sound structure of spoken words
  - Includes rhyming, counting words in spoken sentences, and clapping syllables in spoken words
  - The ability to segment words into their component sounds (phonemes)
  - **Phoneme** is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds in the language
    - *cap* has three phonemes (/k/, /ă/, /p/), and the word *clasp* has five phonemes (/k/, /l/, /ă/, /s/, /p/)

**Structured Literacy™ instruction is marked by several elements:**

**Sound-Symbol Association**
- Map the phonemes to symbols or printed letters
- Sound-symbol association must be taught and mastered in two directions: visual to auditory (reading) and auditory to visual (spelling)
- Master the blending of sounds and letters into words as well as the segmenting of whole words into the individual sounds

**Structured Literacy™ instruction is marked by several elements:**

**Syllable Instruction**
- A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound
- Instruction includes teaching of the six basic syllable types in the English language
  - Closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, final stable syllable, r-controlled, and vowel pair
  - Knowledge of syllable types is an important organizing idea to better determine the sound of the vowel in the syllable
  - Syllable division rules heighten the reader’s awareness of where a long, unfamiliar word is divided for improved accuracy in reading the word
Morphology

- A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language
- Includes the study of base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes
  - Instructor
  - Root: struct - to build
  - Prefix: in means in or into
  - Suffix: or, which means one who
  - An instructor is one who builds knowledge in his or her students
Structured Literacy™ instruction is marked by several elements:

Understanding morphemes also assists students with spelling.

Will all students who show the characteristics of dyslexia qualify for special education services?

Notice how the spelling of Ish is determined by the morphology.

Syntax

- Syntax is the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning
- Includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language

Semantics

- Semantics is that aspect of language concerned with meaning
- Instruction in the comprehension of written language
Structured Literacy™ is distinctive in the principles that guide **HOW** critical elements are taught:

- **Systematic and Cumulative**
  - Systematic means that the organization of material follows the logical order of the language.
  - The sequence must begin with the easiest and most basic concepts and elements and progress methodically to more difficult concepts and elements.
  - Cumulative means each step must be based on concepts previously learned to mastery.

- **Explicit Instruction**
  - Deliberate teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction.
  - It is not assumed that students will naturally deduce these concepts on their own.
Structured Literacy™ is distinctive in the principles that guide HOW critical elements are taught:

- **Diagnostic Teaching**
  - Instruction is based on careful and continuous assessment, both informally (for example, observation) and formally (for example, with standardized measures)
  - The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity
  - Automaticity is critical to freeing all of the student’s attention and cognitive resources for comprehension and expression

- **Multisensory and Multimodal Reading Instruction**
  - Simultaneous use of two or three learning modalities
  - Includes listening, speaking, moving, touching, reading, and/or writing
  - To increase engagement and enhance memory
Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy

Balanced literacy is a philosophical orientation that assumes that reading and writing achievement are developed through instruction and support in multiple environments using various approaches that differ by level of teacher support and child control (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).
Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy

According to a national survey conducted by Education Week Research Center, nearly 70% of K-2 and special education reading teachers indicate they are using balanced literacy.

These teachers described balance literacy as:
• A combination of phonics and whole language
• Guided reading or leveled reading
• A program that bases instruction on all five major components of literacy

Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy

Structured Literacy
Spelling – Students are introduced to a sound/symbol correspondence in isolation, they apply the learning to real and pseudo words in isolation, then phrases, then continuous text.

- Phoneme/grapheme relationships progress from simple to complex.
- Words are organized by syllable types.

Balanced Literacy
Spelling – weekly lists may come from a basal text and may target a sound with various spellings.

For example:
- o
- o-e
- ow
- oie
-ough
**Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy**

**Structured Literacy**
- Sound/Spelling Wall – Students are encouraged to identify the sounds within words and consider the visual representation of the sound.

**Balanced Literacy**
- Word Wall – words are often organized alphabetically and may contain single or multisyllabic words, a variety of syllable types, and may be regular or irregular for spelling.

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**Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy**

**Structured Literacy**
- Decodable Readers – texts that have been carefully sequenced in order to align to the letter-sound relationships and syllable types previously taught and allow opportunities to apply learning of new phoneme-grapheme knowledge to continuous texts.

**Balanced Literacy**
- Leveled Readers – books are placed into complexity levels according to text features such as:
  - Book and print features
  - Content, themes, and ideas
  - Text structure
  - Language and literary elements.

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**Structured Literacy™ in contrast to Balanced Literacy**

**Structured Literacy**
- Prompting may encourage students to divert their attention from the print and rely on meaning and pictures.

**Balanced Literacy**
- Prompting based on sound/symbol correspondences and syllable types.
  1. The teacher may point or draw attention to a letter, chunk, or syllable.
  2. The teacher may provide a verbal reminder “dge makes the /j/ sound.”
  3. The teacher may model decoding left to right.
"The three-cueing system is the way poor readers read," said Kilpatrick.

And if teachers use the cueing system to teach reading, Kilpatrick says they're not just teaching children the habits of poor readers; they are actually impeding the orthographic mapping process.42

"The minute you ask them just to pay attention to the first letter or look at the picture, look at the context, you're drawing their attention away from the very thing that they need to interact with in order for them to read the word (and) remember the word," Kilpatrick said. In this way, he said, three cueing can actually prevent the critical learning that's necessary for a child to become a skilled reader.
David Liben and David Paige advocate for a Structured Literacy approach to “reduce the disadvantage students coming from less language-rich environments might have in these essential early years.”

Louisa Moats and the CCSS

The standards obscure the critical causal relationships among components, chiefly the foundational skills and the higher level skills of comprehension that depend on fluent, accurate reading. Foundations should be first!

The categories of the standards obscure the interdependence of decoding, spelling, and knowledge of language. The standards treat the foundational language, reading, and writing skills as if they should take minimal time to teach and as if they are relatively easy to teach and to learn. They are not.

What is good for older students (e.g., the emphasis on text complexity, comprehension of difficult text, written composition, use of internet resources) is not necessarily good for younger students who need to acquire the basic skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Novice readers (typically through grade 3) need a stronger emphasis on the foundational skills of reading, language, and writing than do the “higher level” academic activities that depend on those foundations until they are fluent readers.

The Center for Development and Learning

Structured Literacy™ Training

For a list of accredited teacher training programs, visit dyslexiada.org/accredited-teacher-training-programs/

Many of these accredited programs use a Structured Literacy™ approach as part of the practicum process.
Structured Literacy™ Training

Structured Literacy™ programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The programs below were listed in &quot;A Powerful Approach to Reading Instruction&quot; by Jessica Hamman, February 2018</th>
<th>The programs below were listed in &quot;Why a Structured Phonics Program is Effective&quot; by David Liben and David Paige</th>
<th>Additional Structured Literacy programs to consider:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Wilson Fundations (pre-k – 3rd) and Wilson Reading System (2nd – adult)</td>
<td>• American Reading Company</td>
<td>• Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing Program (LPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Barton Reading System</td>
<td>• Core Knowledge Language Arts</td>
<td>• Basic Language Skills</td>
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<td>• Slingerland</td>
<td>• EL Education</td>
<td>• Take Flight</td>
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<td>• Language Live!</td>
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<td>• Lexia</td>
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The above programs are provided as a reference and are not to be considered as an endorsement.

Structured Literacy™ programs

Tools available from the NJ Dyslexia Handbook
References and Additional Resources:

“A Major Step Forward” – Dr. Sally Shaywitz writes about the September 18 Congressional hearing on “The Science of Dyslexia”

An Explanation of Structured Literacy and a Comparison to Balanced Literacy
http://www.readingresearch.org/blog/structured-and-balanced-literacy/

At a Loss for Words: How a Flawed Idea is Teaching Millions of Kids to be Poor Readers

Getting Reading Right
https://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/structured-literacy.pdf

International Dyslexia Association Accredited Teacher Training Programs
http://dyslexiaida.org/accredited-teaching-training-programs/

Structured Literacy and Typical Literacy Practices Louise Spear-Swerling

References and Additional Resources:

International Dyslexia Association: Effective Reading Instruction for Students with Dyslexia
http://dyslexiaida.org/reading/instruction-for-students-with-dyslexia/

International Dyslexia Association: Dyslexia in the Classroom, What Every Teacher Needs to Know
http://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-in-the-classroom/

International Dyslexia Association: Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading
http://dyslexiaida.org/practice-standards/

International Dyslexia Association: Most Reading Difficulties can be Resolved or Diminished
https://dyslexiaida.org/practice-standards/review.html

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report Card: Reading
https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/achievement/?grade=4

The New Jersey Dyslexia Handbook A Guide to Early Literacy Development & Reading Struggles

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International Dyslexia Association: Effective Reading Instruction for Students with Dyslexia
http://dyslexiaida.org/reading/instruction-for-students-with-dyslexia/

International Dyslexia Association: Dyslexia in the Classroom, What Every Teacher Needs to Know
http://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-in-the-classroom/

International Dyslexia Association: Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading
http://dyslexiaida.org/practice-standards/

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http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/achievement/?grade=4

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