Dyslexia and Structured Literacy Fact Sheet

Written by Belinda Dekker [Dyslexia Support Australia](https://dekkerdyslexia.wordpress.com/) https://dekkerdyslexia.wordpress.com/

Structured Literacy

- Structured literacy is a scientifically researched based approach to the teaching of reading. Structured literacy can be in the form of teachers trained in the use of structured literacy methodologies and programs that adhere to the fundamental and essential components of structured literacy.

- Structure means that there is a step by step clearly defined systematic process to the teaching of reading. Including a set procedure for introducing, reviewing and practicing essential concepts. Concepts have a clearly defined sequence from simple to more complex. Each new concept builds upon previously introduced concepts.

- Knowledge is cumulative and the program or teacher will use continuous assessment to guide a student's progression to the next clearly defined step in the program. An important fundamental component is the automaticity of a concept before progression.

- Skills are explicitly or directly taught to the student with clear explanations, examples and modelling of concepts.

'The term "Structured Literacy" is not designed to replace Orton Gillingham, Multi-Sensory or other terms in common use. It is an umbrella term designed to describe all of the programs that teach reading in essentially the same way'. Hal Malchow. President, International Dyslexia Association

....

A Position Statement on Approaches to Reading Instruction Supported by Learning Difficulties Australia

"LDA supports approaches to reading instruction that adopt an explicit structured approach to the teaching of reading and are consistent with the scientific evidence as to how children learn to read and how best to teach them.

Programs that follow an explicit structured approach to the teaching of reading include as an integral part of the teaching program specific instruction in phonology, sound-symbol associations, as well as syllable structures, morphology, syntax and semantics as a basis for

developing accurate and fluent word reading and reading comprehension. Such programs conform to the definition of **'structured literacy programs' as adopted by the International Dyslexia Association in July 2014.**

"We use the term structured literacy to encompass instruction that emphasizes the structure of language, including the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), meaning relationships among words and their referents (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse." The Centre for Effective Reading Instruction https://effectivereading.org/certification/the-exam/

STRUCTURED LITERACY PRIMER

Structured Literacy's ELEMENTS work together.

PHONOLOGY · SOUND-SYMBOL · SYLLABLES · MORPHOLOGY · SYNTAX · SEMANTICS

Structured Literacy's Evidence–Based Elements

Phonology (study of sound structure of spoken words) is a key element of Structured Literacy Instruction. **Phonemic awareness** (ability to distinguish / segment / blend / manipulate sounds relevant to reading/spelling) is central to phonology.

Sound-Symbol Association Once students develop phoneme awareness, they must learn the **alphabetic principle**—how to map phonemes to letters (**graphemes**) and vice versa.

Syllables Knowing the six syllable / vowel grapheme types helps readers associate vowel spellings with vowel sounds. Syllable division rules help readers divide / decode unfamiliar words.

Morphology A **morpheme** is the smallest unit of meaning in language. Studying base elements and affixes helps readers decode and unlock the meanings of complex words.

Syntax—the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence—includes grammar, sentence structure, and the mechanics of language.

Semantics Semantics is concerned with meaning. The Structured Literacy curriculum (from the start) includes instruction in the comprehension and appreciation of written language.

STRUCTURED LITERACY PRIMER

These PRINCIPLES guide how Structured Literacy's elements are taught.
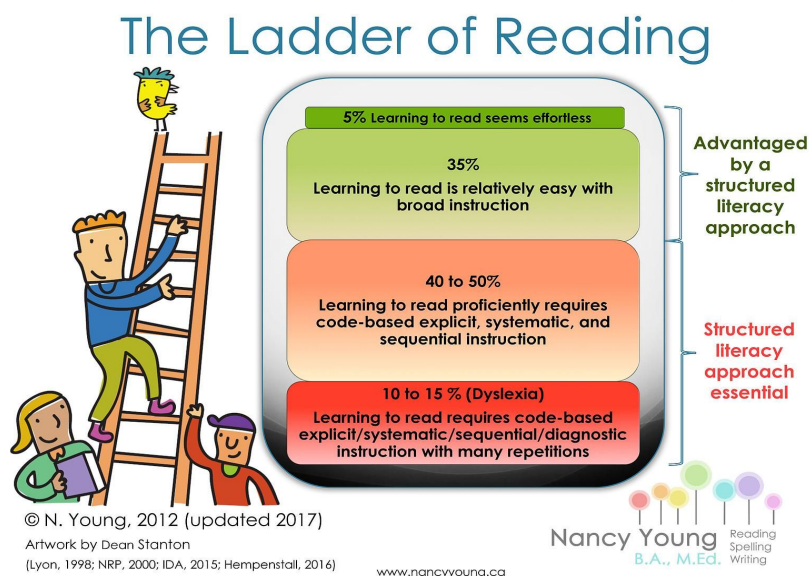
SYSTEMATIC & CUMULATIVE · EXPLICIT · DIAGNOSTIC

Structured Literacy's Evidence-Based Teaching Principles

Systematic & Cumulative
Structured Literacy teaching is systematic and cumulative. **Systematic** means that organization of material follows the logical order of language. The sequence begins with the easiest and most basic concepts and elements and progresses methodically to the more difficult. **Cumulative** means each step is based on concepts previously learned.

Explicit Structured Literacy instruction requires direct teaching of concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction and does not assume students deduce concepts. (While **multisensory teaching** lacks the extensive research validating Structured Literacy's other teaching principles, decades of clinical results support efficacy of simultaneous association of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic-motor modalities for enhancing memory and learning in students with dyslexia.)

Diagnostic Teachers must be adept at individualizing instruction (even within groups) based on careful and continuous assessment, both informal (e.g., observation) and formal (e.g., with standardized measures). Content must be mastered to the degree of automaticity needed to free attention and cognitive resources for comprehension and oral/written expression.

The Ladder of Reading

The Ladder of Reading

5% Learning to read seems effortless	Advantaged by a structured literacy approach
35% Learning to read is relatively easy with broad instruction	
40 to 50% Learning to read proficiently requires code-based explicit, systematic, and sequential instruction	Structured literacy approach essential
10 to 15 % (Dyslexia) Learning to read requires code-based explicit/systematic/sequential/diagnostic instruction with many repetitions	

© N. Young, 2012 (updated 2017)
Artwork by Dean Stanton
(Lyon, 1998; NRP, 2000; IDA, 2015; Hempenstall, 2016)
www.nancyyoung.ca

Nancy Young
B.A., M.Ed.
Reading Spelling Writing

Multisensory

Structured literacy programs and approaches that follow Orton-Gillingham methodologies will have a multisensory component. Whilst all other elements of a structured literacy approach or program have been extensively scientifically validated adequate research is not yet available to support the multisensory component.

"There is a growing body of evidence supporting multisensory teaching. Current research, much of it supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), converges on the efficacy of explicit structured language teaching for children with dyslexia. Young children in structured, sequential, multisensory intervention programs, who were also trained in phonemic awareness, made significant gains in decoding skills. These multisensory approaches used direct, explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships, syllable patterns, and meaning word parts. Studies in clinical settings showed similar results for a wide range of ages and abilities."
ORTON-GILLINGHAM-BASED AND/OR MULTISENSORY STRUCTURED LANGUAGE APPROACHES *International Dyslexia Association 2000*

Structured literacy programs

MultiLit reading programs, Read Write Inc., Sounds-Write, Get Reading Right, Barton Reading Program , Lindamood Bell

Structured Reading pedagogy (teaching methodologies)

Orton- Gillingham Approach

Multisensory Structured Language Approach

This list is in no way complete. There are many programs and tutors who adhere to a structured literacy approach. Inclusion in this fact sheet does not represent an endorsement. Please seek professional advice.

References (n.d.). Retrieved July 07, 2017, from http://www.nancyyoung.ca/research-and-link

What Is Structured Literacy? (n.d.). Retrieved July 07, 2017, from https://dyslexiaida.org/what-is-structured-literacy

Structured Literacy: A New Term to Unify Us and Sell What We Do. (n.d.). Retrieved July 07, 2017, from https://dyslexiaida.org/structured-literacy/

IDA Dyslexia Handbook: What Every Family Should Know. (n.d.). Retrieved July 07, 2017, from https://dyslexiaida.org/ida-dyslexia-handbook/

Read about it : scientific evidence for effective teaching of reading / Kerry Hempenstall ; editedby Jennifer   Buckingham. 2016 research report

Code Read Dyslexia Network Australia

Get in contact with us:
info@codereadnetwork.org
PO Box 493
CURTIN ACT 2605
Australia