

Literacy Terms Dictionary



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Literacy Terms Dictionary

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BEGINNING READING TERMS

Auditory Discrimination	The ability to identify and distinguish between different sounds and words.	Emergent Literacy	A view that literacy learning begins at birth and is encouraged by having children participate early in a range of literacy and language activities. Activities formerly identified as pretend reading and/or scribble writing are now recognized as valid, systematic, important developmental steps through which children move on the way to correct or conventional reading and writing.
Concept of Print	The knowledge of written text that children must develop to become proficient (e.g. matching written words to spoken words, moving through a book from front to back, reading from top to bottom).	Emergent Reader	A young reader who demonstrates behaviors as described above in Emergent Literacy .
Decodable Text	Text that is written for beginning readers. Contains a high number of regularly spelled, decodable words, along with a set of high-frequency words.	Fluent Reading	Fast, smooth, effortless and automatic reading of text (can be silent reading or not) with attention focused on the meaning of the text.
Decoding	The ability to translate the alphabet letters into recognizable sounds (e.g., saying /f/ for the letter f) and to use that knowledge to sound out and pronounce words.	Grapheme	A letter that represents a sound (e.g., f represents /f/).
Developmental Spelling	Spelling patterns that young students demonstrate as they move toward correct or conventional spelling. Also, referred to as emergent , invented , or temporary spelling.	Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence	*The relationship between a grapheme and the phoneme(s) it represents; letter-sound correspondence, as c representing /k/ in <i>cat</i> and /s/ in <i>cent</i> .

BEGINNING READING TERMS



High Frequency Words The most common words in our spoken and written Language. (e.g., *the, a, is, of*)
Note: Sight Words

Onset All the sounds in a word that come before the first vowel (e.g., the /b/ in the word *blank*, the /sh/ in the word *ship*).

Phoneme The units of speech that make up words and make a difference to meaning. If a student changes the first phoneme in the word *sat* from /s/ to /p/, it changes the meaning of the word. Phonemes are not letters; the number of phonemes in a word does not always match the number of letters (e.g.; *dog* and *chin* each have three phonemes: /d/.../o/.../g/, /ch/.../i/.../n/).

Phonemic Awareness A child's understanding that every word is made up of a sequence of phonemes. The phonemes that make up a word can be heard when the word is said slowly (e.g.; *rope* is made up of three phonemes: /r/, /o/, /p/.

Phonemic Awareness (continued)

It differs only by one phoneme from *rip, soap, ripe, road,* and *rode*. Phonemic awareness is key to understanding the logic behind the alphabetic nature of our language and thus the ability to learn to spell, use phonics, and learn to read.

Phonics

The instructional practices that teach children how the spellings of words are related to speech sounds in systematic ways. Learning phonics presumes phonemic awareness. Students who have persistent difficulties in learning and using phonics to decode words may well need assistance in strengthening their phonemic awareness.

Phonogram

*A graphic character or symbol that can represent a phonetic sound, phoneme, or word.

Rime

The first vowel in a word and all the sounds that follow (e.g.; /ank/ in *blank* and /ip/ in *ship*).

Sight Words

The words a student can read and pronounce accurately and automatically, with no necessity for decoding or guessing.

BEGINNING READING TERMS

Tracking

The understanding of and ability to read print from left to right and from the top to bottom of a page. Also described as the ability to match a spoken word to the print that matches the word.

Word Attack

Tasks that readers perform when they do not instantly recognize a word (e.g., left-to-right blending of sounds, using known parts of words, phonics, structural analysis, context, beginning sound + pictures).

Word Wall

A chart or charts that categorize important vocabulary by beginning sounds. Word walls are used for various word-study activities, including practice with writing.





COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

“Pat the Proficient Reader”



Connect Known to New

Proficient readers activate relevant, prior knowledge (schema) before, during, and after reading text. They use prior knowledge to build mental models to use to evaluate what they read.

Determine Importance

Proficient readers determine the most important ideas and themes in a text. They use their conclusions about important ideas to focus their reading and to exclude peripheral or unimportant details from memory.

Ask Questions

Proficient readers ask questions of themselves, the authors, and the texts they read. They use their questions to clarify and to focus their reading.

Form Sensory Images

Proficient readers create visual and other sensory images from text during and after reading. These images may include visual, auditory, and other sensory connections to the text. Proficient readers use these images to deepen their understanding of the text.

Infer Meaning

Proficient readers draw inferences from text. They use their prior knowledge (schema) and textual information to draw conclusions, make critical judgements, and form unique interpretations from text. Inferences may occur in the form of conclusions, predictions, or new ideas.

Synthesize Ideas

Proficient readers retell and synthesize what they have read. They attend to the most important information and to the clarity of the synthesis itself. They synthesize to better understand what they have read.

Solve Reading Problems

Proficient readers utilize a variety of fix-up strategies to repair comprehension when it breaks down. They select appropriate fix-up strategies from one of the six language systems (pragmatic, schematic, semantic, syntactic, lexical, or grapho-phonetic) to best solve a given problem in a given reading situation.

GENERAL TERMS

Comprehension The act of constructing meaning from text. It includes strategies or processes such as the reader activating existing knowledge, making connections between text and the existing knowledge, questioning the text, visualizing, inferencing, summarizing, synthesizing, and self-monitoring.

Developmental A pattern of change that moves from novice through advanced behaviors (e.g., crawling leads to walking; emergent spelling leads to correct spelling).

Environmental Print Common words and messages that guide us through our world (e.g., signs, advertisements, labels, directions).

Fluency A reader's expression, phrasing, and speed as she/he reads a text. The term "fluent" describes a level of automatic, accurate word recognition and reading that is correlated with better comprehension.

Fluent Reader Any person who reads smoothly, without hesitation and with comprehension.

Graded Word Lists Leveled lists of words used to assess word identification skills and the ability to decode words of varying difficulties.

Informal Reading Inventory A graded set of passages beginning at a Pre-Primer or Primer level (kindergarten or first grade) and extending up to junior high or high school; used to estimate a student's independent, instructional, or frustration reading level (see reading levels), as well as determine strengths and weaknesses, and strategies in decoding and comprehension.

Listening Comprehension Level The highest readability or grade level of material that can be comprehended well when it is read aloud to the student. Listening comprehension level is useful in estimating the student's potential silent reading level.

GENERAL TERMS

Listening Level (con't) (75% comprehension is often used as a standard in judging whether a student comprehends material at this level.)

Literal Comprehension The reader's ability to recall ideas and information that is directly stated in the text.

Miscue An error when reading orally; any deviation from the text.

Narrative A text genre that tells a story. Generally includes the elements of character, setting, plot, and theme. Varieties include first-person narratives, fictional stories, and biographies.

Reading Proficiency Reading in which comprehension, fluency, decoding, and rate are well developed.

Running Record A written record (using a series of symbols) that documents how a student read aloud a text and provides information about a student's current reading proficiency. Includes mispronunciations, self-corrections, re-reading, record of accuracy, etc.

Self-selection Students select their own texts to read. Sometimes scaffolded by the teacher (e.g.; showing students how to select a text at the right reading and interest level).

Sight Words The words a student can read and pronounce accurately and automatically, with no necessity for decoding or guessing.



GENRE

Adventure Story	*A narrative that features the unknown, uncharted, or unexpected, with elements of danger, excitement, and risk.
Cumulative Tale	*A story with many details repeated until the climax, as in “The House That Jack Built”; predictable text.
Expository/ Informational Text	A text genre that provides information, persuades, explains, and is based in truth, as opposed to fiction. Examples can include textbooks, newspaper articles, some magazines, and encyclopedias.
Fable	A brief story, usually with animal characters, that states a didactic theme or moral.
Fairy Tales	*A folk story about real-life problems, usually with imaginary characters and magical events.
Fantasy	A story about the non-existent or unreal in which action may depend on magic or the supernatural.

Fiction	The type of book or story which is written about imaginary characters and events and not based on real people or events.
Folktale	*A narrative form, as an epic, legend, myth, fable, etc. that is or has been retold within a culture for generations and is well known through repeated storytelling.
Historical Fiction	*A long narrative of past events and characters, partly historical but largely imaginative. <i>Note: Determining what is historical fact and what is imaginative is sometimes a problem for the reader.</i>
Myth	An ancient story or set of stories, especially explaining in a literary way the early history of a group of people or about natural events and facts.

GENRE

Narrative	A text genre that tells a story. Generally includes the elements of character, setting, plot, and theme. Varieties include first-person narratives, fictional stories, and biographies.	Prose	*Written or spoken language that is not verse.
Non-fiction	*Prose designed primarily to explain, argue, or describe rather than to entertain; specifically a type of prose other than fiction but including biography and autobiography.	Realistic Fiction	*A story that attempts to portray characters and events as they actually are.
Novel	An extended fictional work in prose; usually in the form of a story.	Science Fiction	A story that relies on invention or extension of nature's laws, no the supernatural or magical.
Pattern Book	*A book with a predictable plot structure and often written in predictable text.	Series Book	*(1) One of a group of books having a common set of elements, written by the same author or by a succession of authors. (2) One of a collection of informational books, usually with the same format but on different subjects.
Picture Book	A book that relies on pictures to enlarge or illuminated the text; the pictures may even provide a correlative story of their own.	Survival Story	*A narrative, real or imagined, that describes the courageous spirit of characters who overcome the problems of frontier life, war, dangerous adventure, etc.
Predictable Book	Books that repeat lines and patterns of text. Repetition makes the text memorable and therefore, easier for young students to remember, read, and reread.	Tall Tale	*A story about impossible or exaggerated happenings related in a realistic, matter-of-fact, and often humorous way.

POETRY / VERSE

Acrostic

A poem where the first letters of each line are aligned vertically to form a word. The word often is the subject of the poem from which other words, phrases, or sentences are written.

Cinquain

A stanza of five lines; specifically, one that has successive lines of two, four, six, eight, and two syllables.

Limerick

A five line humorous verse with traditional rhythm and rhyme pattern of *aabbaa*.

Nursery Rhyme

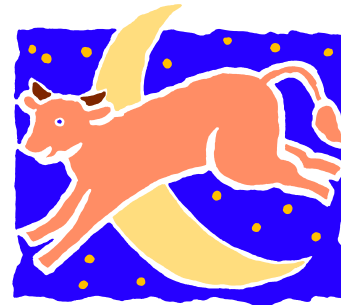
*Folk verse for very young children, as *Hey, diddle, diddle! The cat and the fiddle, The cow jumped over the moon; The little dog laughed To see such sport/ And the dish ran away with the spoon.*

Poetry

Literature in metrical form—verse of “high merit”—the major forms of which are epic, dramatic, and lyric poetry.
Note: While all poetry is verse, verse such as doggerel is not poetry.

Verse

1) a single line of a poem, 2) a rhyming metrical structure with less emotional intensity than poetry.



READING ERRORS (MISCUES)

Insertion

*The addition of one or more words in the oral reading of text; one of several types of oral reading errors commonly recorded in testing oral reading.

Substitution

*The replacing of one or more words in oral reading of text with another word or words, one of several types of errors commonly recorded in testing oral reading.

Miscue

An error when reading orally; any deviation from text.

Note: Substitutions often make contextual sense to the reader but bear little or no phonic resemblance to the word or words they replace.

Omission

*The leaving out of one or more words in the oral reading of text; one of several types of oral reading errors commonly recorded in testing oral reading.

Repetition

The repeating of a word or words within the text.

Reversal

The reading of word within the text in reverse order.

Self-Correction

The correction of miscues by the reader within a reasonable time when reading the text.



READING LEVELS

Independent Reading Level

The child can do the task on his/her own without any kind of assistance.

- That level at which the student can read fluently without teacher assistance with **99-100% word recognition accuracy**.
- The student can read the materials independently with **95% or better comprehension**.
- The materials should cause the student no difficulty.
- Oral reading should be **expressive** with accurate attention to punctuation.
- In a retelling, the student should be able to reflect most of the content of the selection and will **reflect it in an organized fashion**.
- In a narrative, students will recount events in the proper **sequence**.
- In expository/informational text, the student will reflect **text structure** or organization of the material.
- Students should say, **“This book is easy.”**

Instructional Reading Level

The child can do the task with support.

- That level at which students can make **maximum growth** in reading.
- The student is challenged but not frustrated.
- Student should be free of externally observable symptoms of difficulty.
- **95% to 98% word recognition accuracy and 75% accuracy in comprehension** should be evident.
- In a retelling, the student should be able to share the **overall sense and content** of the text.
- At this level students will have the best opportunity to **practice and build new reading strategies**. This is the level where reading instruction is most successful.
- Students should say, **“I can understand what I am taught from this book. Some words are hard, but after the teacher gives me some guidance, the story is easy to read.”**

READING LEVELS

Frustration Reading Level

The child cannot decode or comprehend the text no matter how much support the teacher gives.

- The student *is unable to deal with the reading material even with teacher assistance.*
- *90% or less accuracy in word recognition and 50% comprehension.*
- In a retelling, students *recall incompletely* or in a rather haphazard fashion.
- There is *no logic* or sequential order to the retelling.
- Questions by the teacher tend to be unanswered.
- Students say, **“This is too hard. I hate to read a book this hard.”**



TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Choral Reading An instructional strategy to help beginning readers who struggle with fluency when they encounter difficult text. The teacher and student(s) look at the same text, the teacher reads aloud slowly, and the student(s) reads along with or slightly behind the teacher's voice.

Coaching Teaching that takes the form of prompts and cues to scaffold (see below) students from dependent to independent reading behaviors.

Direct Instruction A planned, explicit, systematic sequence of instruction that has a goal or set of goals. Not synonymous with commercially published programs of the same name.

Echo Reading An instructional strategy to help beginning readers with difficult text. Teacher and student(s) each have the same text. The teacher reads one part alone (e.g., sentence, line, page). Then the student(s) immediately rereads that same text.

Guided Reading An instructional procedure in which the teacher works with a small group of students who are reading at about the same achievement level. Students each have a copy of the text and read orally or silently at the same time. The teacher observes, coaches, prompts, and evaluates their performance.

KLP Kindergarten Literature Program

An instructional program for kindergarten students. The teacher rereads aloud the same storybooks, then encourages students to read them emergently on their own. (*See Emergent Literacy in Beginning Reading Terms.*) Previously called **pretend reading**, but now viewed as a valid, systematic progression toward conventional or correct reading. Also includes writing (e.g., scribbling, pictures, developmental spelling). (See CIERA website, Elizabeth Sulzby)

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Modeling

Teaching performance of specific proficient behaviors (e.g., reads, writes, identifies words, self-monitors) so that students can observe and learn. The procedure gains power when it is accompanied by a teacher think-aloud that explains the specific proficient behavior.

Oral Reading

The process of reading out loud to communicate to others; emphasized in beginning reading instruction to help link printed text to speech.

Partner Reading

A method to provide reading practice in instructional text and/or to help a student through more difficult text. Two students take turns reading from the same text. If the text is more difficult for one student, the other student gives help.

Read-Aloud

A teacher reading aloud a book (usually above students' ability to read independently) to either a small or large group of students. Read-alouds may be done for teaching or enjoyment.

Repeated Reading

For teachers, rereading a book aloud to increase students' understanding and/or memory of the text. For students, rereading a book to increase fluency and understanding or to provide enjoyment.

Retelling

An oral reconstruction of a previously read text. Retellings can be used as instruction or for assessment

Scaffolding

Teaching coaching, prompting, and cueing students in response to their behaviors during a specific literacy task. As the student becomes more able, teacher support is gradually withdrawn.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Shared Reading A method of reading a text that is usually too difficult for the student(s) to read without help; the teacher reads aloud at a rate that allows the student(s) to join in, although usually slightly behind the teacher. As she/he reads, the teacher models specific reading behaviors (e.g., decoding, self-monitoring, making meaning).

Strategy Instruction Instruction that focuses on research-based *processes* that define particular aspects of reading. Strategy instruction can take place during writing, word study, and comprehension activities.

Think Aloud A strategy in which the teacher verbalizes aloud while reading a selection orally, thus modeling the process of comprehension.



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TEACHER NOTES: