

# Fostering Meaningful Literacy Experiences

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## Our Learning Intentions

- Overview- how does the brain learn to read?
- What can we do at home to foster and enhance literacy skills?



Let's Play!





Oral Language

Communication

Experiences

So how is this connected to learning to read?

Motivation

Prior Knowledge

Listening

Social-emotional skills

Executive Functioning

Memory Recall Sequencing

Attention/Focus

Auditory Skills-Listening

Physical Skills:  
Motor Planning  
Eye-hand coordination



# The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading

(adapted from Scarborough, 2001)

## LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE

LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

VERBAL REASONING

LITERACY KNOWLEDGE

## WORD RECOGNITION

PHON. AWARENESS

DECODING (and SPELLING)

SIGHT RECOGNITION

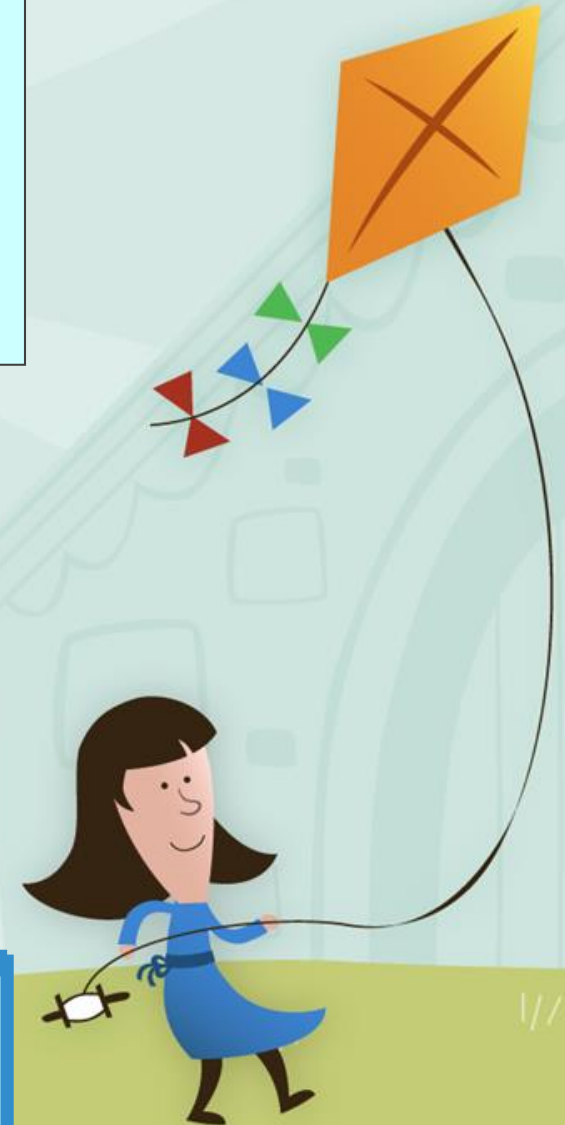
**SKILLED READING:**  
fluent execution and  
coordination of word  
recognition and text  
comprehension.

increasingly  
strategic

Joyful Learning + Engaging + Motivating

increasingly  
automatic

Reading is a multifaceted skill, gradually acquired over years of instruction and practice.



English has a poor correspondence on how a word is pronounced and how it is spelled. This is called deep orthography. The rules of spelling that govern a language are called its orthography

The brain needs to connect the 26 letters of the alphabet to the 44+ sounds of spoken English (phonemes).

Language	Number of sounds Phonemes	Number of ways to spell sounds	
Italian	33	25	Shallow orthography
Spanish	35+	38	Shallow orthography
French	32	250+	Deep orthography
English	44+	1,100+	Deep orthography

How The Brain Learns To Read- David A. Sousa



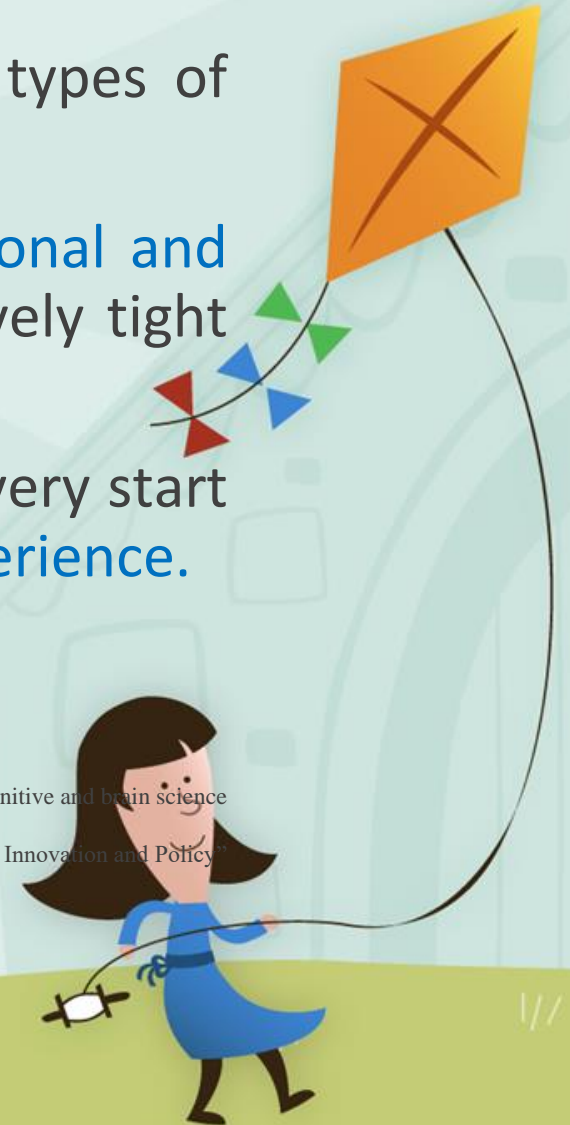
## What do we know from educational neuroscience research?

- There are optimal or “**sensitive periods**” during which particular types of learning are most effective, despite the brain’s lifetime plasticity.
- For sensory stimuli such as **speech sounds**, and for **certain emotional and cognitive experiences such as language exposure**, there are relatively tight and early sensitive periods.
- The brain is biologically primed to acquire language right from the very start of life; the **process of language acquisition needs the catalyst of experience**.



Understanding the Brain: the Birth of a Learning Science New insights on learning through cognitive and brain science

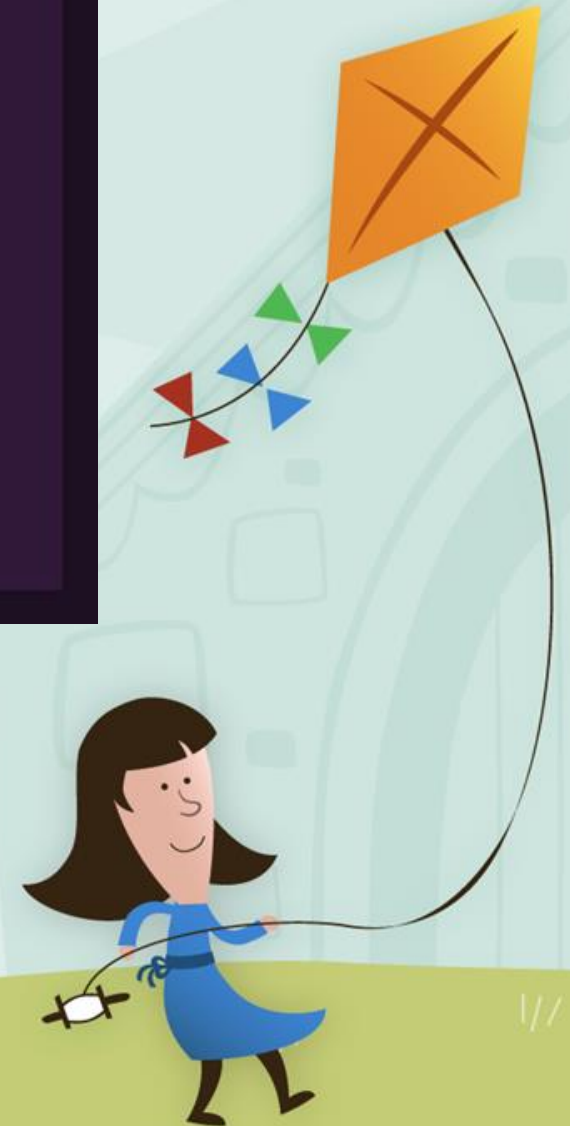
OECD/CERI International Conference - “Learning in the 21st Century: Research, Innovation and Policy”





Monolingual and bilingual children learn words at the same rate, though bilingualism is related to enhanced **executive control, social perspective taking, and metalinguistic awareness.**

**Usable Knowledge**  
CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

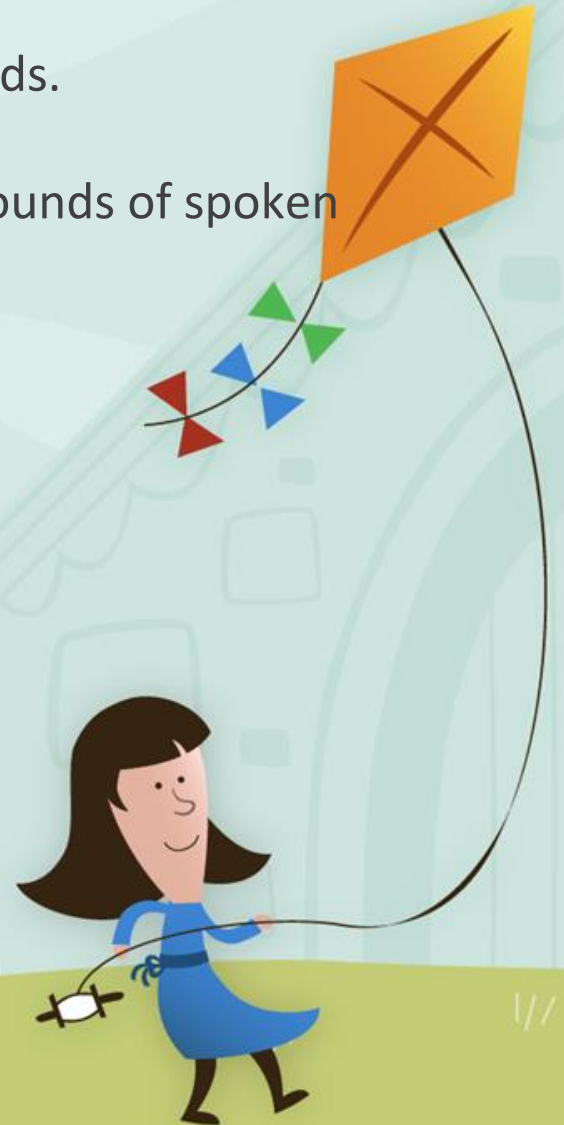




# Balanced Literacy

## The Crucial 5 (National Reading Panel)

- **Phonemic Awareness:** the ability to hear and identify sounds in spoken words.
- **Phonics:** the relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
- **Fluency:** The capacity to read text accurately and quickly.
- **Vocabulary:** All the words students must know to communicate effectively.
- **Comprehension:** The ability to understand what has been read.



# Activities to foster literacy skills at home



# Emotional Connection

The importance of the affective domain cannot be overstated. An emotional connection – reading that matters - is important. This is why you'll often hear of reluctant readers blossoming when exposed to source material that captures their imagination – thank you J K Rowling!

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the squid: the story and science of the reading brain*. Cambridge: Icon Books





# Letter & Sound Connections

You are your child's most important role model. Reading to them allows them to connect spoken and written language together and demonstrates that you value the skill of reading.

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the squid: the story and science of the reading brain*. Cambridge: Icon Books



# Discuss Common Connections

Talk to your child about what they are reading. Encourage them to make predictions, recognize patterns in the words and see their orthographic similarities.

“Fluency does not ensure better comprehension; rather, fluency gives extra time to the executive system to direct attention where it is most needed - to infer, to understand, to predict, or sometimes to repair discordant understanding and to interpret a meaning afresh.” (Wolf, pp 131.)

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the squid: the story and science of the reading brain*. Cambridge: Icon Books



# Wide Reading Connections

Encourage wide reading of a specific topic of interest, or a topic that is being studied in school. Fiction, non-fiction, print and non-print texts all add to vocabulary development, particularly in an area of academic interest. School and local libraries can be an excellent resource.

Marzano, R. (2004). *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD





# Connecting Understanding

Ask your child questions about their reading. **Summarizing** their reading material helps solidify understanding, as does **paraphrasing**. **Applying** and **synthesizing** what they have read allows them to hone the skill of attending to the most important information.

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the squid: the story and science of the reading brain*. Cambridge: Icon Books

Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Hattie, J. (2016). *Visible learning for literacy (Grades K-12): Implementing the practices that work best to accelerate student learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA :Corwin Literacy



# Routine Connections

Make reading part of your routine, perhaps a bedtime story? This fosters a lifelong habit of regular reading. Having books accessible also allows spontaneity, so that reading can occur anytime.

Sikora, J et al. (2018) Scholarly culture: How books in adolescence enhance adult literacy, numeracy and technology skills in 31 societies. *Social Science Research*



# Academic Connections

Children who develop regular reading habits are setting themselves up for academic success. Research shows a strong correlation between students with regular reading habits and academic success.

Allington, D., & McGill-Franzen, A. (2008). Got books? *Educational Leadership*, 65, 20-23

Kirsch, I., de Jong, J., Lafontaine, D., McQueen, J., Mendelovits, J., & Monseur, C. (2002). *Reading for change: Performance and engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000.*





# Repeating Connections

Repeated reading of specific texts consolidates understanding of connections and context, as well as reinforcing appreciation of favourites.

It's important to honour the books children want to read over and over.

Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Hattie, J. (2016). Visible learning for literacy (Grades K-12): Implementing the practices that work best to accelerate student learning. Thousand Oaks, CA :Corwin Literacy



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A CHILD  
who READS will be an  
ADULT  
who  
THINKS.



- Unknown

