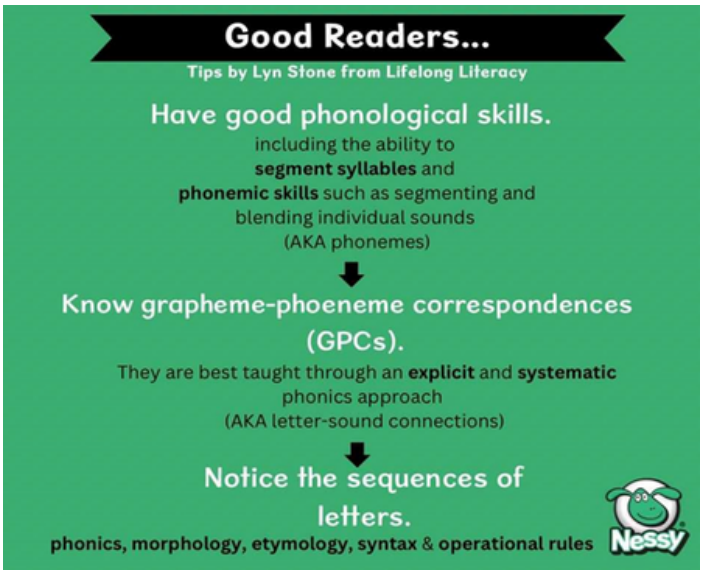
The Science of Reading

The Science of Reading is everything that is scientifically known about how children learn to read, and the most effective way for reading to be taught. The Science of Reading is not a methodology or system designed to teach reading, it is a process which uses the scientific basis for teaching reading, and helping children become competent readers.

"It is simply not true that there are hundreds of ways to learn to read... when it comes to reading, we all have roughly the same brain that imposes the same constraints and the same learning sequence."

- Dr. Stanislas Dehaene, Reading in the Brain

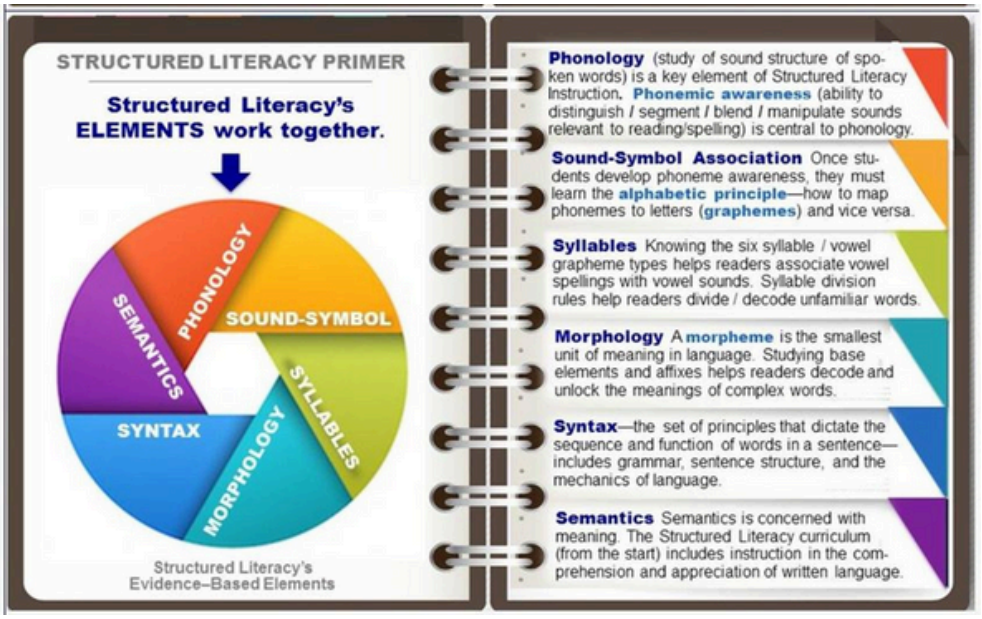
The Science of Reading is much more than just phonics. Phonics is only one component among many that must be taught to children learning to read. In fact, phonics instruction by itself is insufficient.

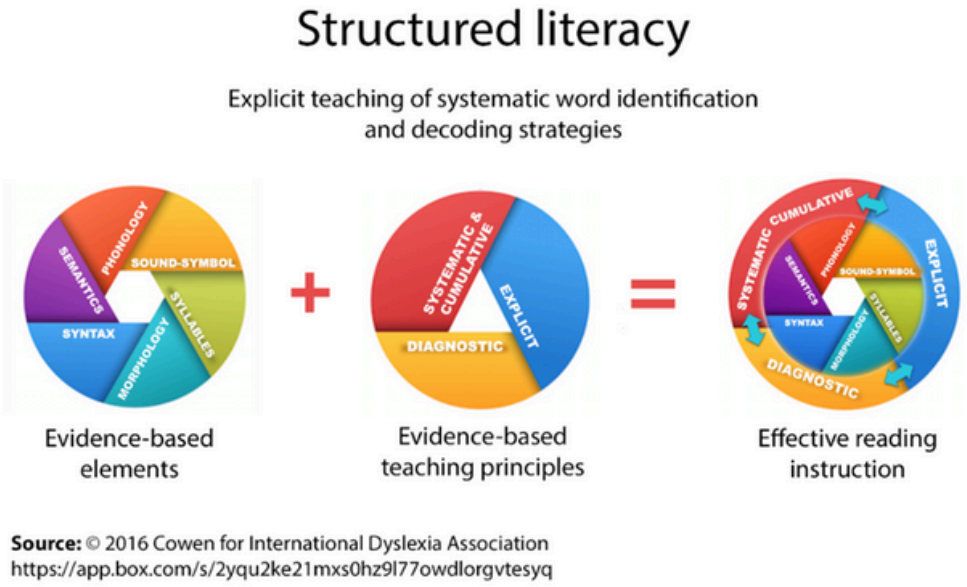


What is Structured Literacy?

Click the article above to learn about Structured Literacy and the Orton-Gillingham approach, the teaching methods that have helped children with dyslexia learn to read and write.

The International Dyslexia Association website is a great place to visit when you are looking to do some further reading on Structured Literacy.





Images sourced from the International Dyslexia Association (IDA). Click here to learn more about Structured Literacy from the IDA website.

Key Terms:

Alphabetic principle
The understanding that we connect letters with their sounds to read and write. For example, a child who knows that the written letter "t" makes the /t/ sound is demonstrating the alphabetic principle.

Phoneme
The smallest unit of speech sound in a word. The word 'cat' has three phonemes /c/ /a/ /t/. The English language, for example, has 44 phonemes (sounds).

Grapheme
The letter/s that represent (spell) the phonemes (sounds) in words. The word 'cat' has three graphemes: c, a, t. The English language, for example, has phonemes (sounds).

Phonology
The study of the sound structure in language.

Phonics
A method of teaching people to read by matching sounds (phonemes) with symbols (letters). Phonics has the strongest evidence base when it comes to teaching reading and spelling.

Phonemic awareness
It is the first step in learning to use phonics. When a child sounds out the letters of a word and blends them together, they are using phonemic awareness.

Blending
Putting together the individual sounds together to hear or read a word.

Segmenting
Hearing or seeing a word and breaking it into its separate phonemes (sounds).
Note: Blending, segmenting, and manipulating can be practised both with and without graphemes (letters).

Decoding
The process of converting printed words into spoken words. Learn more here.

Encoding
The process of breaking down a spoken word into its individual sounds and writing it down/spelling it. Learn more here.

Etymology
The study of the origin of words

Morpheme
The smallest unit of meaning in a word.

Morphology
The study of meaningful word parts.

Orthography
The conventional spelling system of a language

Structured Synthetic Phonics
A teaching method that helps children learn to read and write by teaching them the relationship between sounds and their written symbols. Learn more here.

Vowels
Letters that represent speech sounds where air leaves the mouth without any blockage by the tongue, lips, or throat. The vowels in the alphabet are a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y. They can be pronounced long (by saying the letter's name) or short. Learn more about vowels with our YouTube Learning Videos.