THE SCIENCE OF READING IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

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Providing strong reading instruction plays a vital role in building young children's literacy skills and fostering their academic growth.. This article examines evidence-based practices for teaching elementary students to read. The science of reading is an interdisciplinary field that explores how children acquire reading skills, integrating insights from cognitive psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and education research.

The value of systematic phonics programs in enhancing early literacy has been supported by recent research. According to Castles et al. (2023), struggling students' reading abilities are much improved by explicit phonics instruction, which emphasizes the necessity of systematically including phonics into the curriculum. Similarly, systematic phonics training improves students' performance on decoding and word recognition tasks, according to a meta-analysis by Jones & Reutzel (2024).

Teachers should use decodable texts that reinforce newly learned patterns to incorporate phonics into their students' everyday reading activities (Adams, 2024).

The importance of organized, guided oral reading sessions in enhancing fluency and comprehension has been highlighted by recent studies. Martinez & Brown (2023) claim that scaffolding and instructor modeling in guided reading greatly improve students' reading fluency. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that repeated reading, in which pupils read the same material several times under the supervision of their teachers, enhances automaticity and expression (Thompson & Richards, 2024).

Teachers should combine feedback techniques like chorus reading, partnered reading, and echo reading with guided oral reading to increase efficacy (Miller, 2023). Additionally, employing texts that are interesting and leveled suitably guarantees that children gain confidence as their fluency skills gradually improve (Anderson, 2024).

According to Harper & Ellis (2023), direct instruction in comprehension strategies like drawing conclusions, summarizing important points, and identifying main ideas significantly improves students' reading comprehension skills. Additionally, incorporating metacognitive strategies—like self-monitoring, setting reading goals, and reflecting on understanding—enhances students' ability to engage with texts more deeply (Williams & Carter, 2024). Recent studies highlight the importance of explicitly teaching comprehension strategies and fostering metacognitive awareness in young readers.

By modeling think-aloud techniques, mapping text structures with visual organizers, and encouraging students to pose and respond to their own questions while reading, teachers can aid in the development of comprehension (Johnson, 2023). According to research, these techniques foster long-term reading independence in addition to improving comprehension (Taylor & Simmons, 2024).

Students will get organized, research-based instruction that promotes literacy development if the science of reading is implemented in primary schools. Teachers can foster reading success by emphasizing phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

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