

# Structured Literacy for Adolescents

*Because ALL students deserve to be proficient readers*

April 9, 2024  
2-2:45

NHSAA Innovations Conference

Presenters: Liz Cannon, M.Ed.,  
Loralyn LaBombard, Ed.D., Kerri Harris, M.Ed.



# AGENDA

**Current Reality** - A look at literacy data and the inspiration for this work

**Walking the Talk** - Diving into the reality of implementing a structured literacy program for adolescents

**Be the Change** - An overview of how to implement this kind of program in your district

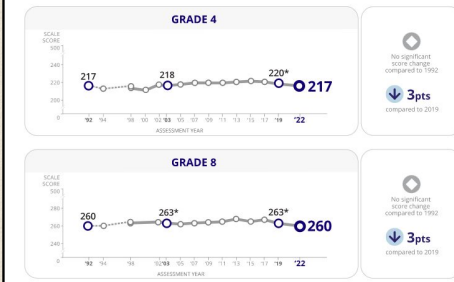
# The Current Reality

A look at literacy data and the inspiration for this work



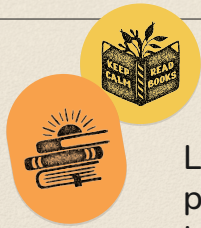
# WHAT STORY DOES DATA TELL?

FIGURE | Trend in fourth- and eighth-grade reading average scores



## NAEP

Despite recent alarm about the 2022 dip in NAEP scores due to the Pandemic, Figure 1 reflects the historical lack of growth in reading proficiency between 1992 and 2022 in grades fourth-grade and eighth-grade.

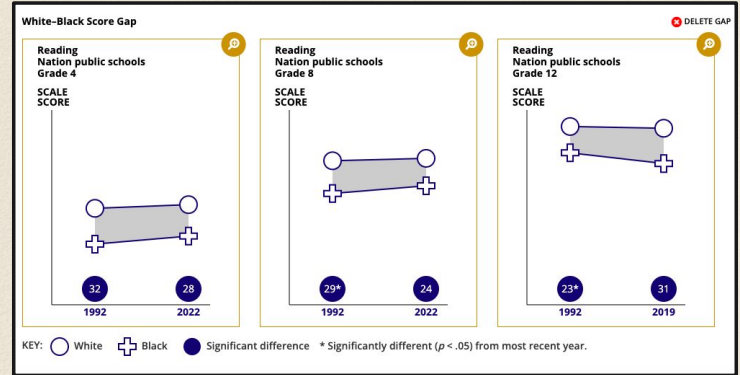


Large inequities are present in this data ...  
Let's dig deeper!

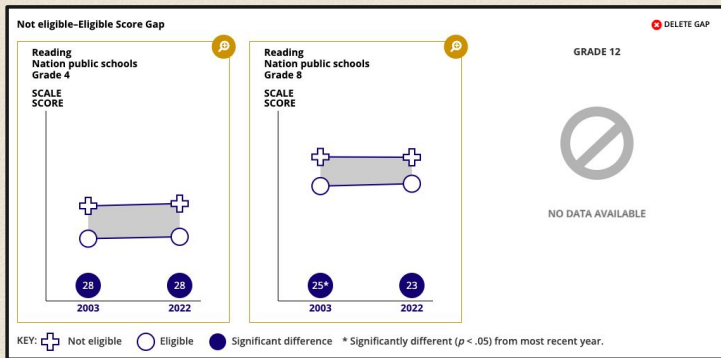


All data is from the [Nation's Report Card Achievement Gaps Dashboard](#)

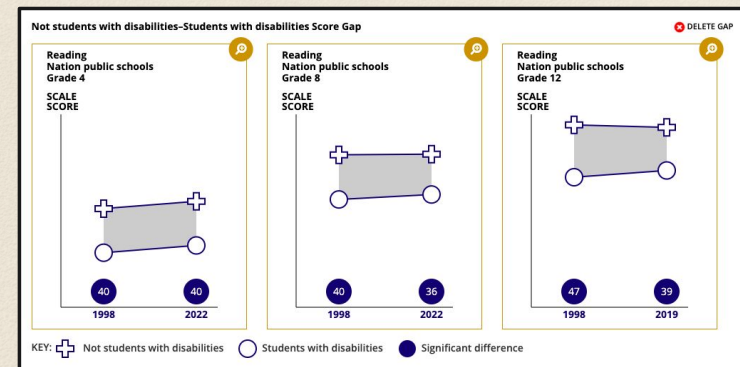
### Inequities - Score Gaps (Ethnicity)



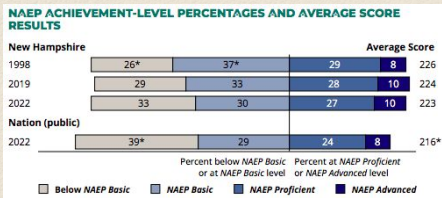
### Inequities - Score Gaps (National School Lunch Plan Eligibility)



### Inequities - Score Gaps (students with disabilities)



# NH NEAP Reading Data 2022 - 4th grade

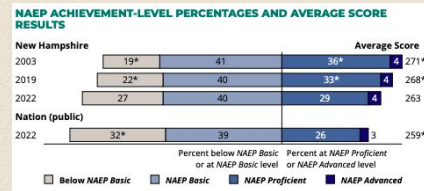


1998 - 37% at or above proficient  
 2019 - 38% at or above proficient  
 2022 - 37% at or above proficient  
 NOTE...  
 \*Difference in the Below Basic level between '98 & '22  
 \*The National level of Below Basic level in '22 —> 39%

\* Significantly different (p < .05) from the state's results in 2022. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.  
 NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/stt2022/pdf/2023010NH8.pdf>

# NH NEAP Reading Data 2022 - 8th grade



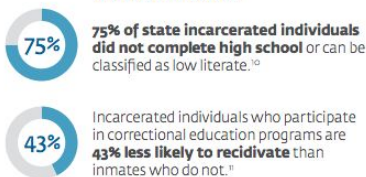
2003 - 40% at or above proficient  
 2019 - 37% at or above proficient  
 2022 - 33% at or above proficient  
 NOTE...  
 \*Difference in the Below Basic level between '03 & '22  
 \*The National level of Below Basic level in '22 —> 32%

\* Significantly different (p < .05) from the state's results in 2022. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.  
 NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/stt2022/pdf/2023010NH8.pdf>

**2/3** of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the 4th grade will end up in jail or on welfare.  
 The 4th grade is the watershed year. We can predict that if a child is not reading proficiently in the 4th grade, he or she will have approximately a 78 percent chance of not catching up.

## Incarceration



<https://governorsfoundation.org/gelf-articles/early-literacy-connection-to-incarceration/>

## Direct impacts of low literacy levels that last a lifetime...

### Literacy statistics

**48%**  
of young children in the U.S. are read to daily.

In high-income families, more than **2 out of 5** children are not read to daily.

Among adults with the lowest level of literacy proficiency,

**43% live in poverty.**

Among those who have strong literacy skills, only

**4% live in poverty.**

**60%**  
of America's prison inmates are illiterate.



**85%**  
of all juvenile offenders have reading problems.

SOURCES: READING ACROSS THE NATION: A CHARTBOOK REACH OUT AND READ. SOURCE: LITERACY BEHIND BARS: RESULTS FROM THE 2003 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LITERACY (PSKID SURVEY). NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. SOURCE: LITERACY IN THE LABOR FORCE: RESULTS FROM THE NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY SURVEY. NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

## Damage Caused by Being Unable to Read

**60%** of inmates in U.S. prisons are unable to read above a fourth-grade level.  
**85%** of juveniles in the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate.



Right to Read = the Right to Economic, Social, Health & Political Equality

## NAACP Position

Black students have historically received inaccurate attributions of racial inheritance to explain their academic success and failure. Structured literacy, taught explicitly and systematically by skilled educators, provides the widest pool of students with the opportunity to develop strong foundational reading skills. It also helps lessen the impact of racial attribution by replacing biases and assumptions with objective guidance. This leaves less room for expectancy effects, helps educators identify challenges, and allows them to intervene in a timely manner.



## Real Life Impacts of Functional Illiteracy or Low Literacy Level



[www.amafoundation.org/go/healthliteracy](http://www.amafoundation.org/go/healthliteracy)

Every student graduating high school deserves to be a proficient reader.  
How will you make this happen?



## Walking the Talk

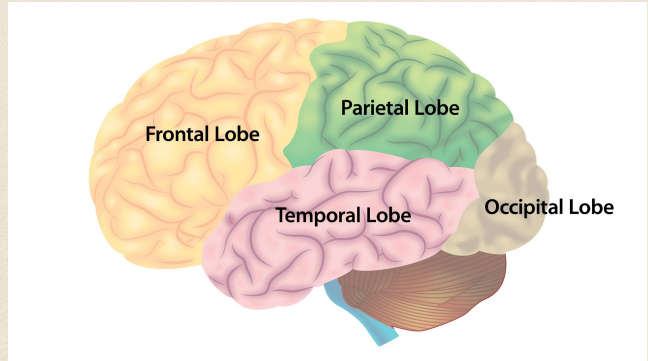
The reality of structured literacy programs for adolescents



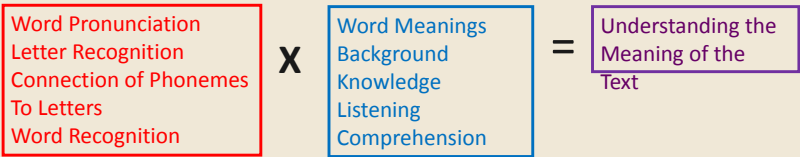
# The Science Of Reading



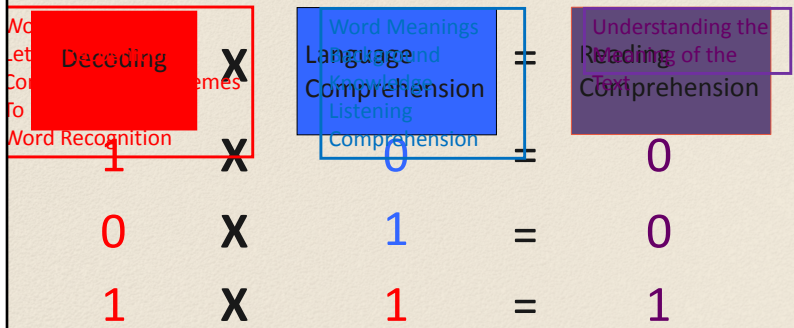
# The Reading Brain



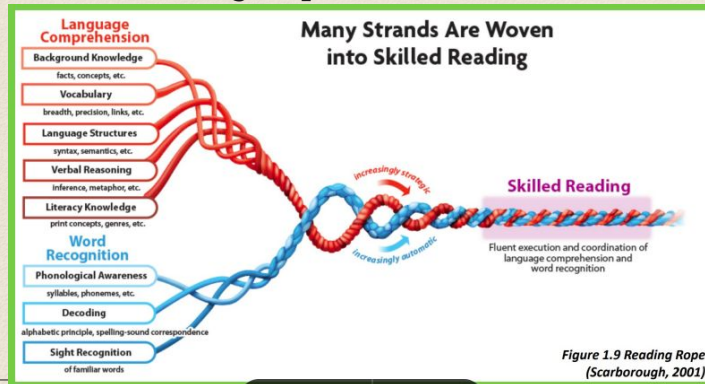
# How Reading Works in the Brain



# How Reading Works in the Brain The Simple View of Reading



## The Reading Rope...an elaboration of the SVR



## Structured Literacy: What is it?

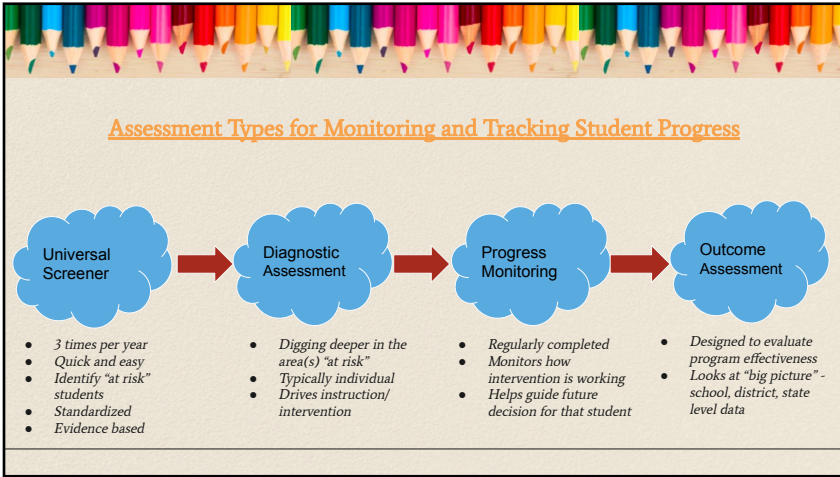
- reading instruction approach based on the Science of Reading
- deliberate, systematic and explicit
- data driven, multisensory, student paced instruction
- develops phonemic awareness, decoding skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension
- provides a strong foundation for proficient reading and spelling

## Structured Literacy: What isn't it?

- a specific curriculum
- drills
- rote memorization
- balanced literacy
- skills learned by immersion
- leveled readers
- literacy instruction contradictory to evidence based research

## What does a structured literacy program consist of?





## Progress Monitoring

## Explicit Instruction

As you watch this video of Pedro and Napoleon jumping off the bike ramp, what do you notice?

- Was Pedro successful?
- Was Napoleon successful?

Turn and talk for a minute about what changes could be made to this situation for Napoleon to have a different outcome?

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION?

Dr. Anita Archer:

## Six Teaching Functions of Explicit Instruction

<p><u>Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review previous skills</li> </ul>	<p><u>Presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State the lesson goal</li> <li>Present material in small steps</li> <li>Model procedures</li> <li>Provide examples and non examples</li> <li>Use clear language</li> </ul>	<p><u>Guided Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require a high level of engagement</li> <li>Teach to mastery</li> <li>Provide timely feedback</li> </ul>
<p><u>Correction and Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reteach as needed</li> </ul>	<p><u>Independent Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor practice attempts</li> <li>Students continue to practice until skills are mastered</li> </ul>	<p><u>Constant Review</u></p>

Explicit Instruction: Effective Teaching by Anita L. Archer and Charles A. Hughes (2011).

## Teacher Qualifications



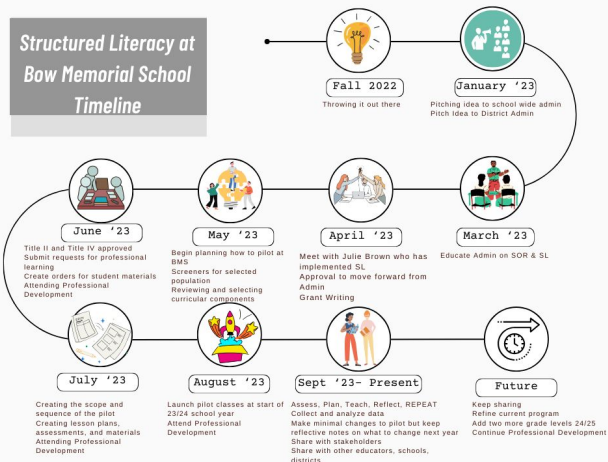
- Knowledgeable in SOR & Structured Literature
- Willing and able to implement with fidelity
- Able to modify
- Passionate about progress
- Use quality appropriate materials
- [Teaching Reading is Rocket Science \(Louisa Moats\)](#)

## Be The Change

Implementing structured literacy in your district



### Structured Literacy at Bow Memorial School Timeline





## The Beginning: Inspiration

Inspired by Julie Brown, a Literacy Facilitator, in Woodstock, Vermont



Brown's program is for high school students lacking a "minimum basic skill proficiency" (Shinn, 2021), who are frustrated in repeated reading failure.

Her structured literacy class is in addition to the student's regular ELA class

Please visit Julie Brown's website: [No Time To Waste](#)

## Basics of the Structured Literacy pilot at Bow Memorial School



- Co-taught by the reading specialist and special educator
- Two structured literacy classes: 7th grade and 8th grade
- 45-minute classes 5 days a week
- The structured literacy class is in addition to their ELA class

## Class Culture: Our Approach

Empowering students to become more proficient and confident readers through:

- **An atmosphere of trust and respect**
- **Respecting students' dignity**
- **Low level pressure**
- **Comfort in taking risks with no fear in failure**

## Rotating Daily Instruction:

Reading Day	Spelling Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sound warm-up</li><li>• Decoding practice: blending sounds or syllables through systematic, explicit instruction</li><li>• Accuracy practice at the word level</li><li>• Vocabulary instruction</li><li>• Reading "heart words"</li><li>• Fluency reading at the sentence or paragraph level</li><li>• Assessment: reading accuracy at the word level</li><li>• Comprehension skill work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sound warm-up</li><li>• Encoding practice: segmenting words using phoneme-grapheme mapping or dry-erase board</li><li>• Vocabulary instruction</li><li>• Spelling "heart words"</li><li>• Assessment: dictation of sounds, words, "heart words" and sentences</li><li>• Comprehension skill work</li></ul>

# Sample Lesson Plan

Structured Literacy Lesson Plan (40 min. Plan)		READING Focus	
Lesson #	Date	Topic/Focus Skill	Icon will learn that certain vowel or consonant suffix
Today's Focus Skill: "I can read multisyllabic words with a vowel or consonant suffix"			
(-2 min) Step 1 Phonemic Awareness "Quick drill of sounds"	Sound Cards: all letters and 0-9 Consonant Suffixes	(-2 min) Step 1 Phonemic Awareness "Quick drill of sounds"	Sound Cards: all letters and 0-9 Consonant Suffixes
(-2 min) Step 2 Sound-Symbol Review & New or Review Concept	Phonics teacher will read multisyllabic words to students to model the skill. ● Reading multisyllabic words with a vowel or consonant suffix	(-2 min) Step 2 Sound-Symbol Review & New or Review Concept	Phonics teacher will read multisyllabic words to students to model the skill. ● Reading multisyllabic words with a vowel or consonant suffix
(-5 min) Step 3 Building Words	Word cards: presently, punishment, picky, extremely, identify	(-5 min) Step 3 Building Words	Word cards: presently, punishment, picky, extremely, identify
(-3 min) Step 3 Vocabulary Words	Consonant Suffix endings -ly (previously) -ness (happiness) -able (possible) -ible (possible) -ity (quality)	(-3 min) Step 3 Vocabulary Words	Vowel Suffix endings -er (broader) -er (longer) -er (longer) -er (person who) -er (to be) -ible (possible of being)
(-5 min) Step 4 Reading for Accuracy and Fluency	Read Out Words Use the words from the list of 100 words that students can read with confidence.	(-5 min) Step 4 Reading for Accuracy and Fluency	Read Out Words Use the words from the list of 100 words that students can read with confidence.
(-5 min) Step 5 Heart Words	Heart Words: use, here, there	(-5 min) Step 5 Heart Words	Heart Words: use, here, there

# Instructional Resources

**DATA**

**83**

percent of students demonstrating spelling growth in all areas

**25**

percent of students moving from below/far below to average scores on STAR

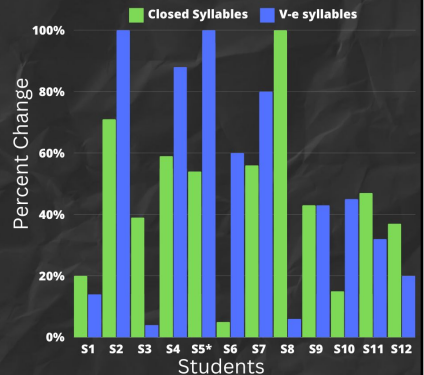
**100**

percent of students showing reading growth

**67**

percent of students making growth according to STAR

Fall to Winter Reading Progress



## STUDENT TESTIMONY

"You can **feel free** to speak out. You know everyone is on the **same skill level**! no one is better than the other, and you can feel that."

"This is the first time in my life I don't feel afraid to read."

Everyone in here struggles with reading so **I am not afraid to read, but I am in other classes.**

"I have become a **better** reader and more **confident** with reading and spelling because of this class."

"I feel safe."

"This class helps me become a better reader and more **confident** with reading ..."

"makes me **feel comfortable** and I want to speak up because in my other classes I don't."

"It helps me learn how to be a **better** reader. Also learning how to **spell** words that I didn't know how to spell before I came to this class."

## PARENT TESTIMONY

"We have been thoroughly pleased with the positive changes we have seen in our children's reading abilities and scores from the Structured Literacy Class and hard work and dedication of Kerri Harris and Dr. LaBombard".

"This newfound confidence has transcended the boundaries of the Structured Literacy class, leading our son to transition from a background observer to a leader in other academic settings."

"The success experienced by our child in the Structured Literacy class serves as a compelling argument for the expansion of this model district wide, ensuring that more students can benefit from the personalized attention, increased confidence, and inclusive environment it provides."

"He has made leaps and bounds in a lot of different areas of literacy since his enrollment of this structured literacy class and my husband and I are so appreciative. From foundational skills that include assistance with spelling (especially science based words) to higher level literacy skills that include assistance with his written expression, sentence structures that need clarity or more descriptions. Thank you for helping him with reading, helping him seek out materials that will foster a lifelong love of reading"

What you have created is something special for the children that just need a little more support. You make them feel like they are just like every other

## Final Thoughts... *Early Intervention gets the biggest results, BUT we can't give up once kids leave elementary school!*

Make the commitment in your district to stay the course with your students and ASSURE they become proficient readers no matter what age they are.

### commitment

[koh `mit munt]  
noun  
a pledge to do something; the state of being bound emotionally or intellectually to an ideal or course of action.

## Recommendations for Adolescent Literacy Interventions in grades 4-9

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is an investment of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) within the U.S. Department of Education that was established in 2002. They provide practice guides as a resource for evidence based instruction. Using the more current [research findings](#), the WWC released a practice guide for providing reading intervention to adolescent learners in grades 4-9.

[What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide](#)

**IES WWC Clearinghouse** What Works Clearinghouse

**PRACTICE GUIDE**

Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9

Released: March 2022

- Introduction document (136 KB)
- Summary document (415 KB)
- Full Guide (2.8 MB)

This practice guide provides four evidence-based recommendations that teachers can use to deliver reading interventions to meet the needs of their students.

- Build students' decoding skills so they can read complex multisyllabic words. **TIER 1 STRONG EVIDENCE**
- Provide purposeful fluency-building activities to help students read effortlessly. **TIER 1 STRONG EVIDENCE**
- Routinely use a set of comprehension-building practices to help students make sense of the text. **TIER 1 STRONG EVIDENCE**
  - Part 3A. Build students' world and word knowledge so they can make sense of the text
  - Part 3B. Consistently provide students with opportunities to ask and answer questions to better understand the text they read
  - Part 3C. Teach students a routine for determining the gist of a short section of text
  - Part 3D. Teach students to monitor their comprehension as they read
- Provide students with opportunities to practice making sense of stretch text (i.e., challenging text) that will expose them to complex ideas and information. **TIER 2 MODERATE EVIDENCE**

## Resources

Archer, A. and Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching*. The Guilford Press.  
[Brown, Julie \(2023\). No Time to Waste: Structured Literacy with Young Adults.](#)

Grace, K. (2022). *Phonics and Spelling Through Phoneme-Grapheme Mapping*. Really Great Reading.  
[The Reading League: NH Chapter](#)

Moats, L. and Tolman, C. (2019). LETRS. Lexia.

The Reading League. (2024, April, 4). Science of Reading: Defining Guide.  
<https://www.thereadingleague.org/what-is-the-science-of-reading/>

Shinn, M., Moran, L., & Collins, J. (2021). *Systemic change: A focus on secondary MTSS & equity*

[Webinar] <https://www.pattan.net/Videos/Systemic-Change-A-Focus-on-Secondary-MTSS-Equity>

Wilson, B. (2018). *The Wilson Reading System Instructor Manual: Fourth Edition*. Wilson Language Training Corporation. [www.wilsonlanguage.com](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com)