



**Welcome to our open night.**



**Please sit and watch our slideshow on classroom routines and whole school approaches.**



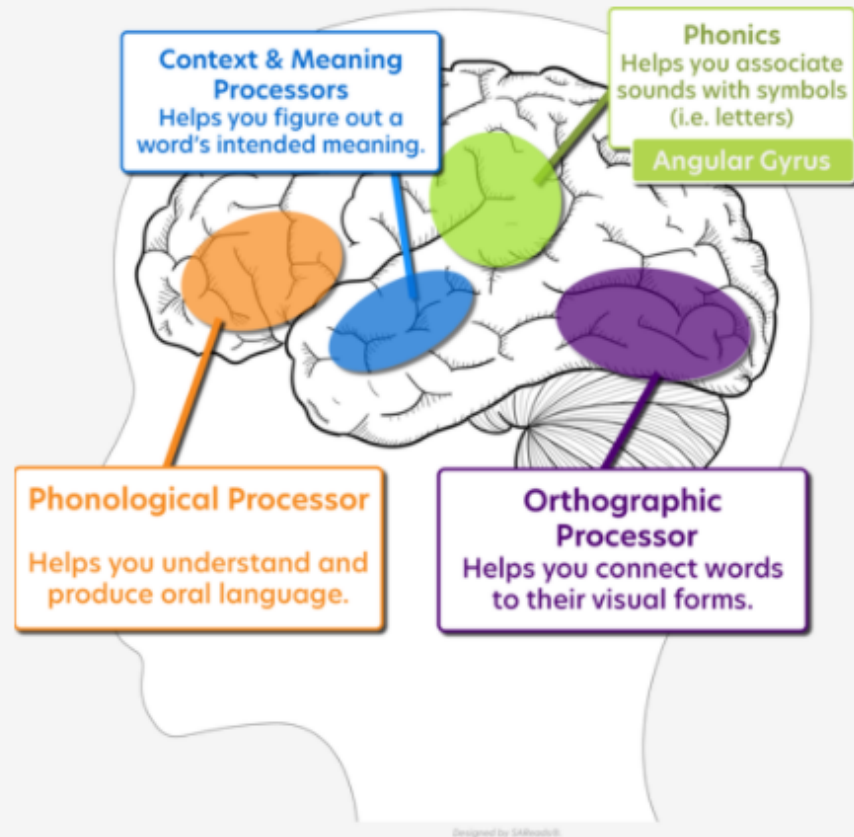
# How do children learn to read?

The past few years has yielded tremendous, interdisciplinary insights into the process of learning to read, gathered from developmental psychology, cognitive neuropsychology, developmental linguistics, and educational intervention research.

Indeed, this is the most studied aspect of human learning. Dozens of journals publish empirical research on reading. Major research syntheses have been consistent in the findings on learning to read and teaching reading which is now known as the science of reading.

## **Reading is considered the foundation of all other learning. Teaching children how to read is a big deal!**

Functional MRIs of the brain prove that “picking up the mechanics” of reading isn’t easy or natural.



- Reading acquisition is neurobiological and unrelated to intelligence.
- Reading is not natural like speaking, but some kids pick up reading very easily—about 5%.
- Another 35% of students do okay with “broad instruction.”
- The **majority of students** need *explicit, structured, diagnostic, and prescriptive instruction*.
- Kids with dyslexia need much more repeated, explicit instruction about how letters represent sounds in written words.

**This explains why so many children do not learn to read through exposure to books and language.**

## Many Strands Are Woven into Skilled Reading

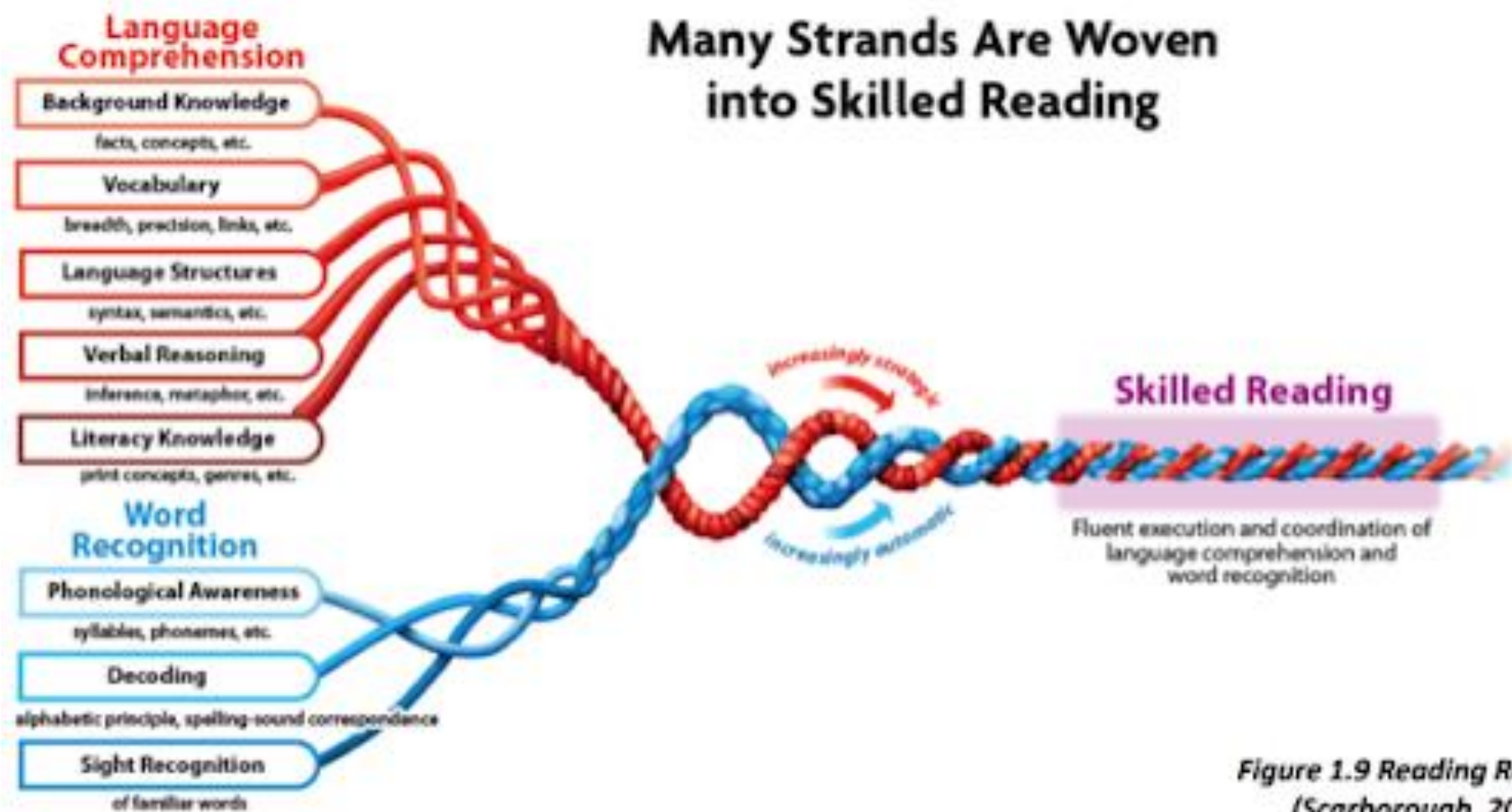


Figure 1.9 Reading Rope  
(Scarborough, 2001)



Or in other words...

# So, what needs to be taught?

There are Six Essential Skills:

Oral Language

Phonemic Awareness

Phonics

Vocabulary

Fluency

Comprehension

# What is Oral Language?

Oral language is the system through which we use spoken words to express knowledge, ideas, and feelings. Oral language is often associated with vocabulary as the main component. However, oral language is comprised of much more. In the broadest definition, oral language consists of six areas: phonology, grammar, morphology, vocabulary, discourse, and pragmatics.

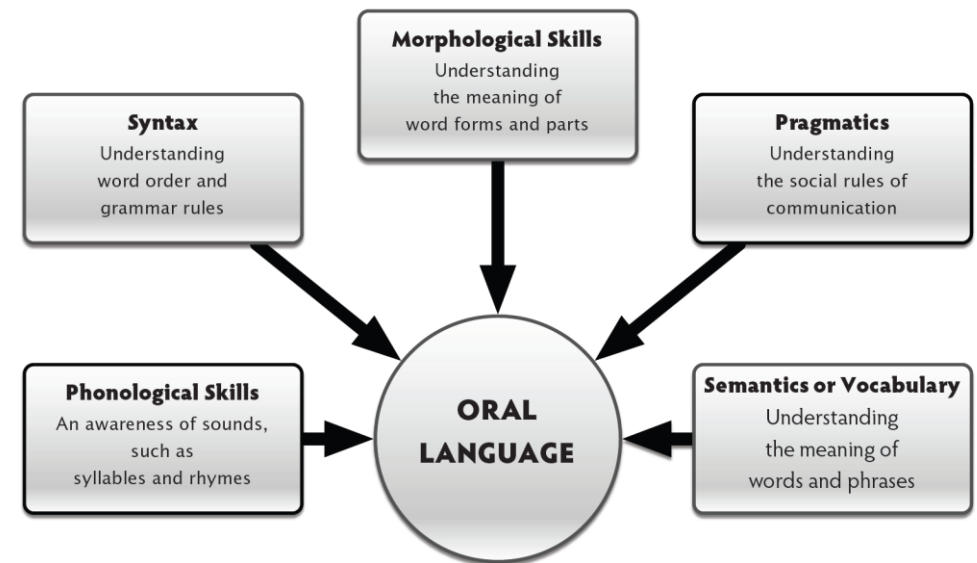


Figure 2.1 Components of Oral Language



# What is Phonological and Phonemic awareness?

Phonological awareness is a crucial skill to develop in children. It is described as sensitivity to the sound structure of language. It is strongly linked to early reading and spelling success through its association with phonics. It includes recognising phonological patterns such as rhyme and alliteration, awareness of syllables and phonemes within words and hearing multiple phonemes within words.

Phonemic awareness is a critical subset of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is auditory and does not involve words in print it includes:

- blending
- segmenting
- deleting/manipulating sounds



# What is Phonics?

Phonics is concerned with sound-letter relationships in written words and builds upon a foundation of language and phonological awareness. Phonics instruction helps children learn the relationship between letters of the written language and the sounds of the spoken language. Research suggests a synthetic phonics approach (blending and segmenting phonemes) is the most efficient way to teach phonics.

1

**cat**

Can I read this word? No? Step 2.

2

**cat**  
● ● ●

Identify the sounds.

3

**cat**  
→

Blend the sounds together.

4

**cat**



Say the word and identify its meaning.

# What is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary refers to knowledge of words, including their structure, use, meanings and links to other words. Words all have:

- meaning, which can vary according to context
- phonology – that is, sounds
- morphology – that is, word parts
- syntax, that is, the way in which words are arranged to form phrases or sentences
- uses, which may be multiple, depending on context.

Oral vocabulary refers to words children can understand or use while speaking and listening. Oral vocabulary is closely related to reading vocabulary, which comprises the words children can recognise and use in their reading or writing.

# What is Fluency?

Reading fluency can be thought of in two different but complementary ways:

- Qualitative: the quality of a child's reading. This includes the use of rhythm, phrasing, intonation, naturalness, and use of voice for different characters or moods.
- Quantitative: accuracy. The number of errors compared to number of correct words read, and speed or number of words read per minute. Quality and accuracy together are indicators of fluent reading. Both are necessary for reading achievement, but not sufficient.

It is an important goal for children to become accurate, efficient, and therefore fluent readers. Facilitating repeated practice of reading aloud is key to developing fluency. The goal for all children is for decoding to become easy and automatic, so they can free up their attention to focus on the meaning of the text.

# What is Comprehension?

Reading comprehension is extracting and constructing meaning from written text using knowledge of words, concepts, facts, and ideas.

Comprehension means understanding text: spoken, written and/or visual. Comprehension is an active and complex process which:

- includes the act of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning from text
- enables readers to derive meaning from text when they engage in intentional, problem solving and thinking processes
- is a lived and institutionally situated social, cultural and intellectual practice that is much more than a semantic element of making meaning.
- Is highly related to background knowledge and vocabulary

A dark blue, irregularly shaped graphic with a splatter effect, containing white text. The graphic is centered on a white background and has a rough, ink-like border. The text is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

Besides the Big 6, what  
else is important to  
reading?



# Orthography

Orthographical knowledge is the awareness of the symbols (letters or groups of letters) used to represent the individual sounds of spoken language in written form.

The complexities of the English Alphabetic Code include:

1. One sound (phoneme) can be represented by one, two, three or four letters: e.g. k, sh, ng, igh, eigh
2. One sound can be represented by different spellings (graphemes): e.g. /oa/ is represented by: o, oa, ow, oe, o-e, eau, ough
3. One spelling can represent multiple sounds: e.g. 'ough': /oa/ though, /or/ thought, /oo/ through, /ou/ plough, /u/ thorough



# Spelling is taught alongside reading

1



Say the word.

2

**cat**  
↔

Stretch the word.

3

**cat**  
● ● ●

Count the sounds.

4

ca 

Represent each sound with a letter.

5

cat ✓

Check the spelling looks right.

The process of spelling is the reverse to reading. It requires children to identify the sounds in a word and then to match a letter (or letters) with that sound to essentially 'make' the word. This takes a five step process:

# Quality Literature

Literature forms a centre piece to being a reader or a writer. It comprises literary texts, such as short stories, novels, poetry, prose, plays, film and multimodal texts. The pleasures and understandings afforded by engaged reading, interpreting, appreciating, evaluating and creating literature enable children to expand their ideas, think deeply and notice new things in their world. Our children need:

- dedicated classroom time for children to read, or be read to, and to discuss their reading
- opportunities for children to be read to, to read with others, and to read by themselves
- opportunities for children to respond to what they read in a variety of ways

**The science of reading is inextricably linked to the love of reading. To teach and inspire the next generation, we simply can't have one without the other.**

# Grammar - Syntax

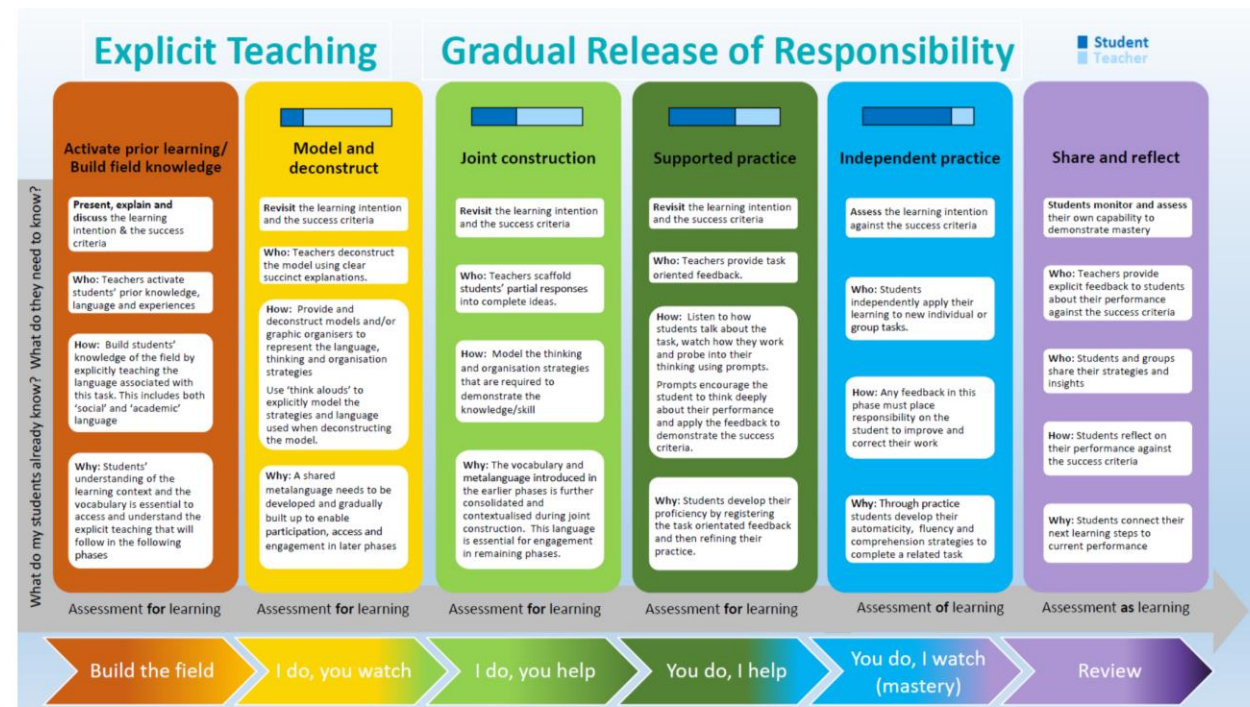
As children develop their oral language skills, they also develop an understanding of grammar—the set of structural rules that govern the combination of words and phrases into sentences, as well as how sentences are combined into paragraphs. Knowledge of these rules helps children understand the relationship among words and apply vocabulary and abstract thinking to their comprehension of oral language.

# Morphology

Morphology is the study of words and their parts. Morphemes, like prefixes, suffixes and base words, are defined as the smallest meaningful units of meaning. Morphemes are important for phonics in both reading and spelling, as well as in vocabulary and comprehension. Teaching morphemes unlocks the structures and meanings within words. It is very useful to have a strong awareness of prefixes, suffixes and base words. These are often spelt the same across different words, even when the sound changes, and often have a consistent purpose and/or meaning. Teaching morphemes unlocks the hidden structures and meanings within words. It is very useful to have strong awareness of prefixes, suffixes and base words.



Teaching is explicit,  
systematic and  
cumulative



# The Principles of Instruction

## 01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

## 02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



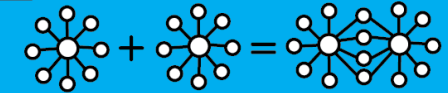
Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

## 03 ASK QUESTIONS



The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

## 04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

## 05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

## 06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask “Are there any questions?” No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

## 07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

## 08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

## 09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces ‘overlearning’ — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students’ working memory.

## 10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.



# Based on this research we will no longer be:

- Testing sight words based on rote memorisation – all words can be decoded
- Reading predictable books with beginners. We will use decodable books based on the sounds the children have been taught
- Asking children to use reading strategies that amount to guessing. We will teach children how to read all through the word.

