

Teaching Reading

*Realising the
reading potential
of every student*



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland.

We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.



Queensland's Reading Commitment: Ministerial Statement



Media release

Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations
and Minister for Racing
The Honourable Grace Grace

Queensland turns the page on reading in schools

- Queensland adopts new Reading Commitment
- Consistent statewide approach to teaching reading in schools with a strengthened focus on phonics
- Backed by a \$35 million investment
- Commitment builds on exceptional work already happening in classrooms

Queensland state schools are set to take a consistent statewide approach to teaching reading that reflects the latest research and has a strengthened focus on phonics.

Education Minister Grace Grace visited West End State School today to announce the Queensland Reading Commitment. It is backed by a \$35 million investment and builds on the exceptional work principals, teachers, teacher aides, and learning support staff already do, ensuring they have access to the latest research to inform their teaching of reading.

There is a growing body of research providing clearer guidance on the most effective and efficient way to teach reading. The updated version of the Australian Curriculum, which will be used in all Queensland schools by 2025, provides clearer guidance on teaching the essential components of reading.

Phonics involves explicit teaching of the sounds for each letter and groups of letters in a planned and logical order. Teaching students this letter-sounds relationship helps them to read.

The investment includes:

- More support for students in the classroom, with the specific support needed identified as the program rolls out
- Cutting edge professional development programs and masterclasses through the Education Futures Institute
- A comprehensive suite of reading materials including guidelines, resources, and advice
- Sharing best practice through demonstration schools, and mentoring from in school expert reading leaders
- Increased engagement with parents and families about helping their children with reading and the importance of starting before school
- Advice about reading difficulties and disorders through our Reading Centre, which has already provided thousands of families with support
- Strengthening key check points, including the use of the Year 1 Phonics Check
- Capability development and masterclasses for our teachers and teacher aides
- Working with universities to prepare preservice teachers
- Working with RTOs, such as TAFE Queensland, so our exceptional teacher aides can have their professional development recognised through formal qualifications

The Queensland Reading Commitment was developed in consultation with educators and key stakeholders. 13 schools helped co-design the commitment, including West End State School, with nearly another 50 trialling it over the past few months.

Changes will be implemented in a staged approach, with an initial intensive focus on Prep, Year 1, and Year 2. Schools will share further information directly with their school communities, and parents and families will be invited to information sessions to learn more about the commitment and how they can help their child foster a love of reading outside the classroom.

More than \$23 million per year is already provided directly to schools, based on need, to improve literacy and numeracy. Over 1,100 specialist learning support roles and more than 500 specialist staff, such as speech language pathologists, work with students who need

23 October 2023

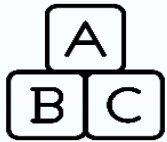
- Teach reading consistently using an evidence-informed approach across all Queensland state schools
- A comprehensive suite of reading materials including guidelines, resources and advice for schools to embed this consistent, evidence-informed approach to teaching reading.

Queensland's reading approach using v9 focuses on teaching the vital components of reading in a logical order, so that our students can quickly move beyond learning the basics.

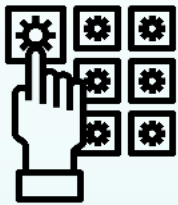


Updates to the Australian Curriculum: English

Examples in the Early Years



- Focus on phonics or teaching letter-sound correspondences



- Reading words by blending individual sounds
- Spelling words by segmenting them into individual sounds rather than learning to read and spell using visual memory



- Beginning readers practise word reading with decodable texts that have familiar letter-sound correspondences
- All students engage with rich curriculum texts

Reading Position statement

Department of Education



Reading Position statement

In Queensland state schools, reading is taught across all learning areas of the Australian Curriculum using evidence-informed teaching practices.

Our commitment to reading

To our students:
The Department of Education is committed to every student realising their reading potential. This is achieved through teaching reading across all learning areas and subjects of the Australian Curriculum using an evidence-informed approach. Research suggests that 95% of students can learn to read successfully when provided explicit, evidence-informed reading instruction (Hempstead, 2013; Snow, 2020).

To our staff:
The department will provide on-demand access to a suite of capability development, resources and advice that reflects contemporary research evidence and best practice. This will support educators and leaders on their continuous journey to improve student reading outcomes.



The importance of reading

Reading has the power to change lives. It plays an essential role in learning, securing a job and being an active and engaged member of society. Reading provides us with information, knowledge, and makes us aware of people and places beyond our immediate circles. Learning foundational reading skills supports wellbeing and can translate to a love of reading and literature. As so much of our world rapidly changes around us, learning to read remains one of the most essential outcomes of schooling.

Reading

Reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from text. Unlike speaking and listening, reading is not a naturally developing skill – all students need to be explicitly taught to read (Castles et al., 2018; Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2017; Snow, 2020).



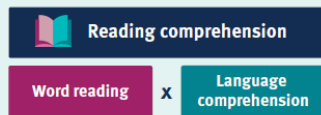
Our evidence base

Reading is taught through all learning areas and subjects of the Australian Curriculum, using evidence-informed practices.

Evidence-informed practices are drawn from a vast body of multi-disciplinary research which provides an understanding of how we learn to read, and the most effective instructional strategies to teach reading (Australian Education Research Organisation, 2023; Castles et al., 2018; Moats, 2020).

The Simple View of Reading

The Simple View of Reading (Gough and Tunmer, 1986; Tunmer and Gough, 1990; Hoover and Tunmer, 2020) is a theoretical framework widely supported for understanding reading (Snow, 2020). It suggests that reading comprehension, or being able to gain meaning from text, is the product of word reading and language comprehension. The Simple View of Reading emphasises that if either component (word reading or language comprehension) is underdeveloped, reading comprehension will be impacted.



Word reading involves the use of phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge to decode written words. In Standard Australian English (SAE) this requires students to map 44 speech sounds (phonemes) to 26 letter or letter combinations (graphemes). Students blend sounds to read words, and segment words into sounds to spell. When students repeatedly decode words using letter-sound relationships, the words are committed to long-term memory through the process of orthographic mapping. This process supports automaticity and fluent reading (Ehri, 2014).

Word reading skills, specifically phonemic awareness and phonics, require explicit instruction (Australian Education Research Organisation, 2023). Systematic synthetic phonics provides a solid foundation for word reading and writing by teaching the grapheme-phoneme correspondences of SAE in a planned, cumulative sequence. Decodable texts support beginning readers to apply their phonics knowledge and phonemic awareness at text level.

Language comprehension (sometimes termed listening comprehension in literature) is the ability to gain meaning from the language of text. It includes oral language, background knowledge, vocabulary, syntax and inferencing skills (Hoover and Tunmer, 2020). Language comprehension continues to develop across the life-span, and becomes the critical determinant of reading comprehension when word reading is automatic.

In the early years of school, shared and dialogic discussions about texts can support students reading. In later years, strategic text-based discussions related to complex curriculum texts continue to build reading comprehension.



Scarborough's Reading Rope

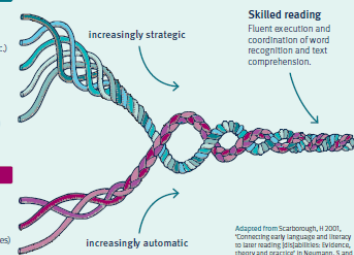
Scarborough's Reading Rope (Scarborough, 2001) confirms and extends the Simple View of Reading, identifying language comprehension and word recognition as essential components for skilled reading. It provides an additional scaffold through the rope metaphor, representing the interaction and interconnectedness of the components as students transition from beginning to skilled reader.

Language comprehension

- Background Knowledge (facts, concepts, etc.)
- Vocabulary (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- Language Structures (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- Verbal Reasoning (inference, metaphor, etc.)
- Literacy Knowledge (print concepts, genres, etc.)

Word reading

- Phonological Awareness (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- Decoding (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)
- Sight Recognition (of familiar words)



The Big 6 – Components that contribute to reading

Reviews into reading consistently identify key components necessary for reading (Korza, 2014; NICHD, 2000). Rather than being a framework for planning reading instruction, research emphasises the interconnectedness of the six components and sequence in which they occur for reading (Seidenberg et al., 2020).

Phonemic awareness: the ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) within words

Phonics: the relationship between letters and sounds used to decode words when reading, and encode words in spelling

Fluency: the ability to read with accuracy, automaticity and prosody; fluency is an outcome of the components of reading

Vocabulary: the understanding of word meanings

Comprehension: understanding the meaning of written text; comprehension is an outcome of the components of reading

Oral language: provides the foundation for reading and writing

Reading is a complex process that involves the integration of these components. The Simple View of Reading and Scarborough's Reading Rope provide a framework for understanding how the components are interconnected and lead to skilled reading comprehension (Australian Education Research Organisation, 2023).

Text selection

As students' progress through year levels, they read increasingly complex curriculum texts, both in terms of structure and content. This requires continual instruction in the underpinning components of reading to ensure that students are able to read, comprehend and learn from texts. Intentional text selection that builds students' knowledge in a cumulative way supports reading. Authentic texts including picture books, literary and non-fiction texts are an essential component of reading instruction, and support student engagement.

Assessment of reading

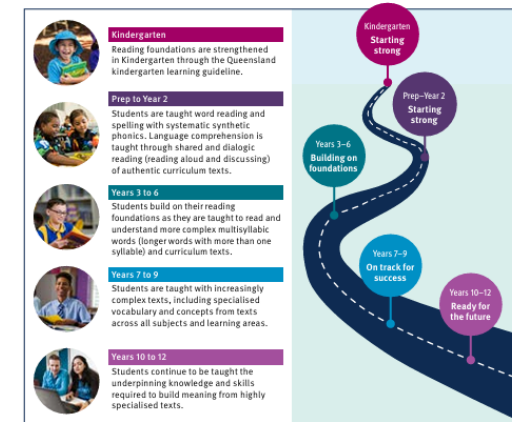
Reading comprehension is the outcome of a number of interconnected and interdependent cognitive processes. Given this complexity, assessing reading involves collecting specific data about a student's learning in relation to the essential components of reading, so that teaching is responsive to students' needs.

Differentiated reading instruction

Teaching reading in Queensland state schools is characterised by sequential content delivery, structured lessons and formative assessment to inform responsive and targeted differentiation. An explicit approach to teaching reading includes students mastering foundational skills before moving to more complex concepts. An individualised approach supports students across all year levels to retain knowledge and skills through purposeful practice, and the application of taught skills in line with their individual learning strengths and needs.

Teaching reading across the phases of school

At each stage of learning, reading plays an integral role in students experiencing success. Reading is taught through the Australian Curriculum using evidence-informed practices across all learning areas and phases of learning.

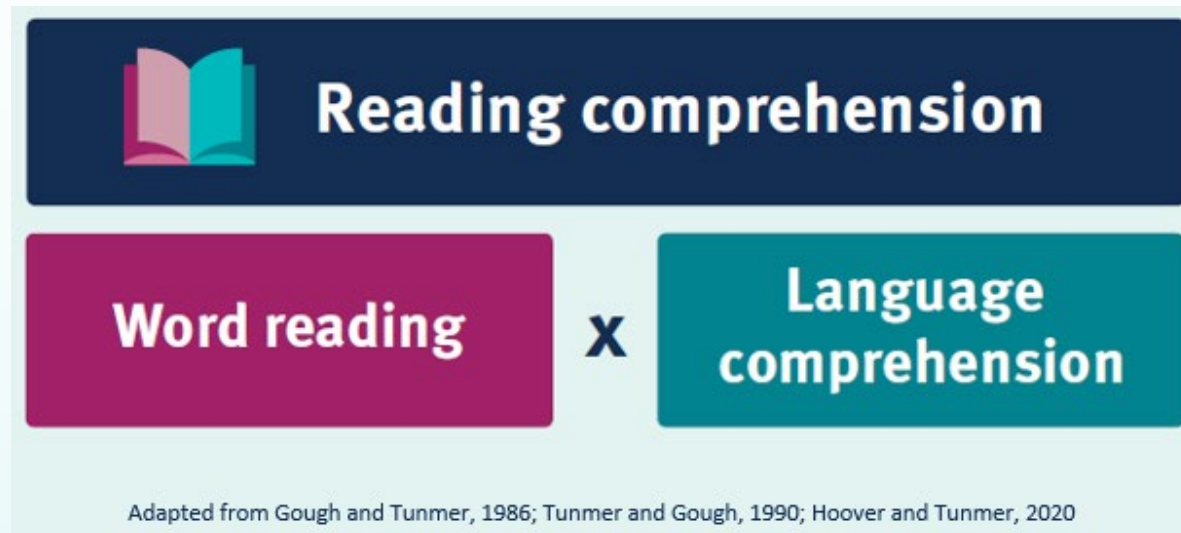


For further information please contact: LiteracyP-12@qed.qld.gov.au

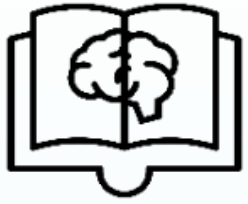
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Evidence to inform our reading instruction

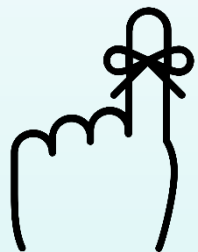


How children learn to read



Research tells us:

- Our brains are not pre-wired for learning to read.
- For the majority of children, reading needs to be explicitly taught in a step-by-step way over a number of years.
- All children need to learn the same reading skills but the effort required and the time it takes may differ.



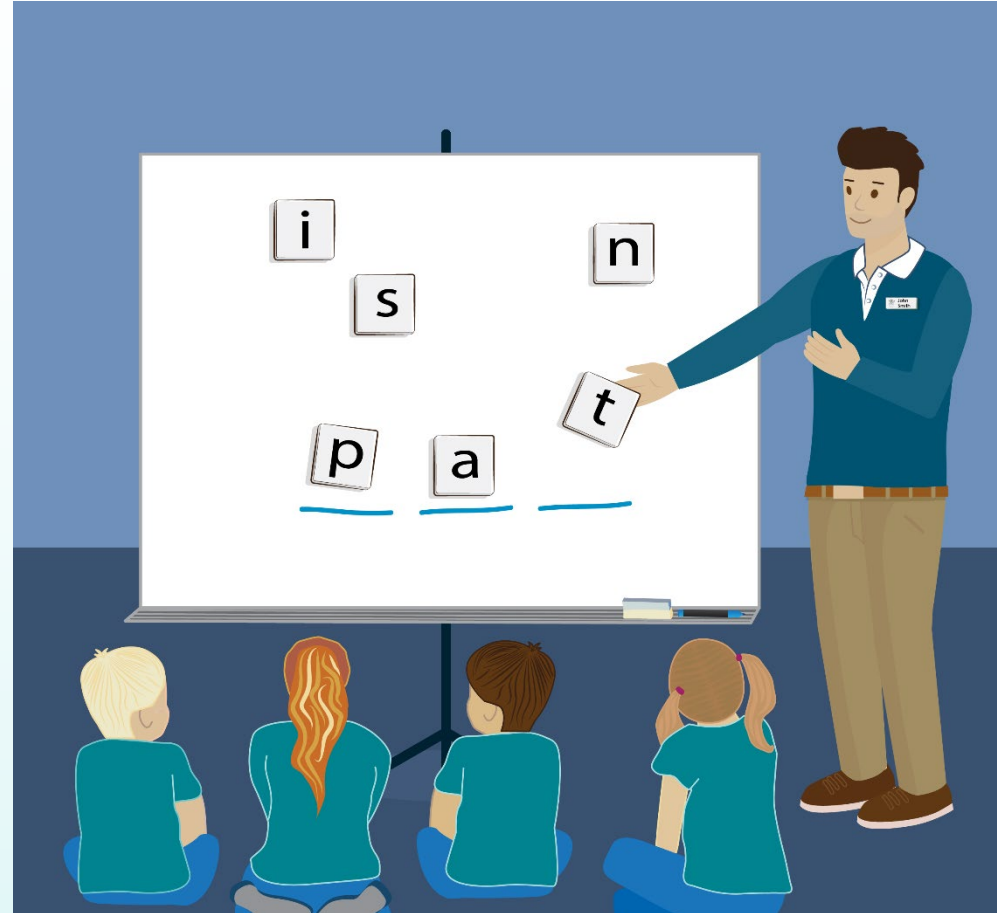
Remember:

- Reading the words on the page is only part of being able to read.
- We also need strong language skills to understand what we read.

How will my child be taught word reading?

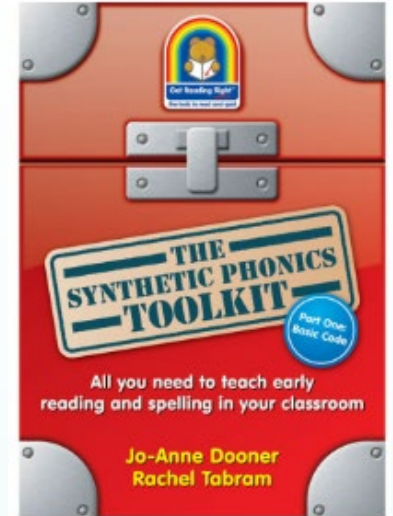
In the classroom:

- Explicit, systematic synthetic phonics aligned to the school's phonics scope and sequence
- Instruction in morphology and word origins
- Fluency practice
- Practising with decodable texts



What Maleny is Doing to Deliver Word Reading

- We have been delivering a systematic synthetic phonics program for the past 9 years based on the Get Reading Right resource. This gave us a clear sequence and followed our explicit instruction method of teaching.
- Decodable texts have been purchased to support the program with a new online decodable resource being purchased this year with the help of a generous bequeathment from the grandmother of Alex and Xavier Bourne. This is to support our teaching not take over from it.
- Fluency sheets have been created by the Literacy Coach to help support Fluency and to mirror the sequence from our synthetic phonics program.
- Vocabulary is a focus at the moment. This will enhance the teaching and understanding of morphology and word origins.



Word reading

Beginning readers start with decodable texts

Practise with decodable texts — books with letter-sound correspondences and high-frequency words already taught in class.

Listen to your child read using the reliable and consistent strategy of decoding — *‘Say the sounds and read the word’*.

Help your child write words or sentences by encouraging them to, *‘Say the sounds and write the word’*.

Decodable texts



Can I sit?



Tom sat.



Tom sat on the mat.

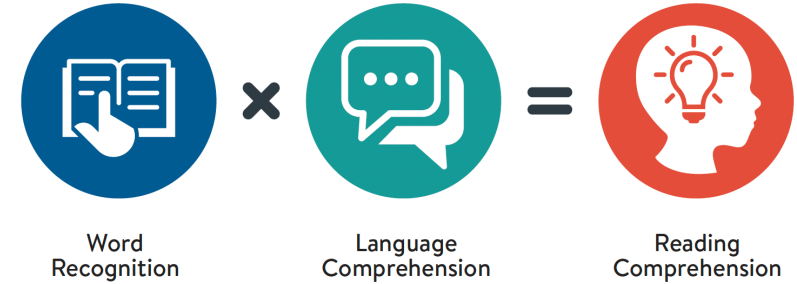
How will my child be taught language comprehension?

In the classroom:

- Engaging with authentic curriculum texts in English and other learning areas
- Engaging with a wide range of texts and topics to build background knowledge and vocabulary
- Whole class, explicit instruction in components of language comprehension
- Text-based questions and discussions to support and build student comprehension



What Maleny is Doing to Deliver Language Comprehension



- Comprehension was our main focus on our last journey into improving our student's reading.
- This has been the cornerstone of our improvement in reading with student's comprehension scores in reading testing improving.
- Our goal is to maintain this success and to enhance the student's understanding by delivering more shared reading lessons to develop discussion and comprehension, and to utilise varied types of texts that will interest and challenge the students.
- Children will be also given the skills to understand new vocabulary and the opportunities to use these words in their learning.

Language comprehension

Building language comprehension through shared reading

Share different books in different ways. Some books help your child to read the words and others help to understand the words.

Keep reading aloud together authentic texts such as library books, even when your child is older and has learnt to read for themselves.

Talk about the books you read aloud together to help them understand the story and what the author means.

READING AT HOME

As part of the enhanced changes, we will be asking parents to support your child/ren's reading at home in two ways;

- 1) Fluency Sheets (P-2) - Engage your child/ren in using the decodable fluency sheets that will be provided. These fluency sheets relate to the exact phonemes (sounds) that your child/ren has/have been learning and the graphemes (letters) that help make them. The fluency sheet is divided into sections and each teacher will give instructions on what and how the children are to use them. These fluency sheets will also have camera words to learn which are words that are frequently used but may be difficult to sound out. The aim of these sheets is to not just use them once but repeatedly over a time set by the teacher. Children need to become fluent by working on their PEAs - Pace, Expression and Accuracy.
- 2) Shared Reading – Here we can share a more interesting book with the child. Unfortunately, decodable texts can be quite bland to read so this is an opportunity to ensure the love of reading is cultivated. The book your child/ren may have with them could be a book from the library or a reader from the classroom (authentic texts). These books are usually not completely decodable and hence will need to be read with or to the reader. This is an opportunity to have a conversation with your child/ren about the book. Such discussions could be around a retell of what happened to what the main character was like. You can also discuss their thoughts on the book and why they thought what they did. The teacher may even give a set of questions to ask or have a set focus to discuss.

HELPING TO SUPPORT PARENTS AT HOME

Department of Education

Reading
through the
Australian Curriculum

Supporting your beginning reader

Reading words

Look at the letters left to right

Say each sound

Blend the sounds

Read the word

train

train

train

train

For words with uncommon spelling support your beginning reader by telling them the uncommon letter-sound correspondence and modelling how to read the word.

said

In the word 'said' the /e/ is spelled with 'ai' /s/ / e / d/ → said

Shared reading, viewing and listening to texts beyond independent reading ability is important to build your child's language comprehension skills.

You can support your child when sharing texts by:

Discussing the text and forming predictions

Discuss the title, words and images.
Ask open ended questions:

- Why do you think there is an image of a ___?
- What do you think will happen in this story?
- What do you think will happen next?

Modelling your thinking and asking questions that encourage your child to make inferences and connections

- Make your thinking visible by modelling how you make an inference.
- What do you think?
- Why do you think that?

Asking questions that promote back and forth discussion

- Throughout the text take time to stop and discuss.
- Ask questions that encourage a response, rather than yes or no.
- Why do you think the character did that?
- How do you think the character would be feeling?

Talking about new words

- Discuss the meaning of words and how they help us to understand texts.

Modelling how to summarise and make personal connections

- After reading parts or the whole text, discuss what the text was about, the main idea, what you liked and didn't like or any new learnings.
- Discussion might include what the story reminds you or your child of. Have you ever ___?

Queensland
 Government

Working together



Students

Engaging — reading at school and practising reading at home.

Teachers

Support Staff
School Leaders

Step-by step, explicit teaching of reading skills and lots of opportunities for practise.

Parents

Carers
Families
Communities

Creating **opportunities to practise** reading skills at home that have already been taught at school.

Activity

Reflecting on how
reading is taught

Reflecting on how
reading is taught in
the school ...

What did you hear?

What questions do you have?

What would you like to know more about?