

THE 5 BIG IDEAS IN Reading Instructional Practices

Reading is a complex system of deriving meaning that requires numerous skills and abilities. Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR) presents evidence on how best to deliver reading instruction. This research has helped identify five essential components for effective reading instruction. The 5 Big Ideas of Reading are...

Phonemic Awareness —

the ability to hear and identify sounds (phonemes) in spoken words

Phonics —

the understanding of the relationship between written language and spoken language

Fluency —

the ability to read text accurately and with expression

Vocabulary —

the development of knowledge about words necessary for communication

Comprehension —

the ability to understand and gain meaning from written or spoken language

The Reading First principal must understand each of the components of effective instruction and its role in determining the best classroom practices. The following are effective classroom practices for each of The 5 Big Ideas in Reading.

I. Phonemic Awareness

- _____ Students are engaged in phonemic awareness activities for 10 to 15 minutes a day.
- _____ Activities develop or support the two critical phonemic awareness skills: blending and segmenting phonemes.
- _____ Activities are done with small groups.
- _____ Teaching is done explicitly.
- _____ Skill development is systematic.
- _____ The auditory task of manipulating phonemes is reinforced, when appropriate, by the kinesthetic task of manipulating tokens or chips, and counters.

II. Phonics and Word Study

- _____ Students work with letters and sounds beginning in kindergarten. Teaching is done explicitly.
- _____ Letter-sound correspondences are presented and reviewed in a systematic and cumulative fashion.
- _____ Students understand why they are learning letter-sounds.
- _____ Activities are done in small groups.
- _____ Activities can be tailored to help students master specific sounds.
- _____ Records are kept—for each child in the group—of which sounds are familiar and which need more work.
- _____ Activities involve both blending and segmenting sounds.
- _____ Letter-sound knowledge is applied in daily reading practice.
- _____ Phonics instruction is integrated with word study instruction.
- _____ Teaching is done explicitly.
- _____ Instruction encourages students to examine words to find regular patterns and similarities.
- _____ Students are encouraged to focus on letters and spellings.
- _____ Word study instruction supports spelling as well as reading.
- _____ Word recognition strategies are applied to daily reading activities.

III. Fluency

- _____ Students are provided many models of fluent reading.
- _____ Students receive direct instruction in fluent reading, including return sweeps, eye-voice span, intonation and emphasis, and phrase breaks.
- _____ Students are supported in their reading by reading with fluent readers and with audiotapes.
- _____ Students read and reread the same text several times.
- _____ Students read texts that are at their individual independent or instructional reading level.
- _____ Students spend 20 to 30 minutes a day reading aloud.
- _____ Teacher reads daily to children.

IV. Vocabulary

- _____ Students are immersed in words.
- _____ Students are read to every day.
- _____ Students learn sophisticated words for familiar concepts.
- _____ Word learning occurs daily.
- _____ Students are encouraged to use the words they learn.
- _____ Students learn the skills they need to be independent word learners.

V. Comprehension

- _____ Students read actively and construct meaning from what they read.
- _____ Students identify major elements in texts and are able to construct oral and visual representations of what they read.
- _____ Students connect personally with literature by making associations between themselves and the characters, settings, problems, or events in the stories they read.
- _____ Students identify favorite parts of literature and explain why they are favorites.

- _____ Students select literature they will enjoy reading and know favorite books and authors.
- _____ Students become familiar with authors and think of books as being written by people.
- _____ Students evaluate books and know the characteristics that define high quality books.
- _____ Students share responses to books they read.
- _____ Students participate in discussions about books with their peers.
- _____ Teacher guides children to critical and other higher order thinking.