

The simple view of reading and literacy acquisition

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Understanding dyslexia and literacy acquisition' from the Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Includes:

- The simple view of reading
- Scarborough's Reading Rope
- Word recognition
- The building blocks of reading comprehension
- The goal of reading
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Strategy: [Understanding dyslexia and literacy acquisition](#)

Suggestion: [The simple view of reading and literacy acquisition](#)

Date

13 June 2026

Link

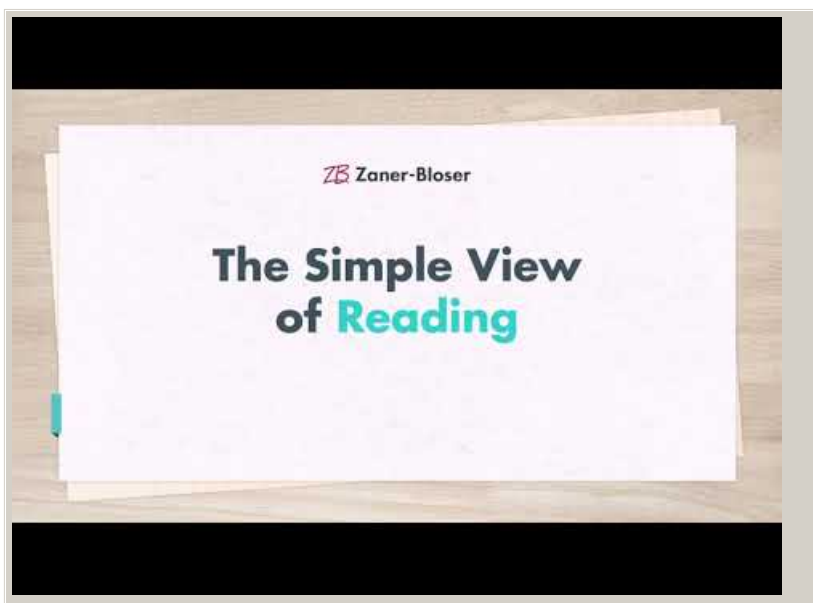
inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/dyslexia-and-learning/the-simple-view-of-reading-and-literacy-acquisition

The simple view of reading

Learning to read

consists of developing skills in two critical areas:

1. **Word recognition** – recognising words quickly and accurately
2. **Comprehension** – understanding the language being read.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/QtDEMHRd8E>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[The Science of Reading](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtDEMHRd8E>

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Scarborough's Reading Rope

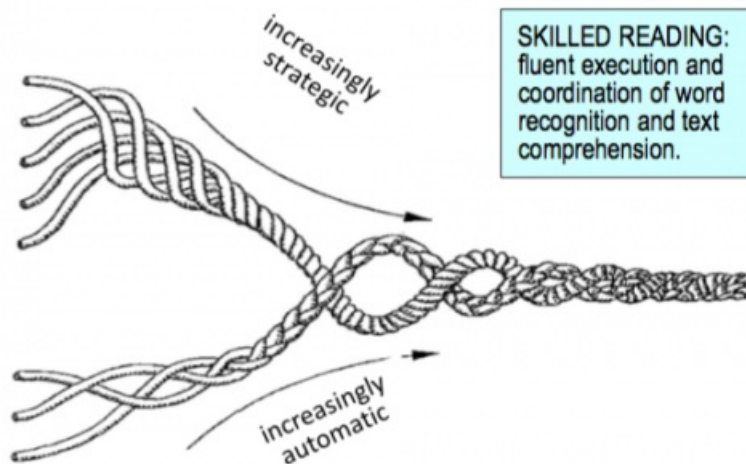
Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001)

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

WORD RECOGNITION

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition



Reading is a multifaceted skill, gradually acquired over years of instruction and practice.

Source:

[Connecting early language and literacy to later reading \(dis\)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice](https://johnbald.typepad.com/files/handbookearlylit.pdf)
<https://johnbald.typepad.com/files/handbookearlylit.pdf>

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Word recognition

Teach these skills explicitly to all learners, particularly learners with dyslexia.

To build **word recognition skills**, provide:

- explicit instruction in alphabetic coding skills
- opportunities to practise and receive feedback on using alphabetic coding skills while reading.

To build **alphabetic coding skills**, focus on teaching:

- the [alphabetic principle](#)
- letter knowledge
- phonemic awareness

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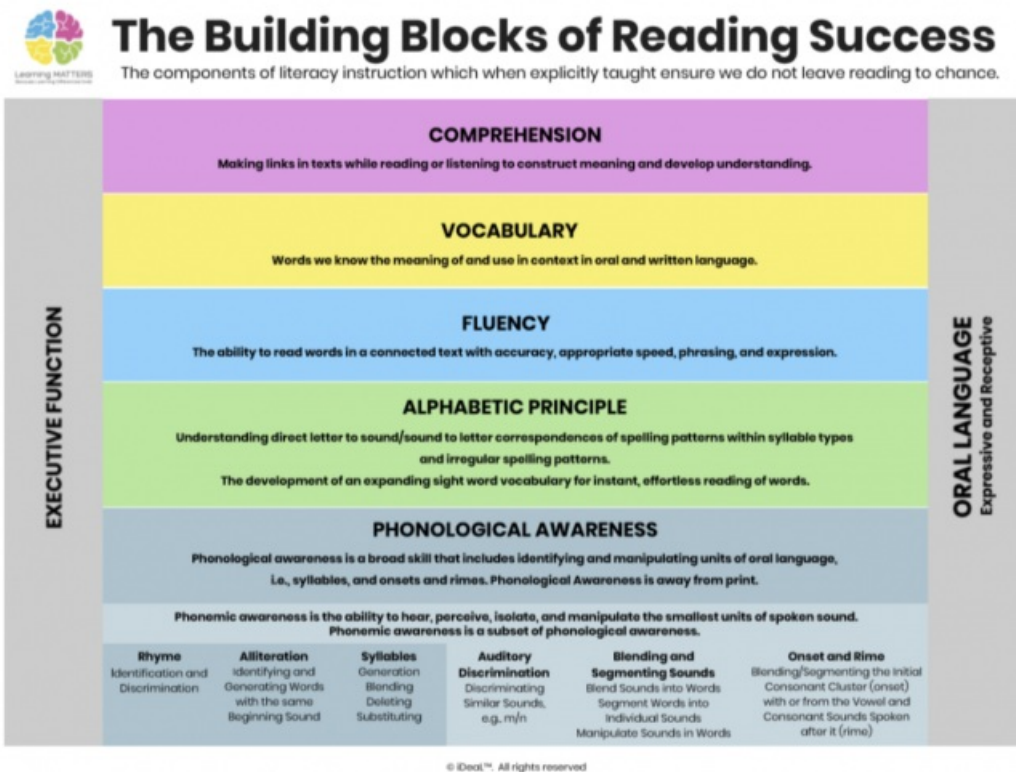
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The building blocks of reading comprehension



Source:

[Learning Matters](#)

<https://www.learningmatters.co.nz/shop/product/338444/Letter-Formation-A3-Poster/>

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The goal of reading

Reading comprehension is not the end-goal of reading; learning, understanding, wondering, and enjoyment are some of reading's true goals.

Source:

[The Right to Read Project](#)

<https://righttoreadproject.com/2019/06/02/part-2-complicating-the-simple-view-of-reading/>

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Useful resources



The simple view of reading

Read time: 20 min

This article explains Gough and Tunmer's simple view of reading. It contains a video, definitions, and important findings from research.

[Visit website](#)



Put reading first: The research building blocks of reading instruction

This guide contains five sections identified in the National Reading Panel Report: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. Each section defines the skill, reviews the evidence from research, suggests implications for classroom instruction, describes proven strategies for teaching reading skills, and addresses frequently raised questions.

Publisher: National Institute for Literacy (NIFL)

[Visit website](#)



Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert

Read time: 160 min

This research paper provides a comprehensive review of the science of learning to read. It covers earliest alphabetic skills to word recognition and skilled text comprehension. It includes an explanation of why phonics instruction is central to learning and a review of research, with information on how phonics informs effective classroom practice.

Publisher: SAGE Publications

[Visit website](#)

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