

Understanding Structured Literacy

A suggestion for implementing the strategy

'Understanding dyslexia and literacy acquisition' from the Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

- Includes:**
- Components of structured literacy
 - Key features of structured literacy
 - Plan a systematic approach
 - Provide explicit instruction
 - Hands-on, engaging, and multi-modal
 - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

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

Suggestion: [Understanding Structured Literacy](#)

Date

22 June 2026

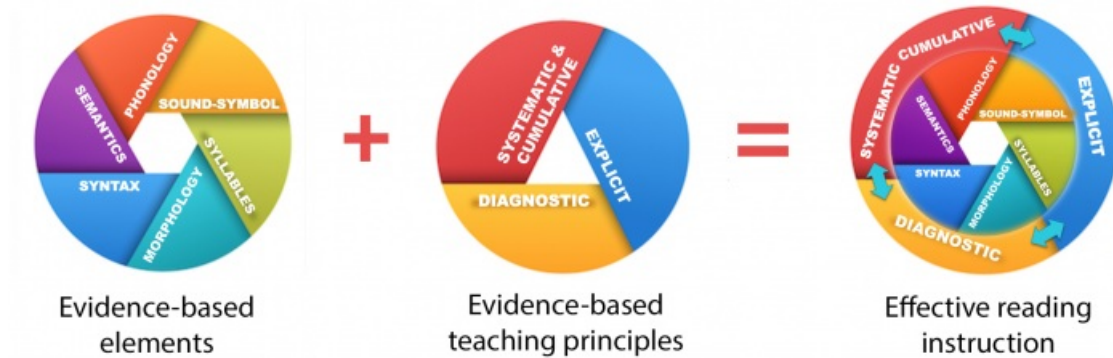
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inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/dyslexia-and-learning/understanding-structured-literacy

Components of structured literacy

Structured literacy

Explicit teaching of systematic word identification and decoding strategies



Source: © 2016 Cowen for International Dyslexia Association
<https://app.box.com/s/2yqu2ke21mxs0hz9l77owdlorgvtesyq>

Source:

Cowen for International Dyslexia Association
<https://dyslexiaida.org/what-is-structured-literacy/>

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Key features of structured literacy

A structured literacy approach is recommended for students with dyslexia and those who are having difficulty with decoding because it directly addresses phonological skills, decoding, and spelling.

A structured literacy approach provides:

- explicit, systematic, and sequential teaching of literacy at multiple levels – phonemes, letter–sound relationships, syllable patterns, morphemes, vocabulary, sentence structure, paragraph structure, and text structure
- cumulative practice and ongoing review
- a high level of student–teacher interaction
- the use of carefully chosen examples and non-examples
- decodable texts
- prompt, corrective feedback.

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Plan a systematic approach

The goal of systematic teaching is the automatic and fluent application of language knowledge to read for meaning.

- ✓ Plan systematic and cumulative sequences of instruction, which progress from prerequisite skills onto more advanced skills.
- ✓ Give learners ample opportunities to apply their skills in reading texts they are capable of decoding and comprehending.
- ✓ Use student responses to adjust pacing, presentation, and amount of practice.
- ✓ Monitor progress closely through informal (observation) and formal (standardised) measures.

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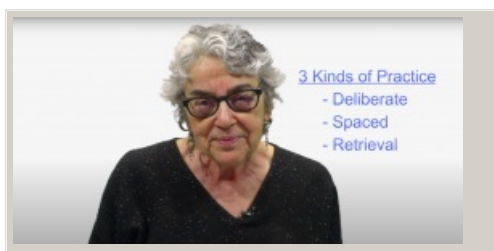
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Provide explicit instruction

Explain each concept clearly. Provide guided practice. Students are not expected to discover or intuit language concepts simply from exposure to language or reading.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/i-qNpFtcynI>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[Center for Dyslexia MTSU \(US\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCyEWT55xVRHZWb9IX9HlaQ>

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Hands-on, engaging, and multi-modal

Pair listening, speaking, reading, and writing with one another to foster multi-modal language learning.

Include hands-on learning such as:

- moving tiles into sound boxes as words are analysed
- using hand gestures to support memory for associations
- building words with letter tiles
- assembling sentences with words on cards
- colour coding sentences in paragraphs.

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Useful resources



Structured literacy: An introductory guide

Read time: 5 min

A comprehensive and easy-to-read explanation of this research-based instructional approach.

Publisher: International Dyslexia Association

[Visit website](#)



Structured literacy: Effective instruction for students with dyslexia and related reading difficulties

A short explanation of structured literacy.

Publisher: International Dyslexia Association

[Visit website](#)



Explicit instruction: What you need to know

Read time: 10 min

An explanation of how explicit instruction teaches skills or concepts using direct, structured instruction, modelling how to start and succeed on a task and giving ample time to practise – includes practical advice.

Publisher: Understood

[Visit website](#)

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