Literacy Instruction & Dyslexia Support Plan

August 2023

Alignment to Strategic Plan 2027

- **Goal Area #1:** Effective and consistent instructional practices that meet the needs of all students

Background

- District data shows gaps in literacy skills for some student groups, which have widened due to the pandemic
- Current adopted elementary ELA curriculum has a balanced literacy approach, which has been proven to be ineffective for many students
- MTSS development and implementation including Universal Data Cycles and COST began recently as a part of Strategic Plan 2027
- Student data has been used inconsistently to drive instruction until recently addressed through Universal Data Cycles.
- District's process in identifying students who may be at-risk for dyslexia and supporting their literacy needs needed to be expanded and refined
- CDE has launched the student reading initiative with the goal that every child will learn to read by the 3rd grade

Vision for Literacy at MVWSD

- MVWSD's goal is that all students are reading by the 3rd grade, in alignment with the state of California's literacy initiative
- The following actions will support this goal over the next several years:
    - Adopt an elementary English Language Arts curriculum based on Science of Reading
    - Adopt curriculum for PreK and TK that is aligned to the elementary curriculum
    - Provide Science of Reading training for all elementary teachers, including continued opportunities for new teachers
    - Identify, purchase, and implement structured reading intervention programs and/or materials
    - Implement the California Dyslexia Guidelines recommendations

Review of Current Research

Reading Development: Simple View of Reading
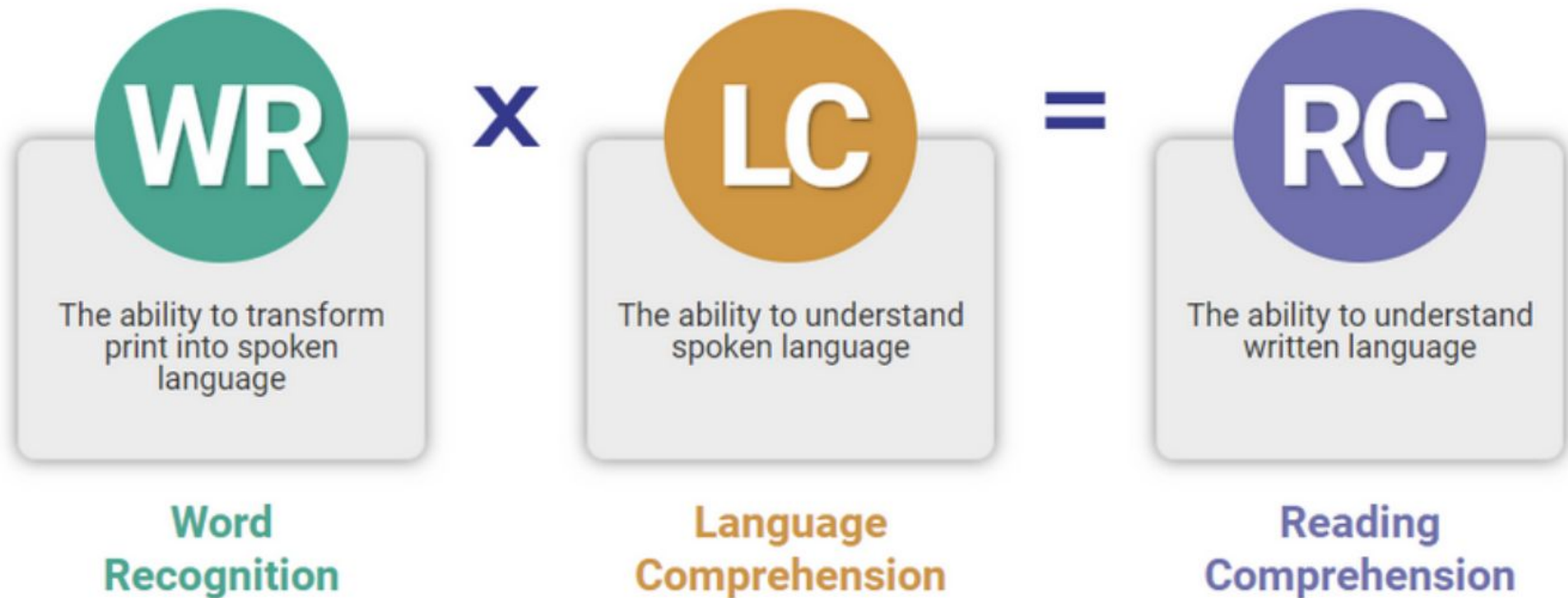
The Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986)
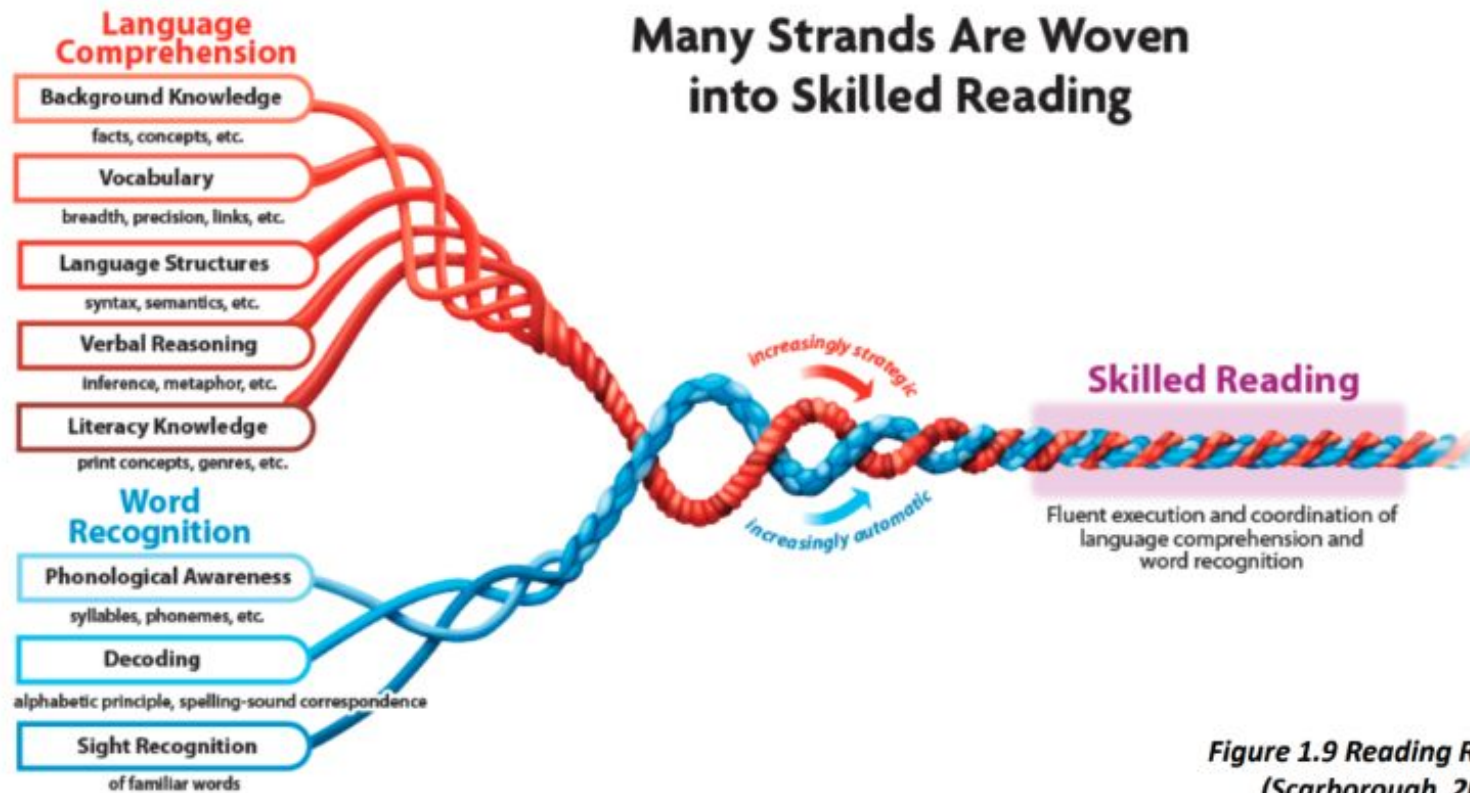
Reading Development: Scarborough's Reading Rope

Figure 1.9 Reading Rope (Scarborough, 2001)

Reading Instruction

Balanced Literacy

- Addresses reading instruction through a variety of means, including a combination of whole language approach and structured reading with no prescribed amount of each
- Typically lacks systematic, explicit instruction of phonemic awareness and phonics
- Uses repeated exposure and context clues to support decoding development
- No structured or sequenced approach
- Proven less effective than structured literacy

Balanced Literacy - Cueing System Artifacts
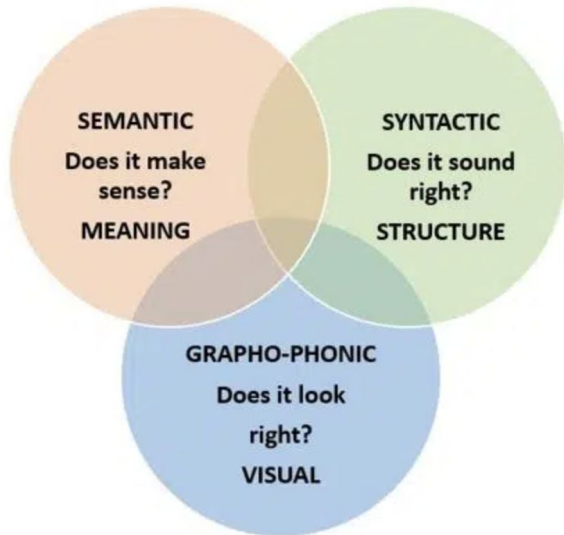
We need our pajamas to camp.

Reading Instruction

Structured Literacy

- Commonly referred to as Science of Reading
- Requires systematic and explicit teaching of literacy components
- Explicit instruction of phonemic awareness and phonics
- Follows a sequence of instruction
- Proven effective in developing reading and writing skills, inclusive of students with reading difficulties or disabilities
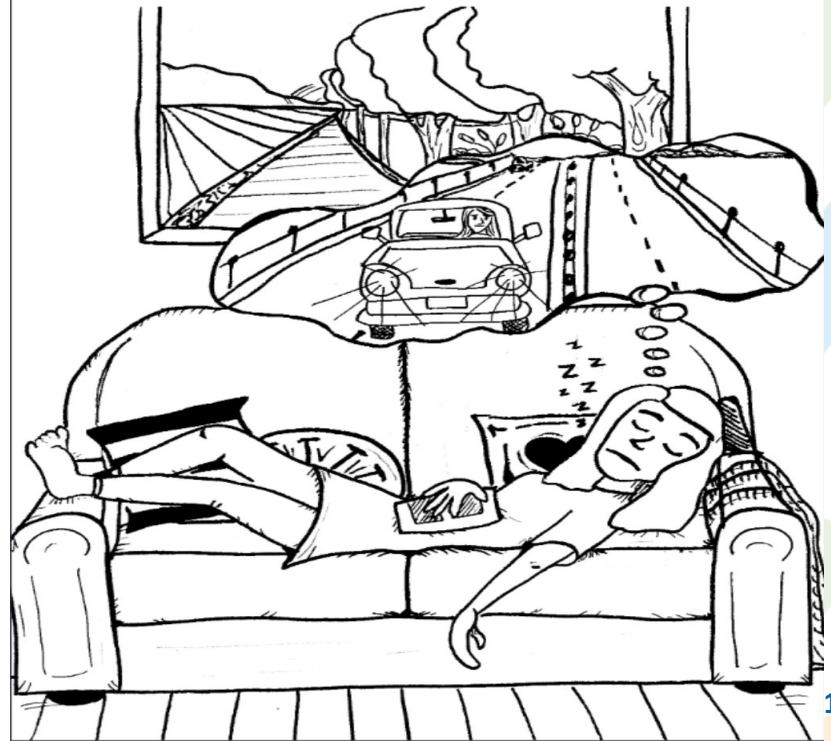
Structured Literacy Artifacts

Twilight Nightmare
(Book 58)

Concept: igh

Red Words: a, as, car, could(n't), do, from, have, of, or, should, some, the, there, to, want(ed), was, were, what

Vocabulary: delight, frighten, nightmare, sigh, slight, trunk, twilight

Word Count: 221

At twilight last night, Beth was on the couch feeling that she might want to take a nap. She fell asleep and began to dream. She dreamed that she was lost on a highway. She wanted to get home, but she couldn't.

MTSS & Literacy

- MTSS fully integrates support to all students, including literacy, and addresses the following:
  - Universal screening, important in identifying students at-risk for dyslexia
  - Process for analyzing and monitoring student progress and needs
  - Continuum of supports using a tiered approach for all students

Literacy Difficulties and Disabilities

- Occur on a continuum, from mild to severe
- Can include difficulties in word reading accuracy, reading comprehension, reading fluency, or any combination
- Dyslexia is one form of a reading disability
  - also occurs on a continuum
- Students are best taught through structured literacy instruction
- Level of intervention will depend on how significant the student's needs are
  - Students may benefit from accommodations, assistive technology, and/or reading intervention
  - Some students may qualify for a Section 504 plan or IEP, but not all will

Dyslexia

- Specific learning disability that is neurological in origin, typically a phonological processing deficit
- Does not impact a person's IQ or cognitive ability
- People with dyslexia may have difficulties with: accurate and/or fluent word recognition, decoding, which often affects effective reading comprehension; and spelling/writing
  - Level of impact on the person varies from mild to severe difficulties
- Research varies on prevalence of dyslexia, approximately 5-20% of the population (Wagner, et al., 2020)
- Occurs across all demographic groups

Review of Neighboring Districts

- District leaders reviewed literacy practices in Palo Alto, Los Altos, Cupertino, and Sunnyvale
- Balanced and structured literacy represented
  - Most use a tiered instructional approach
- i-Ready Screener used in Palo Alto for Universal Screening
- Orton-Gillingham instructional practices used in Palo Alto and Los Altos
- Palo Alto recently adopted the new version of Benchmark Advance ELA curriculum

Data Summary

Data Referenced

- i-Ready Dyslexia Screener administered in November/December 2022 after Diagnostic 2 administration
- Diagnostic provides information for students identified for reading difficulty or further Task Administration for certain students who may be at-risk for dyslexia.

Data - i-Ready Diagnostic 2 Proficiency (K-3)

	Reading Comprehension	Vocabulary	High Frequency Words	Phonics	Phonological Awareness
Overall	53%	53%	66%	58%	75%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	19%	20%	37%	22%	52%
English Learners	16%	16%	32%	23%	49%

Data - i-Ready Diagnostic 2 Proficiency (K-3)

	Reading Comprehension	Vocabulary	High Frequency Words	Phonics	Phonological Awareness
Overall	53%	53%	66%	58%	75%
Hispanic/Latino	25%	8%	42%	70%	57%
White	65%	67%	76%	70%	87%
Asian	76%	74%	86%	82%	88%

Data - i-Ready Dyslexia Screener (K-3)

	Identified for reading difficulty	Identified At-Risk for dyslexia
Overall	19% (349)	13% (248)
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	36% (209)	26% (147)
English Learners	50% (237)	38% (177)

Data - i-Ready Dyslexia Screener

	Asian	White	Hispanic/Latino
Identified for Reading Difficulty	5% (16)	10% (32)	85% (277)
Identified At-Risk of Dyslexia	4% (9)	9% (21)	87% (206)

Data Summary

- Overall - Castro, Mistral, Monta Loma, and Theuerkauf are underperforming other elementary schools across all domains
- Students who are Hispanic/Latino represented 44% of the overall district population, but 85% of students identified for Reading Difficulty and 87% of students who scored at-risk for dyslexia
- 58% of the Hispanic/Latino students identified are also English Learners
- High percentage of students identified for reading difficulties are Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, ELs, and/or Hispanic/Latino

Screening Process

Why i-Ready Screener?

- Approved universal screener in 22 states; including OR, AZ, ME, MI, etc
- Ease of use and familiarity for both students and staff
  - Regular diagnostic is step 1
  - Only small percentage are referred for paper-pencil tasks in step 2, avg. 2-7 minutes per student
  - maintains consistency until an anticipated state approved list of screeners is released
- High ratings from National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) in areas of reliability, validity, and classification accuracy
- Adopted by Palo Alto Unified in 2022-23
- Science of Reading assessment alignment

Screening Process

- Students in grades Kindergarten-Third grade are screened using the i-Ready Dyslexia Screener
- Students are either:
  - 'identified for Reading Difficulty' or not
  - students identified for Reading Difficulty are then identified 'at-risk for dyslexia' or not
- Instruction is designed at the site level based on the needs identified through the diagnostic and screening
  - additional supports are implemented for students, including reading intervention and assistive technology
- Parents are notified after the screening process is completed with information regarding supports put in place for student
- Student progress is monitored through the Universal Data Cycle Process, COST or SST as appropriate
- Students are rescreened in December and process continues

Current Work

Current Work

- MTSS
  - Full implementation of MTSS and its processes, UDC, COST, and SST
  - Professional development for district leaders, instructional coaches, teachers, and staff on all MTSS processes
  - Continue and improve intentional UDC action planning for literacy and Response to Instruction
  - Expanded Universal Screening (Fall and Winter 2023)
    - Explore options for a layered screening approach
  - Expanded partnership with UCSF's Multitudes screener
  - Continued Reading A to Z and expand systematic reading interventions for students

Current Work

- Early Literacy Team
  - Director of Literacy
  - Literacy teachers to support students at sites based on student level data
  - Teachers trained in systematic, multisensory reading instruction through IMSE's Orton Gillingham (OG) training
  - Increased support through additional instructional assistants
- Elementary ELA Curriculum adoption in process
- PK/TK curriculum adoption in process
- Preschool Family Literacy Program Pilot
- Continue Learning Ally audiobooks for any student

Current Work

- Continued and expanded professional development for leaders and staff, including topics on Science of Reading and dyslexia
    - Professional learning - Dyslexia Awareness for Educators, Part 2 for Elementary teachers and staff (January 2024)
    - Leaders attend Learning Ally's Spotlight on Dyslexia Conference
    - Explore opportunities for Communities of Practice focused on literacy and dyslexia for district and site leaders
- Professional learning and implementation of Dr. Ortiz's Picture Vocabulary Acquisition Test in the special education department

Considerations

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- Dyslexia occurs on a continuum
- State will require all K-3 to be screened by the 2025-26 school year.
  - We will use our current screening process and make revisions as guidance is released from CDE
- Data from initial screener shows students most impacted by the pandemic are also the students being identified in larger numbers by the screener for reading difficulty and at-risk for dyslexia
- School teams review screening data in conjunction with current ELPAC scores to monitor appropriate growth and progress for ELs
- Data from i-Ready Diagnostic 2 and screener will help us understand student reading needs and progress

Next Steps

Next Steps

- District MTSS team and site leaders will continue to gather feedback to improve upon MVWSD MTSS
- Administer Universal Screening for students in grades K-3
  - Fall and Winter administration
  - Explore options for layered screening in reading to gain more information on students' skills
- Compare year-to-year results on i-Ready Dyslexia Screener
- Expand work with UCSF on the Multitudes project at four schools during the 2023-24 school year
  - TH, CA, MI, ML

Next Steps

- District Literacy Team will support the needs of K-2 students at Castro, Mistral, Monta Loma, and Theuerkauf to improve their literacy growth and development following Universal Data Cycles
- Convene the ELA curriculum adoption committee in September 2023 to find and adopt Science of Reading aligned curriculum
- Explore possible addition of Grammarly for students
- Provide an update to the Board of Trustees after Winter screening