Teaching Reading and Writing

PreK to Grade 8

THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Second Edition

Kristin M. Gehsmann • Shane Templeton

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Pearson

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Gehsmann, Kristin M. author. | Templeton, Shane author.
Title: Teaching reading and writing : the developmental approach / Kristin M. Gehsmann, Shane Templeton.
Description: Second edition. | Hoboken, NJ : Pearson, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "Knowledge and strategies for teaching literacy in a developmentally- and culturally-responsive way from Preschool through Grade Eight: Reading - Comprehension of narrative and informational texts; Writing of narrative and informational texts; Word Study (Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling, Morphological Knowledge, and Vocabulary); Fluency; Motivation; Digital/New Literacies; Children's and Young Adult Literature. Special coverage of teaching English learners, literacy assessment, and working with readers who struggle. Two appendices of assessment tools and instructional materials. Sample lesson plans, teaching vignettes, video assets, interactive glossary, and student work samples. Suggestions for working with community partners and families. E-text and instructor resources available."—Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020050585 (print) | LCCN 2020050586 (ebook) | ISBN 9780134985077 (paperback) | ISBN 9780134985060 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Language arts (Elementary)—United States. | Language arts (Middle school)—United States. | Developmental reading.

Classification: LCC LB1576 .T459 2013 (print) | LCC LB1576 (ebook) | DDC 372.6/044—dc23

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020050585
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020050586

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode

ISBN 10: 0-13-498498-6
ISBN 13: 978-0-13-498498-8

To Ashley, Abigail, Ayden, Ansel, Madeleine, Ellie, Ellis, and their teachers —past, present, and future

About the Authors

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Dr. Shane Templeton is Foundation Professor Emeritus of Literacy Studies, University of Nevada, Reno. A former classroom teacher at the primary and secondary levels, Dr. Templeton's research has focused primarily on developmental word knowledge in elementary, middle, and high school students, and has been published in both research and practitioner journals. He has authored and coauthored several books on the teaching and learning of reading and language arts, and since 1987 has been a member of the Usage Panel of the *American Heritage Dictionary*.

Preface

Today's teachers face many challenges, including teaching all students, teaching them well, and teaching them in the context of rising expectations and high-stakes assessment. Today's students come from increasingly diverse socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Because of your dedication to these children, you embrace the challenges and opportunities of teaching in today's dynamic and diverse classroom environments.

In that spirit, we welcome you to *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach.* What distinguishes this book from all other, similar texts is our emphasis on teaching literacy in a developmentally as well as a culturally responsive way. Understanding developmentally responsive instruction allows you to teach in students' instructional zones, accelerating their literacy learning and development. We have written *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* to provide you with the knowledge and strategies for this type of teaching, including up-to-date research on literacy development, instruction, assessment, and intervention. In this book, we address three goals:

Goal 1. Provide foundational knowledge in the nature and progression of literacy development for PreK-8 learners, identifying what they are able to understand about the essential elements of literacy at different developmental stages, and when and how they are able to apply those understandings, with your help, as well as independently.

Goal 2. Provide an understanding of the essential elements of literacy and how related instructional strategies support deep and meaningful engagements with text.

Goal 3. Provide an understanding of the foundations and nature of culturally responsive literacy instruction.

Intended for preservice and experienced teachers alike, *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* provides a wealth of content and does so in a conversational, approachable style that connects theory to practice by including:

- Vignettes and sample lessons from real classrooms
- Authentic student work samples
- Tools for organizing and managing a comprehensive, developmentally responsive literacy program

Whether you're preparing to teach or have a classroom of your own, this new edition of *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* promises to provide you with the tools and knowledge necessary to confidently and competently meet the diverse needs of students in today's classrooms. It is designed to help you teach in a student-centered, research-based way.

Organization of the Text

This second edition of *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* retains the popular and effective aspects and features of the first edition. Beginning with assessment, you'll learn to identify PreK-8 students' stages of development as a means for determining *what* to teach, *when* to teach it, and *how* to teach it.

Most methods texts dedicate separate chapters to the essential elements of literacy—word knowledge, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and motivation—but our chapters reflect an integrated model of literacy instruction that is based on the understanding that reading and writing are developmental processes. As such, you will see these components of literacy addressed in *every* chapter.

- Each chapter begins with real-life scenarios that illustrate the theory in practice. This will help you immediately see the relevance and application of theory.
- Student work samples are included in each chapter to help you actually see the kind of work students at each stage of development create so that you will know what to expect from learners across the developmental continuum. We also help you learn how to analyze student work to identify a student's stage of development and instructional needs.
- Sample lessons not only make the text engaging and accessible but they also make the text come to life. These samples help you put the theory and research into practice with real students in real classrooms.
- Literature for Children and Young Adults is integrated throughout the text. In each instructional chapter you'll find a list of titles appropriate for that stage of development; in other chapters you will find titles appropriate for the various topics that are addressed. With standards in most states emphasizing text complexity, these lists are timely and extremely helpful for teachers who are planning standards-aligned lessons each day.
- Each chapter ends with a comprehensive chapter summary, recommended professional resources, and additional online resources.

Rationale for Chapter Order

THE FOUNDATION. The first two foundational chapters of *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* address the nature of development and interaction of thought, language, and literacy. They introduce you to the developmental model, the literacy essentials, historical trends in the field, as well as the current policy environment in which standards and recent policy initiatives figure prominently. By giving you an overview of these topics early on, we're able to build on this knowledge in each of the subsequent chapters.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES. The third foundational chapter addresses the principles and practices of effective, developmentally responsive literacy instruction, and the fourth chapter grounds your understanding of development and instruction in effective, student-centered assessment.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LEARNERS. In addition to a special feature titled *Working with English Learners* in each chapter, the fifth chapter of this book is dedicated to the unique needs of English learners. The chapter addresses specific accommodations English learners may require in the literacy classroom, as well as the importance of culturally relevant and culturally expanding pedagogy.

FOCUSED ON DEVELOPMENT. Chapters 6 through 10 are dedicated, respectively, to each stage of literacy development: *emergent, beginning, transitional, intermediate*, and *proficient*. Within each chapter, you'll learn how to differentiate instruction for students within each stage, meet the expectations of reading/English language arts standards, accommodate English learners, collaborate with other professionals, and build

home–school connections. The literacy essentials are addressed in each of these chapters, with a special focus on the unique needs of learners at each specific stage of development.

FOR READERS WHO STRUGGLE. The last chapter specifically focuses on teaching readers who struggle. This chapter provides an overview of Response to Intervention as well as profiles of readers who struggle. For each profile, you will learn about research-based methods proven to accelerate the achievement of these readers. General suggestions for accelerating the achievement of all learners are included at the end of the chapter.

We hope you will find *Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach* to be the foundation and guide for your literacy instruction that we have intended it to be. It will support your dedication, excitement, and commitment to the very best of literacy instruction—a guide to helping your students move toward reading and comprehending literary and informational texts independently and proficiently, and toward writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

New to This Edition

Significant Changes in All Chapters

LEARNING OUTCOMES. Assessment must be measured on clear goals. At the onset of each chapter, goals that signal expectations for a a deep understanding of literacy instruction will help guide your reading and reflections.

VIDEO EXAMPLES. Instructional videos in every chapter illustrate developmental characteristics, instruction, and important foundational content.

NEW FEATURE. A new "Step by Step" feature distills important instructional sequences and the pacing of instruction.

DIGITAL LITERACY. Since the publication of the first edition, in which a "Reading and Writing in Digital Contexts" feature occurred in most chapters, the digital presence and importance of digital literacy have grown exponentially and is now an essential theme throughout every chapter.

DESCRIPTIONS OF LITERACY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT AND PRECEDING DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE. At the onset of each "developmental" chapter are tables that at-a-glance compare and contrast the developmental characteristics of reading, writing, and word knowledge (vocabulary, phonics, and spelling).

UPDATED CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE. Not only is there extensive coverage of appropriate "libraries of literature" in each chapter but each of these literature features has been revised, updated, and expanded. These features provide an in-depth inclusion of titles across all genres to reflect culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse characters, settings, and communities, as well as an expanded lists for LGBTQ+ youth.

PRACTICAL CLASSROOM RESOURCES. Two new appendices—an *Assessment Appendix* and an *Instructional Appendix*—accompany this revision. A library of downloadable, ready-to-use assessment tools and instructional resources are linked via marginal notes at point-of-use but are also grouped at the end of the text.

REVISED AND UPDATED RESEARCH FOUNDATION. We are researchers ourselves and are continually engaged in reading and evaluating ongoing literacy research.

In this new edition, significant studies published since the first edition are referenced throughout and support the instruction in this new edition. Appropriately, we continue to include references to earlier classic, foundational research studies that have stood the test of time and upon which much contemporary literacy research stands.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

Chapter 1. As it lays the foundation for the developmental model of literacy learning and instruction, this chapter addresses the increasing importance of learning how to apply purposes and strategies in both print- and digitally based environments. The "Science of Reading" and the debates surrounding it are discussed as well as how they influence classroom instruction. Recent research is addressed, including the roles of motivation and mindset in learning and comprehension, as well as the role of spelling knowledge in increasing fluency.

Chapter 2. Recent research further supporting the developmental model is included, particularly as it concerns differentiated instruction, early literacy experiences and writing, and comprehension. Exciting new insights from neuroscience that underlie the development, over time, of cognitive and perceptual factors underpinning literacy development are included.

Chapter 3. This chapter addresses instructional best practices in reading, writing, and word study instruction. There is expanded coverage of motivation and language in the classroom; support for identifying which kind of book to use with each component of reading instruction, and expanded coverage of best practices for writing instruction are given more attention. Increased attention to diversity is promoted in the Classroom Observation Checklist.

Chapter 4. The focus of this chapter is on a more developed explanation of what it means for an assessment to be valid, especially classroom assessments; more assessment options and examples have been added as have specific suggestions for assessing motivation and interest and additional information about running records and the controversial MSV cueing system. There is added information about assessing foundational skills and new sections on standardized tests and universal design for learning. Video Examples illustrate the administration of various assessment instruments.

Chapter 5. This chapter provides expanded language and literacy instruction for English learners that includes teacher language and behaviors that support multilingualism; updated terminology and definitions; coverage of effective home–school communication for the families of English learners; expanded lists of children's and young adults' literature websites that address issues of diversity; and, an expanded section on cognates and cognate instruction. A revised discussion of the impact of characteristics on language/literacy acquisition includes immigrants and refugees, differences in socioeconomic status, home literacy levels, and home languages. So much that is written about instruction for ELs concludes that "good instruction that works for native English speakers also works well for ELs"—which is for the most part true—but recent research provides support for when that conclusion is *not* appropriate, and provides applicable adjustments.

Chapter 6. For emergent learners, recent research has extended our understanding of oral language and vocabulary development, and of the relationships among and the importance of phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and phonemic awareness, and our understanding of writing development—there is expanded discussion of instruction in all these domains. There also is increased coverage of using different types of texts with emergent learners

Chapter 7. Included in this chapter is an expanded discussion of the relationships among phonics, spelling, handwriting, and vocabulary development at the

beginning stage—recent research has underscored the special importance of handwriting in constructing understandings, and the critical balance that must be struck as instruction is increasingly occurring on a keyboard. Expanded discussion of how to differentiate changing instructional priorities and reading materials over the course of this stage is emphasized, as well as expanded instructional support for writing and genre study.

Chapter 8. This chapter has an expanded focus on fluency and motivation; a new feature on syllable types and how to work with Greek and Latin roots in this stage; expanded too, is coverage of Quick Writes coverage of comprehension instruction with readers in the transitional stage, and a section on teaching inference and scaffolded silent reading. Look for an updated discussion of persuasive/argumentative writing.

Chapter 9. In Chapter 9, online research and comprehension is addressed at a greater length, with new coverage of how to help students evaluate the validity of websites and online material. Increased instructional coverage of teaching critical reading in more complex texts is also included. The discussion of Greek and Roman mythology and words from Classical myths and legends, addressed in Chapter 10 of the previous edition, has been moved to Chapter 9. Updated references and resources for exploring the myths and legends of non-European cultures have been expanded.

Chapter 10. Chapter 10 has increased instructional coverage of teaching reading and writing more deeply and critically; for example, "In-Depth Exploration of Themes." Based on significant recent research, we have expanded coverage of how to critically, and in depth, evaluate digital resources; for example, the new step-by-step feature "Determining the Truth in News, Politics, Science, Health." New research confirms the strong developmental and instructional relationship between spelling and vocabulary development at this level.

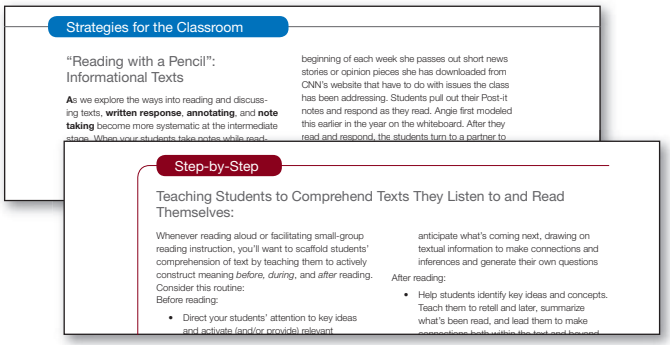
Chapter 11. In this chapter a discussion about RTI/MTSS has been updated as well as the criteria for determining eligibility of English learners for special education. A major update in the citations regarding individualized instruction for readers who are experiencing difficulty, a significant update of the discussion addressing profiles of readers who experience difficulty learning to read and a new figure on Pre-K learners and expanded coverage on primary grade students experiencing difficulty are now included. There are more direct connections to assessment and more explicitly defined similarities and differences between the words "differentiation" and "accommodation." Newer supportive research underlies an expanded section on instruction for comprehension-based difficulties. A section on scaffolded reading practice has been added, including a connection to "high-success" reading; the section on motivation has been significantly expanded. The Interactive Strategies Approach is described and there is expanded coverage of Reading Recovery's model. Importantly, the coverage of dyslexia is expanded as well as some of the more contemporary concerns surrounding this topic; a new "Step-by-Step" feature demonstrates how to make important morphology explicit for students who are experiencing difficulty learning to read.

Pedagogical Features

To the extent that it is possible in the print or online format, we have tried in this text to develop an ongoing conversation with you. While this conversation is obviously one-sided, we still have tried to present content and ask questions just as we would if we were sitting there with you. With this goal in mind, we have organized this text so as to provide (1) effective and, we hope, efficient delivery of content; (2) opportunities to engage your critical thinking about the teaching of literacy; and (3) realistic opportunities to apply ideas, strategies, and activities. The text's features include:

Strategies for the Classroom—This feature succinctly presents practical activities and strategies for teaching the content addressed in each chapter.

Step-By-Step—A new feature that distills important instructional sequence and pacing.


Strategies for the Classroom

"Reading with a Pencil": Informational Texts

As we explore the ways into reading and discussing texts, **written response**, **annotating**, and **note taking** become more systematic at the intermediate stage. When your students take notes while read-

beginning of each week she passes out short news stories or opinion pieces she has downloaded from CNN's website that have to do with issues the class has been addressing. Students pull out their Post-it notes and respond as they read. Angie first modeled this earlier in the year on the whiteboard. After they read and respond, the students turn to a partner to

Step-by-Step

Teaching Students to Comprehend Texts They Listen to and Read Themselves:

Whenever reading aloud or facilitating small-group reading instruction, you'll want to scaffold students' comprehension of text by teaching them to actively construct meaning *before*, *during*, and *after* reading. Consider this routine:

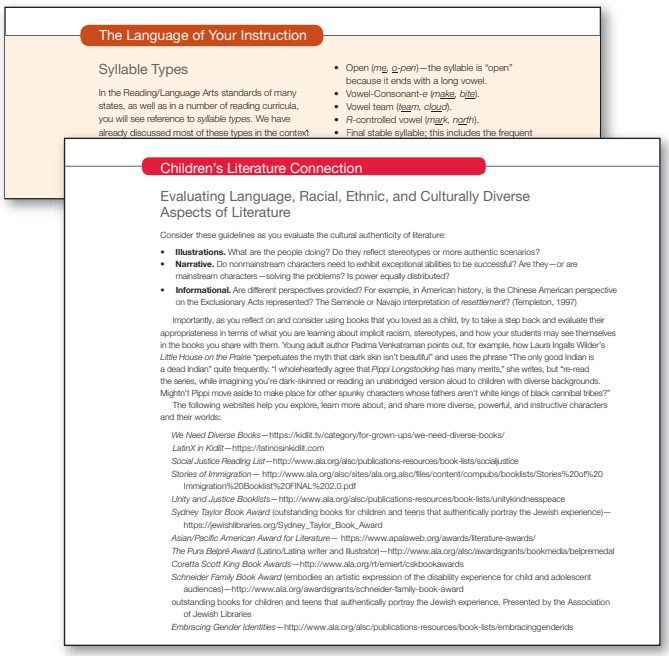
Before reading:

- Direct your students' attention to key ideas and activate (and/or provide) relevant

anticipate what's coming next, drawing on textual information to make connections and inferences and generate their own questions

After reading:

- Help students identify key ideas and concepts. Teach them to retell and later, summarize what's been read, and lead them to make


The Language of Your Instruction

Syllable Types

In the Reading/Language Arts standards of many states, as well as in a number of reading curricula, you will see reference to *syllable types*. We have already discussed most of these types in the context

- Open (*me*, *o-pen*)—the syllable is "open" because it ends with a long vowel.
- Vowel-Consonant-*e* (*make*, *bite*).
- Vowel team (*team*, *cloud*).
- *R*-controlled vowel (*mark*, *north*).
- Final stable syllable; this includes the frequent

Children's Literature Connection

Evaluating Language, Racial, Ethnic, and Culturally Diverse Aspects of Literature

Consider these guidelines as you evaluate the cultural authenticity of literature:

- **Illustrations.** What are the people doing? Do they reflect stereotypes or more authentic scenarios?
- **Narrative.** Do nonmainstream characters need to exhibit exceptional abilities to be successful? Are they—or are mainstream characters—solving the problems? Is power equally distributed?
- **Informational.** Are different perspectives provided? For example, in American history, is the Chinese American perspective on the Exclusionary Acts represented? The Seminole or Navajo interpretation of *resettlement*? (Templeton, 1997)

Importantly, as you reflect on and consider using books that you loved as a child, try to take a step back and evaluate their appropriateness in terms of what you are learning about implicit racism, stereotypes, and how your students may see themselves in the books you share with them. Young adult author Padma Venkatraman points out, for example, how Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* "perpetuates the myth that dark skin isn't beautiful" and uses the phrase "The only good Indian is a dead Indian" quite frequently. "I wholeheartedly agree that *Pippi Longstocking* has many merits," she writes, but "re-read the series, while imagining you're dark-skinned or reading an unabridged version aloud to children with diverse backgrounds. Might'n't Pippi move aside to make place for other spunky characters whose fathers aren't white kings of black cannibal tribes?"

The following websites help you explore, learn more about, and share more diverse, powerful, and instructive characters and their worlds:

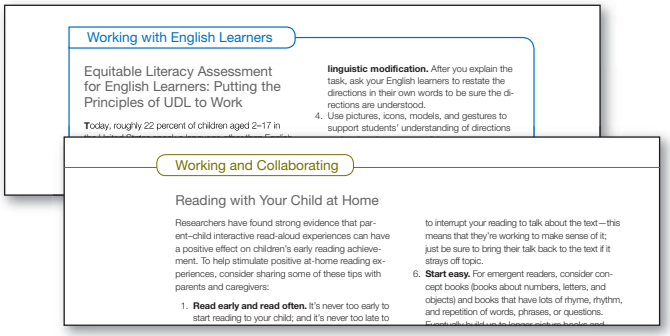
We Need Diverse Books—https://kidlit.tv/category/for-grown-ups/we-need-diverse-books/
LatinX in Kidlit—https://latinosinkidlit.com
Social Justice Reading List—http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/socialjustice
Stories of Immigration— http://www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/compubs/booklists/Stories%20of%20Immigration%20Booklist%20FINAL%202.0.pdf
Unity and Justice Booklists—http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/unitykindnesspeace
Sydney Taylor Book Award (outstanding books for children and teens that authentically portray the Jewish experience)—https://jewishlibraries.org/Sydney_Taylor_Book_Award
Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature— https://www.apalaweb.org/awards/literature-awards/
The Pura Belpré Award (Latino/Latina writer and illustrator)—http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/belpremedal
Coretta Scott King Book Awards—http://www.ala.org/rt/emiert/cskbookawards
Schneider Family Book Award (embodies an artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences)—http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/schneider-family-book-award
outstanding books for children and teens that authentically portray the Jewish experience. Presented by the Association of Jewish Libraries
Embracing Gender Identities—http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/embracinggenderids

The Language of Your Instruction—This feature will provide models of language and questioning that you can use to initiate, engage, and facilitate students' thinking about and discussion of texts and words.

Children's/Young Adults' Literature Connection—Chapters 3 through 11 include recommended titles across genres and cultures as well as ways to explore more deeply a specific aspect of literature. In Chapter 10, this feature is labeled *Young Adult Literature Connection*.

Working with English Learners—In each developmental chapter, aspects of accommodating literacy instruction for English learners are now embedded in the running text.

Working and Collaborating—Chapters 6 through 10 include suggestions for how you may collaborate and partner with your students' homes and the community—fellow educators, parents, and volunteers—with examples for supporting literacy instruction and intervention for learners specific to each developmental stage.


Working with English Learners

Equitable Literacy Assessment for English Learners: Putting the Principles of UDL to Work

Today, roughly 22 percent of children aged 2–17 in

linguistic modification. After you explain the task, ask your English learners to restate the directions in their own words to be sure the directions are understood.

4. Use pictures, icons, models, and gestures to support students' understanding of directions

Working and Collaborating

Reading with Your Child at Home

Researchers have found strong evidence that parent–child interactive read-aloud experiences can have a positive effect on children's early reading achievement. To help stimulate positive at-home reading experiences, consider sharing some of these tips with parents and caregivers:

1. **Read early and read often.** It's never too early to start reading to your child; and it's never too late to

to interrupt your reading to talk about the text—this means that they're working to make sense of it; just be sure to bring their talk back to the text if it strays off topic.

6. **Start easy.** For emergent readers, consider concept books (books about numbers, letters, and objects) and books that have lots of rhyme, rhythm, and repetition of words, phrases, or questions.

Pearson eText, Learning Management System (LMS)-Compatible Assessment Bank, and Other Instructor Resources

The Pearson eText is a simple-to-use, mobile-optimized, personalized reading experience. It allows you to easily highlight, take notes, and review key vocabulary all in one place—even when offline. Seamlessly integrated videos and other rich media will engage you and give you access to the help you need, when you need it. To gain access or to sign into your Pearson eText, visit: https://www.pearson.com/pearson-etext Features include:

- **Video Examples.** Each chapter includes Video Examples that illustrate principles or concepts aligned pedagogically with the chapter. These clips enable you to know what expert teachers do when they are engaging students and include captions that ask you to consider how you would respond to situations depicted in the video. They are not just for you to view and enjoy; they are for you to reflect on and take into account as part of your ongoing learning.

  Here are three examples:

  Link to an Example of Reading Instruction. **Pearson eText Video Example 3.4**
  Link to an Assessment Example. **Pearson eText Video Example 4.8.**
  Link to an Example of Word Study. **Pearson eText Video Example 5.8**

- **Interactive Glossary.** All key terms in the eText are bolded and provide instant access to full glossary definitions, allowing you to quickly build your professional vocabulary as you are reading.

- **Assessment and Instructional Artifacts.** Marginal notes throughout the text will link you to classroom resources you should become familiar with—assessment guides, morphological guides, and other valuable tools, lesson templates, and teaching resources. Clicking on the title of an artifact in a marginal note will allow you to download the artifact for classroom use. These artifacts can also be found in the Assessment and Instructional Appendices.

LMS-Compatible Assessment Bank

With this new edition, quizzes and application exercises are included in LMS-compatible banks for the following learning management systems: Blackboard (9780137376483), Canvas (9780137376544), D2L (9780137376568), and Moodle (9780137376490). These packaged files allow maximum flexibility to instructors when it comes to importing, assigning, and grading student work. Assessment types include:

- **Learning Outcome Quizzes.** Each chapter learning outcome is the focus of a Learning Outcome Quiz that is available for instructors to assign through their Learning Management System. Learning outcomes identify chapter content that is most important for learners and serve as the organizational framework for each chapter. The higher-order, multiple-choice questions in each quiz will measure your understanding of chapter content, guide the expectations for your learning, and inform the accountability and the applications of your new knowledge. When used in the LMS environment, these multiple-choice questions are automatically graded and include feedback for the correct answer and for each distractor to help guide students' learning.

- **Application Exercises.** Each chapter provides opportunities to apply what you have learned through Application Exercises. These exercises are in a short-answer format and can be based on Pearson eText Video Examples as well as scenarios modeled by pedagogical text features. When used in the LMS environment, a model response written by experts is provided after you submit the exercise. This feedback helps guide your learning and can assist your instructor in grading.

Instructor's Manual (9780134984940)

The Instructor's Manual is provided as a Word document and includes resources to assist professors in planning their course. These resources consist of chapter overviews, learning outcomes, guidance for using available PowerPoint® slides to promote concept development, questions for discussion, and supplemental teaching suggestions. In addition, this manual includes test items for each chapter in various formats: true/false, multiple choice, and short answer/essay.

PowerPoint® Slides (9780134984933)

PowerPoint® slides are provided for each chapter and highlight key concepts and summarize the content of the text to make it more meaningful for students. Oftentimes, these slides also include questions and problems designed to stimulate discussion and to encourage students to elaborate and deepen their understanding of chapter topics.

Note: All instructor resources—LMS-compatible assessment bank, instructor's manual, and PowerPoint slides—are available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com. Use one of the following methods:

- From the main page, use the search function to look up the lead author (Gehsmann), or the title (*Teaching Reading and Writing: The Developmental Approach*). Select the desired search result, then access the "Resources" tab to view and download all available resources.
- From the main page, use the search function to look up the ISBN (provided above) of the specific instructor resource you would like to download. When the product page loads, access the "Downloadable Resources" tab.

Acknowledgments

A project as intensive and extensive as this book could not have been undertaken, much less completed, without the support and ideas from so many dear friends and professional colleagues. Space does not allow the inclusion of all of their names here, but we wish to acknowledge those who have impacted this project most specifically:

Drew Bennett, who has believed in, encouraged, and sustained this text; Rebecca Fox-Gieg, who joined and supported our mission in this second edition; Linda Bishop, our phenomenal executive developmental editor—over the many years, and for this book—who always went above and beyond in supporting all aspects of our revised text and for communicating and, when necessary, representing our beliefs and plans; Yagnesh Jani, content manager and logistical mastermind; Karthik Orukaimani, who seamlessly orchestrated all aspects of production; Dr. Amy Frederick and Dr. Annie Ittner, who graciously and with all due dispatch took on the major construction project of writing the several components of the Learning Management System for our text; Anita Silvey, celebrated children's book editor and author, who contributed to our lists of children's and young adult books; and, Madison Wildman, graduate assistant extraordinaire!

Yet again, we could easily write a page of gratitude for each of the following colleagues for their sharing, for what they have taught us, and for their ongoing support: Donald Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, Francine Johnston, Kevin Flanigan, Tisha Hayes, Lori Helman, Darrell Morris, Dianna Townsend, Cindy Brock, Julie Pennington, Alexandra Spichtig, Jeffrey Pascoe, John Ferrara, Terry Atkinson, Elizabeth Swaggerty, Kimberly Anderson, Mikkaka Overstreet, Christy Howard, Darian Thrailkill, Heidi Anne Mesmer, and Tracy Cole.

We wish to extend especial thanks to the following reviewers who have used our text in their teaching and whose comprehensive evaluations and recommendations inspired and helped us to expand, clarify, and enrich this new edition: Amy Frederick, University of Wisconsin River Falls; Deborah G. Litt, Trinity Washington University; David B. Yaden, Jr., University of Arizona; Jean Vintinner, University of North Carolina at Charlotte; Karen Carpenter, Coker College; Wendy Johnson Donnell, Avila University.

Thank you, too, to those students and teachers who generously shared their work with us and with you. And, finally, we are especially grateful to our families, who have been more than supportive and understanding of the countless hours we've invested in this project.

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Chapter 1

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The Foundations of Literacy Learning and Instruction

Learning Outcomes

1.1 Describe what being "literate" involves, and why it may be more complex for today's students than when their grandparents learned to read and write.

1.2 Explain how the literacy essentials support the development of reading and writing as *reciprocal* processes.

1.3 Identify the five stages of literacy development and summarize the major characteristics of each.

1.4 Explain the importance of teachers' awareness of the sociocultural and language contexts of literacy learning.

1.5 Describe the importance of different levels of support in teaching literacy.

IT IS SHORTLY after 9:00 a.m. on a Tuesday morning in September. Ms. Arlene Robinson, principal of Compello Elementary School, has invited you to accompany her as she visits each classroom during literacy block. The primary grades have a two-hour block; intermediate grades meet for an hour and a half. Arlene visits the classrooms every day; her previous school, she mentions, was simply too large to be able to do that—so she worked out a rotation. And she doesn't always visit the classrooms at Compello Elementary in the mornings; quite often, she does her "walk-about," as she calls it, in the afternoons. Like most effective elementary principals, Arlene makes it a point to know the names of every student well before the winter break in December.

As you're walking down the kindergarten/first-grade wing, you can't help but notice the lively voices seeping out into the hallway from every classroom. Arlene went on to share how every teacher at Compello understands that learning is a social phenomenon, and that students have to be able to talk with one another in order to learn. "*Most* of the time," she winks, "they're using their indoor voices!"

When we enter Karleen Echevarria's first-grade classroom, several of the children move quickly across the room to give Arlene a hug, which she receives with a smile, hugs them in return, and gently eases them back toward what they had been engaged in doing. These particular children had been working at their desks on their science unit, sorting pictures into different categories: creatures that live on land, in water, or both on land and in water. The children resumed a spirited debate about whether one particular creature could be placed in the "both land and water" category, then agreed to put it in an "oddball" category—they'd check on it later with Ms. Echevarria. Karleen was in the reading corner, meeting with another group of seven children. They were earnestly discussing why the animals who Henny Penny had told "the sky is falling" all went along with her without asking her how she knew this! Karleen followed up by asking them if there'd ever been a time when *they* had followed along with a group without asking why.

A bit later, as you and Principal Robinson turn into the fourth-/fifth-grade wing, Arlene shares that the district adopted a new reading program the previous year. The state had mandated that schools adopt a program and approved three choices for districts to choose from.

"Now, I know I've got several experienced teachers at Compello who are excellent teachers of reading and writing. I'm pretty certain they don't need a program to teach well. Most of the teachers here, though, are within their first three to four years of teaching, and I like having that program as a resource for them to draw from and lean on for support when they need to. Our veteran teachers—we've got a very supportive school culture—help them sort out and focus on what's of most help in the program for their students. Otherwise, those programs can be overwhelming to teachers early in their careers! Together with the support they receive from the veterans, I think our newer teachers are doing a pretty good job of becoming effective literacy teachers!"

You ask if there is a literacy coach or specialist at Compello Elementary. Arlene shares that the district has budgeted for a literacy coach for every three "bubble" schools—those not quite qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch—and that the coach does her best, "but it sure is difficult if that person isn't living every day in

your school." The district does a pretty good job of providing professional development during the year, Arlene adds, but more and more the focus has been placed on building and trying to support effective professional learning communities *within* each school. "They're trying to get us to have more within- and between-grade discussions," she comments, "focusing on 'data-driven' instruction—how do we know how our students are doing in reading, and what adjustments can we then make in our instruction? This had been part of our RTI [Response to Intervention] and MTSS [Multi-Tiered System of Support] framework the last few years, and we've been working not only to use the assessments we are mandated to use, but [and here Arlene winks again] adding a couple of assessments that we feel give us perhaps better 'classroom-based' information about individual students.

"You know, another big push we began a couple of years ago was how to adjust our reading instruction to fit our state's new reading/English language arts standards. Teachers throughout the district have expressed some concern that the new grade-level expectations may be too advanced for many of our students. Our mission, as administrators throughout the district, is to support the teachers' efforts to achieve the higher expectations for reading and writing but to do so in ways that reflect research-based instruction. Fortunately, most administrators understand a *developmental model* of literacy learning—almost all of us are former classroom teachers—so we are better able to set the appropriate tone for our teachers."

This vignette captures several important themes that we will address in this text:

- the social nature of literacy learning; the differentiation of instruction, which involves meeting with small groups of students while other students are working independently, in partnerships, or at literacy workstations;
- the importance of getting to know your students well;
- literature and vocabulary discussions in which the children are *actively* involved.

Also touched upon are some of the practical situations that every teacher experiences and must learn how to negotiate—using a mandated curriculum, following district-mandated procedures while drawing upon the experienced teachers' and principal's professional judgment in customizing instruction and assessment.

As you read this foundational chapter, please keep in mind that

- Its purpose is to describe briefly the literacy terrain that will be explored in this text;
- The background information that sets the stage and will be referenced and elaborated upon in subsequent chapters;
- You should circle back to this chapter when reading other chapters to refresh your memory on the foundational concepts shared.

What *Is* "Literacy"?

1.1 Describe what being "literate" involves, and why it may be more complex for today's students than when their grandparents learned to read and write.

Simply put, **literacy** is the ability to read and write. Reading is thinking guided by print, and writing is using print to guide one's own thinking and the thinking of others. Every literacy act involves a *reader/writer*, a *text* that is being read or written, and a *context* in which the reading or writing is occurring.

In a best-selling book published many years ago titled *Why Johnny Can't Read*, a journalist wrote that all we have to do is teach a child the sounds that the letters make, and that child will learn to read (Flesch, 1956). If it were that simple, of course, we probably wouldn't need teachers. There is no question that it is necessary to learn how letters represent sounds but becoming literate involves so much more than that. You'll not only be teaching your students *about* reading and writing, but you'll also be helping them learn how these tools will empower them to learn and to think more critically. Unfortunately, many students experience difficulty in developing literacy right from the beginning. Many other students learn easily but run into difficulty later on. This is because literacy—reading and writing—is complex.

A generation ago, being able to read at the eighth-grade level would suffice in many occupations (Wagner, 2010). In the twenty-first century, however, that is not enough. The levels at which students must be able to read are considerably higher because requirements for getting a job are more rigorous in an increasingly globalized economy. Globalization and information technology have merged. Because of this reality, literacy must develop and support students' abilities to think critically, problem solve, communicate effectively, and collaborate. Becoming literate and using the tools of literacy will develop over many years. How well these tools are acquired and used depends in large part on the teachers students will have—on you.

Digital Literacy

We all know that the digital world is changing in profound ways and in how young people, as well as those who teach them, are looking at and thinking about their worlds (Gee, 2017; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Leu, Kiili, & Forzani, 2016).

Changes in society and technology have led a number of educators and scholars to think about literacy in broader terms: They point out that there are many ways to "read" and "write" the world. Some are beginning to ask if there will still be a role for "print" literacy—for abilities based on paper, pen, turning pages, books on shelves in libraries—in constantly fluid and evolving digital spaces. As the content of this book will show, there definitely will be. Digital literacy involves "the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate digital information" and requires "both cognitive and technical skills" (American Library Association, 2013, p. 1). Much of the ability to understand and navigate digital environments, as well as to use social media responsibly and effectively, is grounded in skills developed primarily through print literacy.

Texts and the thinking that goes into understanding them (*reading*) and creating them (*writing*) provide frameworks for thinking about what's going on in the physical world and its extension, the digital world. Because of this, you will be teaching your students to be **biliterate** (Wolf, 2017; Wolf, Ullman-Shade, & Gottwald, 2012), learning how to apply purposes and strategies in both print- and digitally based environments. Much of your initial instruction will probably be print-based or print-based formats displayed digitally, in which you will teach not only *basics* such as letters and sounds but *critical* literacy as well (Frey, Fisher, & Berkin, 2009). Although your students may be **digital natives**, they will still need you to reveal and guide them through the nature and implications of print—of reading and of writing. They will need you to support their developing understanding of what print and screen environments require and allow them to do (Baron, 2017). While digital spaces afford rapid access and negotiation of information, an engaging book held in the hands supports the sustained attention that is essential for deep reflection and awareness (Birkerts, 2015; Newkirk, 2011).

Pearson eText

Video Example 1.1

Today's classroom teachers use technology in a variety of ways to teach reading and writing. How does technology assist this teacher in motivating her class and helping them focus on the concepts she is teaching?

Is There One "Best Method" for Teaching Reading to All Children?

Education in general, and literacy in particular, are shaped by social, political, economic, and technological influences (Graff, 2010; Smith, 1965). At different times throughout history, different methods have held sway. They usually have to do with how to teach beginning reading, but the different positions educators take also have implications for upper grade levels as well.

You may be aware of the debates about how "best" to teach reading and the recent emphasis on the "Science of Reading," the elements of which are addressed throughout this text (see Pearson, 2004, 2007; Scanlon & Anderson, 2020; Seidenberg, 2017; Shanahan, 2020; National Center for Education Policy, 2020; and Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018 for a history of the debates in the U.S.). Over the years, the loudest debaters—and those who often have influenced national policy regarding how reading should be taught—have usually fallen into either of two positions:

- Those who say we should begin with the parts—sounds and letters—and build up from there to the whole
- Those who say we should begin with the whole—a text—and work down to the parts

Throughout your teaching career you will see different shifts and emphases. It is important to bear in mind, though, that these changes will not overturn everything you know about how to teach literacy. Understanding the developmental model—how literacy knowledge and skills evolve over time, one after the other—will be your constant instructional compass and companion. The technologies certainly will change, affecting how you arrange and provide instruction, but the underlying mechanisms of students' learning will remain reassuringly constant.

Teaching letters and sounds, therefore, without providing a model of what reading *is* will not make sense, and eventually interest will fall away. Attempting to teach using whole texts without providing systematic instruction in the ways letters and sounds correspond will not make sense either, because children are not being provided the tools for fulfilling their own purposes for reading. The truth of the matter, of which you are also probably aware, is that the recipe for "How Best to Teach Reading" includes several essential components or ingredients, and how much of each ingredient is provided for each child at different points in time depends on where that child is along the continuum of literacy development.

So, although there is no "best method" (the word "method" itself suggests a narrower, more exclusive focus), there *is* one "trusted approach": The *developmental* approach best supports your teaching of reading—and *writing* as well—in a way that will make sense to your students. You teach your students what they are ready to learn; they are more likely to be interested, and they will attend more closely to what you are demonstrating and helping them learn how to do. Teaching students the "basics" as well as the *application* of this basic knowledge continues throughout the school years. Effective instruction in reading *and* writing will enable and empower your students as they access, understand, and evaluate their informational and narrative worlds.

The Many Faces of Literacy

A number of scholars and educators describe *literacy* in terms of a set of flexible "practices for communicating purposefully in multiple social and cultural contexts" (Mills, 2010, p. 247). These contexts exist in digital spaces and remind us we live in a "hypermediated" environment. Students' experiences with fictional characters occur across several formats in what scholars term "branded fiction" and "genre mixing" (Lefstein & Snell, 2011; Sekeres, 2009). Just think of Harry Potter (books, movies, websites, clothing, theme

park), *Frozen* (movies, books, music, dolls, websites), and the *American Girl* series (books, clothing, dolls, movies). There is an exciting new literacy frontier stretching out through these interconnections and technologies. There are also unparalleled seductions: How are reading and writing affected, and what will they mean in this New World?

We can begin to answer these questions by turning to the Old World. The essence, insight, and meaning of critical thinking have not changed at least since Socrates' time over 2,000 years ago. And dating from Socrates' day, we have had at least four "technological" revolutions that have affected reading and writing directly and significantly:

- An alphabet that can represent all the sounds in a language
- The development of the book
- The invention of the printing press
- The development of the Internet

There is no question that, with each new technology, how people "do" literacy is significantly affected. Indeed, each technological revolution has also accelerated the arts, humanities, and sciences as well as social, economic, and political developments (Olson & Cole, 2006). Throughout each of these revolutions, however, the true meaning and potential of reading and writing has remained and will continue to remain remarkably constant: *thinking* critically and very often *feeling* deeply so that we may communicate with ourselves, with others, and with our world. That's what reading and writing have meant, and what they will continue to mean.

The Literacy Essentials: The "What" of Effective Instruction

1.2 Explain how the literacy essentials support the development of reading and writing as *reciprocal* processes.

At a broad level, reading and writing are *reciprocal* processes (Graham, 2020; Graham & Hebert, 2010, 2011). As students learn to read and write, each ability supports the other. As they read and think in different genres—for example, mystery, biography, poetry—students learn, with teacher guidance, how writers *use* the language and structure of those genres to affect readers: how readers think, how they learn, how they feel, how they are entertained, and how they behave. Our students then use these models to guide their own writing. Understanding this reciprocal process, your approach to teaching reading and writing will be based on your knowledge of:

- *What* needs to be taught, and understanding effective ways to teach it
- The *development* of language, thought, and literacy in children and older students

First, we will address the *what*; second, we will lay the cornerstones for the *developmental* foundation.

We've mentioned that reading and writing involve the use of print to guide thinking. Texts are like "blueprints" for constructing meaning (Spiro, 1980). Reading involves purposefully engaging a text—following the blueprint—in ways that ensure we are constructing as best we can the meaning that the author intended. When we *write*, we use our understanding of those same "blueprints" to help our readers construct the meaning we are trying to convey. So that we may teach students how best to build meanings as they interact with texts, it's necessary that we understand the essential components involved in this process of meaning construction. Attention to these essentials is necessary to enable all the other literacies:

- Comprehension
- Writing

- Vocabulary
- Word structure
- Fluency
- Motivation

Comprehension

To comprehend is to understand. Comprehending or understanding what we read may occur at different levels—deeply, or more superficially—depending on our purpose for reading. And that is the key: Comprehension is *active*, not passive. "Meaning" is not literally on the page or screen to be passively lifted off. Although identifying the words is essential, understanding what we read is not merely a by-product of that identification. Driven by our purpose, meaning must be constructed from the blueprint that the information on the page or screen suggests, together with the background knowledge we bring to the page. Because every reader brings a unique blend of background knowledge, experiences, and understandings to every reading, whenever a reader reads a text, a new meaning is constructed that did not exist before.

The most important foundation for comprehension is a reader's general knowledge and understanding of the world and specific domains or disciplines such as history, science, mathematics – and of course one of your fundamental responsibilities as a teacher is to develop this knowledge and understanding. This begins early. We know that young children can develop concepts and frameworks for understanding their world and the disciplines it comprises – for example, that the Greeks and the Anasazi were important civilizations a long time ago. And as students grow, develop, and learn, such bits of information will become elaborated and interrelated with other information. All of this background knowledge will underlie students' comprehension and understanding as they read and write (Wexler, 2019; Willingham, 2017).

In general, comprehension of any text is a process that proceeds in the following manner (Daugaard, Cain, & Elbro, 2017; Kintsch, 1998; Perfetti, 2007; Perfetti & Stafura, 2014):

- The words are identified and their meaning is determined.
- The order of and relationships among the words within each sentence are processed.
- The sentences are related to each other.
- Larger chunks of text are related to each other.
- An overall "model" of the text is created in the reader's mind.

From the writer's blueprint to the reader's construction of the model—that's what comprehension is about. Importantly, readers' models of texts seldom contain the *exact* wording of the text (that would seriously overload their memories) but rather construct a more general understanding or sense of what the text is about.

For many years, reading comprehension has been described in terms of three levels: *literal, inferential*, and *critical* (Irwin, 2006; Israel & Duffy, 2008). Generations of teachers have tried to help students understand these levels by using the phrases *reading the lines* (literal), *reading between the lines* (inferential), and *reading beyond the lines* (critical). These phrases made sense if students already understood the levels of comprehension but were of little help if they didn't. Over the last several years, educators have developed more effective ways to discuss and support students' understanding of how they can actively engage texts to best achieve their purposes for reading (Amendum, Conradi, & Hiebert, 2018; Brock, Goatley, Raphael, Trost, Shahata, & Weber, 2014; Kendeou et al., 2016; Pearson, Palincsar, Biancarosa, & Berman, 2020; Raphael, Highfield, & Au, 2006).

The Language of Your Instruction

Theories of Comprehension

In your own study of learning and instruction you have probably encountered many labels and terms. Researchers' investigations of the process of comprehension have also resulted in several labels, and each label represents a particular perspective—a theory or model that differs in certain ways from others. In recent decades the two most influential perspectives are schema theory (Anderson, Spiro, & Montague, 1977) and the construction integration model (Kintsch, 1998). Both are powerful explanations for what readers do when they read. We will describe *schema theory* here because it is the foundation you will see reflected most often in reading comprehension instruction.

An important part of our background knowledge—its content and how it is organized—relies on specific experiences we have had. For example, if we are reading about a particular soccer match, our ability to understand the information about fielders, goals, penalty kicks, and so forth relies on the experiences we have had with soccer matches. If we haven't had much experience, then we're not going to be able to comprehend very much of the article. Schema theory explains this phenomenon (Anderson, Spiro, & Montague, 1977; McVee, Dunsmore, & Gavelek, 2005; Richey, Klein, & Tracey, 2011; Cervetti, 2019). **Schema theory** provides an important perspective for much of our understanding about comprehension in reading. If you read and understand fairly easily the article on the soccer match, for instance, it is because you have a robust mental *schema* for soccer matches. Your soccer schema has been constructed over time as you have learned more and more about soccer, and perhaps even played it. The *schemas* (or *schemata*) for different types of experiences apply to all social and cognitive, or thinking, activity. For example, someone whose "restaurant schema" has been constructed based only on experiences in more expensive establishments might enter a McDonald's or Burger King and stand around waiting to be seated by the *maitre d'*—admittedly a silly example, but one we hope illustrates the nature of schema theory.

In response to specific texts and specific situations, our schemas organize and apply our appropriate concepts to support our comprehension. Our concept of "net," for example, is applied to our soccer schema and has to do with where goals are scored, although the net looks different from the net in basketball. Similarly, our concept of "net" is used differently in our "fishing schema" and in our "Internet schema"—the result of our experiences in fishing with our cousin and using the Web. The implications of schema theory for learning in general and reading comprehension in particular are important.

READING FOR A PURPOSE Our purposes for reading a particular text—what information or experience we are looking for, and why—determine how we approach any reading we do. This is because our purposes will guide what we look for and the degree to which we need to rely on our own background knowledge as we read.

And our *purposes* for reading a text vary, of course: We may simply want to escape to and enjoy a narrative world, fictional or real; we may need information right now to solve a problem we are having with our printer; or we may—as is so often the case with students—be reading because a teacher has required us to and given us questions to answer. Regardless, readers must be able to apply strategies that will help them in accessing the **sources of information** they will need in order to achieve their purposes:

- Some information sources will be "right there," explicitly stated in the text;
- Other information sources may be inferred from the text by "thinking and searching";
- Still other information sources may be accessed by combining information that is explicit or implied in the text with the reader's background knowledge or "in the head" information (Raphael, Highfield, & Au, 2006).

As teachers, we teach our students strategies for accessing these information sources. We want them to grow from applying these strategies consciously and deliberately to applying them almost effortlessly, without even thinking about it (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008).

We've just noted the types of texts our students will listen to and read: *narrative* and *informational*. An important part of the background knowledge about reading that we help our students learn is the structure of these types of texts.

Narrative texts The notion of *narrative*, or "story," runs deep in every culture in the world. Many have said that we organize and make sense of our lives through the structure of a story or narrative. The power of stories in the lives of children, first heard and later read, cannot be overstated. "As they are told and retold, stories have the function of wrestling with the ultimately inexplicable chaos of reality around us. They give it form, and in shaping and reshaping the form, they help us gain control over it" (Jabbour, cited in Templeton, 1996). Stories or narratives offer a structure that helps younger children and older students take on problems and, over time, resolve those problems. Narratives may take on different forms in different cultures—Latino and Hispanic, for example, and Native American/Indigenous and African—but they serve the same function in all cultures: teaching and reassuring us as we grapple with life's challenges, large and small. For example, Sandra Madura, a teacher at Compello Elementary School, selects *Al Capone Does My Shirts* (Choldenko, 2004) for her fifth-grade class. The main characters are children of parents who are working in the maximum-security prison on the island of Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay. Sandra wants her students to read and explore this text because, as a work of historical fiction, it connects to her instruction in U.S. History, and its narrative reflects the timeless struggles and worries of young people on the verge of puberty.

Informational texts While a sense of narratives may be "wired in" to our collective psychology and experience, *informational* texts are not (Havelock, 1988; Ong, 2002). They structure information to accomplish different purposes: *inform, describe, argue*, or *persuade*. Our ability to reason logically, however, may develop based on our experience with the structure and the language of informational texts (Olson, 1996). Informational text, or as it's often referred to, *expository* text, does not "tell stories" in the narrative sense. It's structured to convey and represent information in supportive and accessible ways—or at least it *should* be. When it isn't, students should be led to inquire "Why not?" Such inquiry is an important part of critical thinking and reading. For example, middle school students might come to question a history text that says the primary cause of the Civil War was "states' rights" or that the explosion of the battleship *Maine* was the primary cause of the Spanish-American War.

Informational texts also are usually characterized by the use of **academic language** (Brock, Lapp, Salas, & Townsend, 2009; Schleppergrell, 2004; Zwiers, 2014). Academic Language includes challenging *vocabulary*—new and abstract nouns and verbs, for example—and more complex *sentences* (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). These sentences are more complex because they're longer, often contain a number of clauses, and include connective words and phrases such as *therefore, subsequently*, and *as a consequence*.

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES What are the comprehension strategies for narrative and informational texts that you will be teaching your students? You will see

Pearson eText

Video Example 1.2

Teachers use a variety of ways to help students comprehend informational text. How is this second-grade teacher helping her students understand informational text?

different labels, but most educators (e.g., Block & Pressley, 2007) agree that they involve:

- Predicting
- Questioning
- Drawing inferences
- Identifying important information
- Summarizing
- Monitoring

Each of these strategies will be taught in the context of specific narrative and informational texts. They will also overlap in places. You will teach them directly, individually, but will also demonstrate how they may be used in combination. Learning them, and learning how and when to use them, is a *developmental* process. We'll describe each briefly here, and then unpack them in later chapters.

Predicting Decades ago, Russell Stauffer (1969) revolutionized the way many educators thought about reading instruction by encouraging teachers to ask students "What do you think will happen next?" before and during the reading of a story. For many years, reading had been taught as if students were passive recipients of information, but this simple question emphasized that students could and should read actively—and that if they did, their understanding, recall, and retention would improve. Getting students to predict what they will learn or find out, and then revise or confirm their predictions as they read, is powerful. Prediction involves bringing background knowledge to bear, often *visualizing* what might occur. For example, after reading the blurb on the back cover of *Al Capone Does My Shirts*, Sandra Madura asks her students, "What do you think might be the kinds of trouble Moose Flanagan [the novel's main character] could get into on Alcatraz?" The resulting discussion not only primes the students for their reading but it also gives Sandra helpful information about her students' background knowledge.

Questioning Like predicting, asking questions before and during reading makes it much more likely that readers will understand and recall the information. Of course, these questions are often posed by teachers, but we will support our students' learning how to pose questions themselves. One question that inevitably springs from Sandra Madura's fifth-graders before reading the first chapter of *Al Capone* is "Why is this kid living on Alcatraz, anyway?" The answer, found on the first page of Chapter 1, "Devil's Island," is "My mother said I had to." Of course, this answer only begs more questions—the kinds of questions students would naturally ask of their world, because their minds are set up this way. Teachers simply remind them to do this when they read or listen to texts, and teachers model how to do it when the going gets tough.

Drawing inferences This is one of the most complex processes in the act of reading and one of the most important to teach students how to do. Inferring relies on the reader's background knowledge. Consider the following two sentences:

"Shelley is eleven years old. Her sister, Julie, is fourteen."

Now answer the question "Who is older, Shelley or Julie?" This may seem fairly simple, but you can read those two sentences all day long and not find the answer to the question "Who is older?" unless you also use your background knowledge about numbers and operations that apply to them.

Similarly, your ability to infer the relationship between the following two sentences relies on your background knowledge:

"The citizens demonstrated loudly in the streets. The government cut benefits significantly."

Answering the question "Why did the citizens demonstrate?" relies on your drawing an inference based on your background knowledge: The *order* of the sentences might suggest the government cut benefits *because* the citizens demonstrated, but your knowledge of current events, relationships between governments and their citizens, and so forth, led you to infer that the citizens demonstrated *because* of the government's actions.

These examples are meant to illustrate not only the nature and subtlety of inferring but also the importance of being sensitive to students' reading levels and background knowledge. What may appear to us or to some of our students to be "right there" on the page is often *not* obvious to other students. This highlights the significance of demonstrating and walking students through the strategy of *how* to draw inferences.

Identifying important information Depending on the reader's purpose, in both narratives and informational texts it is necessary to determine what is essential and what is not, and to understand the relationships among this information. Students often assume that *all* information in a book is important—otherwise, wouldn't the author have left it out? That is why it is important to emphasize the *purpose* for reading. For example, the chapter on Andrew Jackson, "Old Hickory," in Joy Hakim's (1993) *The New Nation* includes boxes with interesting if not fascinating information about Jackson and his era. In one of these boxes we learn that Jackson bought 20 spittoons for the East Room of the White House at a fairly steep price. Although that type of information may catch our eye as we are previewing the chapter before reading more carefully—and we might remember it because of its interest—it may not be the most important information to focus on when we go back and read the chapter thoroughly. As the teacher, you will walk students through the chapter, showing them how the topic sentences in each paragraph help "label" the essential information and point to supporting details. In this case, most paragraphs describe the chronology of Jackson's life and how his experiences shaped his perspective when he was later elected President of the United States.

Summarizing A summary answers the question "What is this text *really* about?" It is a shorter version of the text, capturing the main point or points. Crafting a summary is the most challenging strategy, as it relies on and pulls together all of the other strategies. Some educators make a helpful distinction between "summarizing" and "writing a summary" (e.g., Frey, Fisher, & Berkin, 2009). Summarizing during reading is one way of ensuring that readers are making sense of the reading and getting the big picture. In this sense, summarizing is a way of *monitoring* one's reading, which we explore in the next section. But summarizing *after* reading either by sharing orally or writing a couple of sentences, or by writing a more developed composition, draws on the same types of information and strategies.

When you first address summarizing, begin with narratives. Younger children can learn the basics of summarizing, even though they may not be writing summaries for a while. What are the most important things or events that happened in the story? What did they all add up to? For informational text, students learn that the headings, subheadings, and boldfaced text represent the most important ideas. As we'll see in later chapters, putting this information into one's own words is important, and we will support our students in doing so.

Monitoring During reading, we should be aware of how it's going—are we cruising along with most things making sense, or are we encountering some problems in making sense of some sentences? Being aware of (1) the degree to which we're making sense as we read and (2) what to do about it when we aren't, involves monitoring. If we are encountering difficulty, self-monitoring helps determine where the difficulty lies and how to fix it, which involves plugging in another strategy.

The Language of Your Instruction

Strategies versus Skills

The strategies we've been discussing are often referred to as *skills*. So is there a difference between strategies and skills? Yes, and this difference has to do with the degree to which readers are aware of them. A *strategy* is what we teach and students consciously learn to apply over time. When our students reach the point where they are applying a strategy without thinking about it, it has become a skill (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008). Strategies are conscious and deliberate; skills are automatic. Our objective, of course, is for these strategies to become automatically applied by our students. When they are self-monitoring and encounter difficulty when they read, it is our hope that they will remember a strategy and apply it, as needed.

One last, very important, point: You will encounter many labels for strategies, types of questions, and types of support. These labels and strategies appear in your curriculum guides, standards, and articles you may read. Despite all the labels and terminology, just remember the basics of good comprehension instruction: Through your support and guidance

- You are helping your students grow and develop their background knowledge, which includes their own world knowledge and what they are learning about the structure of the particular type of texts they are reading.
- You are showing your students how to activate and use their background/prior knowledge to deepen their understanding of text before, during, and after reading.
- Your students are learning to do this based on their purpose/goal/intention for reading.

Writing

Our expanded definition of *literacy* includes a wide range of purposes and types of writing. As we've noted, the texts our students read are blueprints for constructing meaning. Importantly, these texts will also be the blueprints for our students to construct through their writing the meanings they want their readers to construct (Galbraith & Baiijen, 2018).

Traditionally, the readers of our students' writing have been teachers, but teachers should not of course be the *sole* readers of everything students write. We should be facilitators of our students' developing ability to communicate with others and influence their immediate contexts and the broader world beyond. As students learn through your reading instruction how authors structure arguments, provide information and explanation, and create narrative worlds, they will apply this knowledge in composing their own texts—first with your guidance and then later independently. They will think carefully about their audience and how their writing may best be structured to affect that audience. For example:

- A second-grader writes about why the *Henry and Mudge* (Cynthia Rylant) books are her favorites, offering her opinion, supported by two or three reasons, using linking words such as *because*, and providing a conclusion.
- A seventh-grader writes a persuasive essay in support of teachers allowing writing in an online *fanzine* to count for class credit in English. The fanzine in this case is dedicated to the "vampire and werewolves" fantasy genre. In her paper, she

Pearson eText

Video Example 1.3

Teaching your students to use comprehension strategies will assist them in understanding text. What strategy is this fifth-grade teacher using, and how is its use different from your own childhood experience?

addresses the teachers in the English/Language Arts department in her middle school. She begins her **persuasive** piece by introducing her point. She then organizes and supports her point with appropriate reasons and evidence, chooses words and phrases that explicitly establish the relationship between her topic and the support she offers, and adopts the appropriate tone or style for this type of argument.

For our students' informational writing, there is at present an increased focus in most reading, English/language arts standards on **argument**. This is not the heated, in-your-face type of argument, but rather the more objective, logical presentation of a point of view. Well-constructed arguments are invaluable in both education and the workplace. The argument form is used to change points of view, move others to act in a certain way, or convince others of the reasonableness of your position. Unlike *persuasive* writing, however, its power is in its structure. Whereas *persuasive* writing is usually *selective* in presenting a point of view and appealing to the reader's emotions, arguments rest on the power of the structure and reasoning in the writing. **Informative/explanatory** writing are used both to examine and to convey information and ideas with clarity and accuracy. This type of writing supports our students' learning as well as their communication with others.

Like the reading of narratives, narrative *writing* supports students' developing understanding of themselves and their world and provides a form through which they can try out these developing understandings with others. It also helps them develop further insight into the narratives they read and the ideas and themes that narratives explore.

You will support your students' understanding of the *process* of writing. Many students honestly believe that the work of published authors magically springs from their pens or keyboards in perfect final-draft form. In reality, just about every composition a writer truly cares about is developed over time through planning, revising, and editing. Many teachers may not enjoy or choose to do a lot of writing outside of the profession, and yet they must encourage and support their students to write. Some very wise writing teachers have reassured us that by writing with our students, sharing and modeling our writing, we not only help the students' development but also come to enjoy writing *ourselves* (Calkins, 1994; Fletcher, 1996; Graves, 1983; Routman, 2018). Over the years, the *National Writing Project* (www.nwp.org) has supported thousands of teachers in becoming writers and in supporting their teaching of writing, and we encourage you to become involved yourself with this excellent project.

Vocabulary

Students' understanding of words and the concepts the words represent is one of the best predictors of their success in school (Schleppegrell, 2004; Rasinski & Rupley, 2019; Stahl & Nagy, 2006). Regardless of the grade or grades you teach, you will be teaching your students specific words as well as teaching them *about* words—the processes of word formation that apply to most of those hundreds of thousands of words in English (Nagy, 2007; Templeton, 2012). Your instruction will be what educators call *generative*: Knowing how words "work" will help students *generate*, from one word, an understanding of several other related words. Your instruction will also be engaging and motivating, helping students develop an interest in and wish to explore words (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2020; Graves, August, Mancilla, & Martinez, 2013; Templeton, Bear, Invernizzi, Johnston, Flanigan, Townsend, Helman, & Hayes, 2015; Townsend, in press).

THREE PRINCIPLES OF VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION We will frame vocabulary instruction throughout this book within three principles that we've adapted from Stahl and Nagy (2006):

1. **Immerse the learner in rich oral language and in wide reading and purposeful writing.** Learners of all ages must be surrounded by rich oral language and should be reading widely. For some students, this is going to occur mostly in their classrooms. The words, phrases, and nuances of meaning students encounter in their reading should also be tried out and exercised in their writing—further extending students' understandings of the underlying concepts. You will support your students' wide reading, and for children who are emergent and beginning readers, and therefore not able to read widely, you read to the children books that reflect a range of words in contexts that are compelling and engaging.

   Although wide reading is absolutely necessary for growing a large vocabulary, it is not sufficient. The next two principles provide the additional sufficient support.

2. **Explicitly teach and talk about meaningful word elements.** The structure of words gives important clues to their meaning. So many of the words students will encounter in their reading, and should use in their writing, are created by combining these meaningful elements: **prefixes**, **suffixes**, **base words**, and Greek and Latin **roots**. For example, we walk younger students through the simple relationships involved in taking the word *help* and adding prefixes and suffixes:

   help
   help*ing*
   help*ful*
   *un*help*ful*

   Older students explore how a word such as *courage* is affected by the addition of different prefixes and suffixes:

   courage
   courage*ous*
   courage*ously*
   *en*courage
   *dis*courage
   *dis*courag*ingly*
   *dis*courage*able*
   *undis*courag*ed*
   *en*courage*ment*
   *en*courag*ingly*

3. **Engage in deep, intense study of specific words.** The words that represent the most important concepts in a text or unit of study deserve focused instruction. Looking at how they are used in context and examining their structure support the learning of these words. They should also, however, be explored through activities that involve learners in comparing and contrasting the words and their concepts in ways that construct deep and lasting understandings. For example, fourth-graders learning about classical Greek civilization will learn or expand understanding of concepts such as *democracy, city-states, myth*, and *legend. Democracy* may be contrasted with *autocracy*: How are they alike (a form of government) and different (rights and freedoms enjoyed by citizens)? How might an understanding of the meaningful parts that make up *democracy* and *autocracy* support learning and remembering the concepts they represent? (*Cracy* means "rule or govern," *demo* refers to "people," and *auto* refers to "self"—rule by the *people* versus rule by an *individual*.)

THREE MAJOR TYPES OF VOCABULARY There are three major types of vocabulary: (1) everyday conversational vocabulary; (2) more "academic" vocabulary that occurs in all content areas and disciplines, referred to as *general* academic vocabulary; and (3) academic vocabulary that primarily occurs within each specific content area or discipline, referred to as *domain-specific* vocabulary. You will also see the labels "Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3" used to refer to these three types (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013): Tier 1 is the equivalent of conversational vocabulary, Tier 2 general academic, and Tier 3 domain-specific.

- **Conversational vocabulary** refers to the basic, most frequently used words in the language. The words often label common things or actions, and they seldom require direct instruction because they are used so frequently—for example, *chair, fun, happy*, and *ran*. Many of our new English learners, however, may need explicit instruction in some of these words.
- **General academic vocabulary** refers to words that students encounter often in their reading and should be able to use in their writing. These words are also likely to occur in formal oral language contexts such as lectures. They occur across all content areas—examples are *coincidence, energetic, fortunate*, and *paradox*. Often, students have the underlying concepts for the words but just need to learn the new labels.
- **Content- or domain-specific academic vocabulary** refers to words that occur in specific content areas such as mathematics *(numerator, rectilinear)*, science *(enzyme, magnetic field)*, the arts *(bass clef, impressionism)*, and history and social science *(antebellum, preamble)*. The domain-specific vocabulary in reading/English/language arts is often referred to as *literary vocabulary*—for example, *foreshadowing* and *rhyme scheme* (Hiebert & Lubliner, 2008). In contrast to general academic vocabulary, much domain-specific academic vocabulary represents new concepts, or familiar concepts with new applications.

Strategies for the Classroom

Selecting Specific Words for In-Depth Study

How do you know which specific words to select for deep and intense study? We will address specific guidelines later in the developmental chapters, but in general, for the primary grades we ensure that children, especially English learners, acquire the most frequently occurring words they may not be picking up in conversation. We also emphasize appropriate general academic vocabulary, and begin to explore the domain-specific vocabulary that will represent important concepts in content-area units of study. For the intermediate grades, both general academic and domain-specific vocabulary will receive significant emphasis. In the middle grades, domain-specific vocabulary receives primary emphasis.

For example, although several unfamiliar terms appear in the first few chapters of *Al Capone Does My Shirts*, teacher Sandra Madura chose those that she believed were critical to her students' understanding of the developing narrative and were important for them to learn by the intermediate grades. Some of the words she selected were *convict, criminal, electrician, innocent, affliction*, and *Eleanor Roosevelt*. Sandra knew that most of her students have at least heard most if not all of these words, and some have some knowledge about them. She also knew that most of the words are important general academic vocabulary terms—thus requiring a deeper understanding—and those that are domain-specific are important in the context of the narrative. She skipped those that were *not* critical to understanding the chapter or the larger themes—words such as *embezzler* and *conniver*, the meanings of which she could simply mention along the way.

Word Structure

Does the spelling of English words make sense? Most folks would probably answer "Of course not!" But there is far more logic in the way words are spelled than most people realize, and we will be exploring how we can support our students' understanding of this logic throughout this book. Yes, there are famous examples of the apparent *illogic* of spelling (for example, *cough, though, tough, through, bough*), but when taken together with most words in the language, these examples are fairly few in number.

Learning to read and spell words in English involves learning about the logic of word structure at the level of *sound* and at the level of *meaning*. We'll briefly examine the logic at the level of *meaning* here, and in Chapter 2 address this level more deeply as well as the logic at the level of *sound*. Subsequent chapters will provide support in how we *teach* about these levels to students at different developmental levels.

Recall from the previous section how the structure of words gives important clues to their meaning. Among words that are related in meaning there is a strong *visual* connection, captured in the *spelling* of the related words. This relationship is referred to as the **spelling–meaning connection**: "Words that are related in spelling are often related in meaning as well, despite changes in sound" (Templeton, 1983; 2012). It also explains most of the "odd" spellings in the English language. For example, why are there silent consonants in the following words?

*bom**b*** *si**g**n* *mus**c**le*

They are there because they maintain the *visual* relationship with words to which they are related in *meaning*:

*bom**b***	*si**g**n*	*mus**c**le*
*bom**b**ard*	*si**g**nature*	*mus**c**ular*

Why do vowel letters have different sounds, as with the letter *i* in the following words?

*def**i**ne*
*def**i**nition*
*def**i**nitive*

Although it stands for three different sounds, the letter *i* is there because it helps to maintain the *visual* relationship among these words, which are related in meaning.

Why do many consonant letters stand for different sounds? The spelling–meaning connection explains most of these: When reading *Al Capone Does My Shirts*, for example, Sandra Madura and her students discussed the profession of Moose Flanagan's dad: *electrician*. Sandra wrote the word *electric* on the white board and then the word *electrician* underneath it. She underlined the final *c* in both words and reminded the students how words related in meaning are often related in their spelling. Even though the sound that the final *c* represents changes when *-ian* is added to *electric*, the spelling does *not* change because of the meaning relationship that these two words share.

When students develop an awareness and understanding of these connections between spelling and meaning, their vocabularies also grow in breadth and in depth. This is the second principle of vocabulary instruction as we previously discussed.

Students will develop insight into the logic of sound and meaning only if their teachers are aware of and understand this logic. If you are just coming to this awareness, know that we will explore these relationships in some depth in several other chapters. As Hughes and Searle (1997) point out, "Many teachers themselves see spelling as more arbitrary than systematic; at least, they give that impression to their students... . If we teachers do not believe that spelling has logical, negotiable patterns, how can we hope to help [students] develop that insight?"

Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability to identify words quickly and accurately, to understand their meaning, and to read orally with expression (Gehsmann, Spichtig, Pascoe, Ferrara, & Tousley, 2019; Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard, Linan, & Thompson, 2011). Becoming a reader who is able to read an unfamiliar text with expression, sounding natural, is a developmental phenomenon. It fundamentally depends on the ability to identify all or almost all words automatically, tacitly applying all of the information the reader knows about each word—its meanings, pronunciation, how it can be used in context without having to stop to decode or figure it out. For this reason, fluency is both a cause and an effect of comprehension (Gehsmann, Spichtig, & Tousley, 2015; 2016; Invernizzi, 2017; Spichtig, Gehsmann, Pascoe, & Ferrara, 2019). It is impossible to read aloud naturally without being able to decode almost all the words in a text automatically and accurately. This means that instruction should emphasize attention to the structure of printed words as well as plenty of opportunities to read texts at appropriate levels, encountering the most frequent words and word patterns in the language over and over. Rasinski (2011) has pointed out that readers who are able to read orally with good expression are also better able to comprehend material when reading silently. If oral reading is awkward and "disfluent," comprehension during silent reading will suffer. Importantly, whenever we focus our instruction on fluency we are simultaneously helping students see the relationship between fluency and comprehension. A growing body of evidence shows the importance of comprehension-based fluency instruction (Spichtig et al., 2019).

Motivation

Motivation is key to success in learning. Students are motivated to read and are engaged in that reading if they're interested. As Smith (2012) observed, "No one ever taught reading to a child who wasn't interested in reading, and interest can't be demanded." If students are not motivated to read, then they will not be able to bring their attention to bear on a text, much less apply the strategies you have been teaching.

The motivation and love of reading come from being "hooked" by a particular book, author, or topic and then going from there (Becker, McElvany, & Kortenbruck, 2010). When a student experiences success with reading because he or she is interested and motivated, the teacher may then build on that to develop a willingness to read material in which the child is *not* naturally interested or which may be more challenging. In this regard, motivation is related to the concept of a learning or growth **mindset**—how to persist, perhaps struggle, and persevere when facing a challenge (Myers, Wang, Black, Bugescu, & Hoeft, 2016; Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

When students are motivated and engaged readers, they can overcome what otherwise are often challenging obstacles to the rate and extent of their literacy development, including parental education and income (Guthrie, 2004). A number of researchers have confirmed that the following practices will help establish the environment for nurturing students' motivation to read and expansion of interests (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2018; Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012):

- Allow opportunities for students to choose what to read. When you get to know your students and what motivates them in their own lives, you will know what topics and books to make available. Listen to and value their opinions.
- Provide students with easy access to interesting texts.
- Read real texts for genuine reasons and purposes.
- Offer students opportunities to discuss readings.
- Engage students with a range of genres.

The Language of Your Instruction

Standards and Their Influence

The topic of *standards* is part of your instructional language because the terminology used in literacy standards inevitably becomes a significant part of the terminology you use in the classroom. Over the last decade, elementary teachers and students in the United States have faced a considerable increase in grade-specific standards and testing. Some have argued that this trend has resulted in a narrowing of the curriculum, a decrease in morale among educators, and an increase in "one-size-fits-all" teaching practices (Allington, 2002; Gehsmann & Templeton, 2011/2012; Nichols & Berliner, 2007).

A word about standards may be helpful here: To a greater or lesser degree, there have always been grade-level expectations or their equivalent in education. They determine what is taught and tested. Unavoidably, they often clash with classroom realities that reflect the range of abilities among students. Although not disagreeing with the intent of standards, educators who understand learning in a developmental perspective have often criticized *what* and *how much* is expected by the end of each grade level. Over the course of a generation, the expectations for children's reading and writing have increased, and occur earlier in the standards. What used to be the first-grade curriculum is now addressed in kindergarten, for example, and this shift ripples on through the grades: Middle school expectations of a decade ago now appear in grades 4 and 5.

When we drill down into some of the specifics in every state's reading, English/language arts standards—expectations for which you will likely be held accountable—there may be some challenges. Throughout this text, we will demonstrate how a developmental model of literacy grounds effective literacy instruction and will support you as you negotiate the ever-present tension between (1) providing literacy instruction that is in children's "construction zones" (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Newman, Griffin, & Cole, 1989) and (2) addressing grade-level standards for which you may be accountable.

Every state's reading, English/language arts standards reflect what your students will be expected to learn, but another important set of standards reflects what teachers are expected to learn and be able to apply in their teaching and in their interactions with the broader community: the International Literacy Association's (ILA) *Standards for Literacy Professionals* (2017). This document informs much of the information and support we provide you in this text. The ILA *Standards* provide six overarching standards that include foundations for literacy instruction, what and how to teach, the effective assessment of literacy learning and development, understanding diversity and teaching from a culturally responsive perspective, establishing a supportive literacy environment, and a commitment to lifelong learning and collaboration with other educators and the broader community through professional learning and leadership. In addition, specific standards for different instructional roles are provided. Instructional recommendations for teachers of pre-K through elementary and middle/high school students are reflected throughout the chapters in this book. Regardless of your students' grade or stage of development, you will be well prepared to help them meet the standards in your school and state!

The Literacy Essentials from a Developmental Perspective

1.3 Identify the five stages of literacy development and summarize the major characteristics of each.

Reading and writing are mutually supportive. The relationship between these two abilities begins in the preschool years and will continue to be the foundation for

students' literacy development. We take a *developmental* approach to the teaching of literacy because this supports teaching where our students *are* rather than where they are *not*. Determining where your students fall along the continuum of literacy development ensures that you will be teaching them in their instructional zone or level, so your instruction will make sense (Morris, 2014). You will know how far you can "stretch" your students without winding up in their frustration zone. When you meet your students in their appropriate instructional zones, you are able to build on what they already know and what they are trying to do.

If this sounds quite obvious to you and you're thinking "Of course!" that's a very good sign. Unfortunately, as we will address throughout this text, you often may feel pressured to teach content or concepts that are beyond particular students' learning zones. But if your literacy instruction is grounded in the developmental perspective, you will be able to move your students farther along toward that content and those concepts by teaching *in*, rather than *beyond*, their instructional zones most of the time (Connor, Morrison, Fishman, Crowe, Al Otaiba, & Scatschneider, 2013; Connor & Morrison, 2016; Gehsmann & Templeton, 2011/2012).

Stages of Literacy Development

Whereas all students at some level are trying to make meaning when they read, the ease with which they are able to do so *during* reading, and how well they adjust when the reading becomes challenging, depend on their stage of reading development. The degree to which students are able to write—to encode their thinking at the word and sentence level while keeping in mind the purpose of their writing—depends on their stage of literacy development. Chapter 2 will explore the characteristics of development at each of these stages in some depth, and Chapters 6 through 10 will address *instruction* at each of these developmental stages. Here, however, we offer a brief introduction to these stages of literacy development.

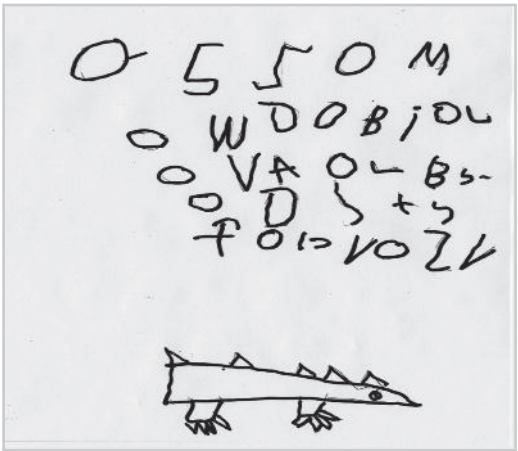
EMERGENT STAGE Ranging from the preschool years through early first grade, the emergent stage is an important foundational time during which children develop concepts about print and learn that it represents spoken language. They develop an understanding of the **directionality** in print—that it flows in a left-to-right, top-to-bottom manner. They learn the alphabet and some sounds that the letters make.

Emergent learners develop concepts of "story" and often of "nursery rhyme." With little effort, over time they memorize favorite texts and "read" them back, turning the pages at exactly the right places. This is not true reading, of course, but an extremely important foundational understanding for reading to develop. Their writing evolves from random scribbles to letterlike forms as shown in *Student Artifact 1.1.*

BEGINNING STAGE Children attend much more closely to print. They are coming to understand how units on the printed page or screen correspond more precisely to speech. While teachers are continuing to model how print functions, children are learning to "read the spaces" (Clay, 1991; Clay, 2001), and develop a **concept of word in text** (Bowling & Cabell, 2018; Morris, Bloodgood, Lomax, & Perney, 2003). This concept of word in text—that words have beginnings and endings, indicated by spaces—supports children's awareness

Student Artifact 1.1

Emergent Writer–Gavin's "Dinosaur"



of all of the sounds in a word. This awareness is called **phonemic awareness**; able to attend to **phonemes**, the smallest units of speech, children come to understand the **alphabetic principle**—that letters represent sounds and are matched in a left-to-right sequence within the printed word. These understandings in turn lay the foundation for

- **decoding**—using knowledge of letter-to-sound relationships to determine the identity and meaning of unfamiliar words in print
- developing a **sight vocabulary**—words that the learner recognizes immediately both in text and in isolation.

Like emergent learners, beginning readers continue to benefit from repeated readings of predictable texts. When they encounter a new text, their reading rate is quite slow and choppy, often described as "word by word." Reading fluency obviously has yet to develop, because beginning readers are spending so much of their "thinking space" focused on identifying the words on the page.

Because of the read-alouds you will be conducting with your children at this stage, they will be developing a more elaborate concept of story as well as developing a beginning understanding of informational texts and how they work. The students are able to learn that each type of text usually has different purposes. Interestingly, young boys often respond with more interest to informational texts than to narratives (Brozo, 2019), a point we will explore further in Chapter 2.

Student Artifact 1.2

Beginning Writer - Elisa's "I like sitting under my favorite tree."

Learners at the beginning stage are able to exercise their developing knowledge about print through their *writing*. Just as with their reading, their writing is slow going, definitely not fluent. They expend so much thinking space and energy matching up letters with the sounds they want to represent, while still trying to hold onto the topic of their writing (not to mention the pencil!). It is important not to set too many expectations on them during these initial attempts with respect to quality and correctness of writing. If they wish to, or are required to, revise a piece of writing, then care should be taken on how much is addressed during the revision process. Simple conventions—capitalization at the beginning of a sentence and a period at the end—and any wording changes they might wish should be about the maximum expectation. First-grader Elisa's writing (*Student Artifact 1.2*) took a few minutes to complete.

Some children move into the beginning reading stage in kindergarten, while most move through this stage in first grade; some children are still in this stage in second grade.

TRANSITIONAL STAGE Learners move toward fluency in their reading—that is, increasing rate, accuracy, and expression. This development is grounded in their increasing word knowledge—understanding how printed words work—and their growing familiarity with narrative and informational texts. The children's store of sight words increases significantly. During this stage, they will become silent readers, which is something beginning readers simply cannot do. All of this knowledge about words and print allows them to recognize words more rapidly and automatically, which in turn frees up more thinking space *as* they read. They are better able to analyze, summarize, and generalize based on their *own* reading rather than just on the texts that are read *to* them by the teacher (Madura, 1998).

Because of their growing familiarity with and understanding of the nature and functions of print and texts, transitional learners are also becoming more fluent in their *writing*. Their processes of **encoding** words—using knowledge of sound-to-letter relationships and spelling patterns to write words they want to use—as well as representing ideas become

more rapid. They are able to hold information and ideas in their heads better as they are encoding that information. They are also better able to keep in mind the purpose and audience for their writing. For transitional learners, *revision* of their writing is a realistic expectation. *Student Artifact 1.3* represents two entries from second-grader Kirstin's journal.

Many children move into the transitional stage in first grade; most will move through this period in second or third grade, though a few are still at this stage in fourth grade.

Student Artifact 1.3

Transitional Writer—Kirstin's Journal Entries

Sharons frind brocke her arm yesterday by jumping off a swing.

I cant whate till tomarow.

INTERMEDIATE STAGE Many students move into this stage in third grade; for most, however, movement into this stage corresponds to the intermediate grades—grades four and five. A number of middle-grade students are still in this stage as well. The children's developing understanding of texts allows for reading more extensively across a range of texts and genres, and sustaining their reading over longer periods of time. Fluency develops further, allowing quite natural-sounding oral reading of on-level texts. Their reading interests may expand considerably, and they may immerse themselves for weeks on end in particular series books or particular genres. Students in the intermediate stage develop the ability to step back and think in more depth about the structure and content of what they read—a noted foundation for the more sophisticated cognition that will come in just a few years. Importantly, this is the stage during which students' acquisition of vocabulary increases dramatically, based on wide reading and understanding of how meaningful elements in words combine, including frequently occurring Greek and Latin roots.

Intermediate writers incorporate the more complex patterns and features of both narrative and informational texts. They are better able to balance the many cognitive demands of writing—more fluently encoding at the word and sentence levels, while sustaining focus and intent. Writing also becomes a vehicle for *learning* (Mills, Stornaiuolo, Smith, & Pandya, 2018; Scardamalia, 1981), not only in response to the reading that the students are doing but also through their original compositions. It is a powerful medium through which they discover more about themselves, work toward establishing their identities, and learn that who they are and what they do really matter.

An entry from fifth-grader Richard's learning log (*Student Artifact 1.4*) reflects his reading of different informational texts that address the topic of extinct animals.

Richard's misspellings ("exstinked," "indangerd," and the different attempts at *species*—"speceys"/"speaces") are revealing examples of his underlying word knowledge, although he is clearly able to read these words in text. As we'll explore in Chapter 2, when students move into the transitional stage, and then continuing throughout their development, there will usually be a gap between words that they are able to read and their ability to spell those words correctly.

Student Artifact 1.4

Intermediate Writer—Richard's Learning Log

I thought it was fun to learn about birds that are exstinked and indangerd speceys and about the dodo bird I didn't know there was. I thought that it was a joke about the dodo bird. It's cool to learn about other indangered speaces and I loved talking about the dodo bird. Whats' inchrasting is that they eat a plant called the dodo plant!

PROFICIENT STAGE At this stage the ability to read deeply, thoughtfully, and critically may be applied to a wide range of genres, although there will always be room for fine-tuning the strategies with which particular genres or the informational and literary texts in particular disciplines may be read. Reading can become much more flexible and strategic. Students become increasingly able to analyze themes and character motivations, as well as relate contemporary literary characters and themes to earlier works. Word knowledge may grow into an appreciation of the increasing range and importance

Student Artifact 1.5

Proficient Writer–Catherine's Personal Narrative: "A Nerve-Wracking First Time"

It was early competition season: November, maybe even December, and it was our first time tumbling on tumble track in awhile; we'd been so busy working on perfecting our routines. Once we took two, maybe three turns each, I did my back layout. As I got out of the dusty pit full of foam blocks that cushioned my landing, my coach shouted, "Wow! That was so high! Double next time."

"What?!" I nervously asked. "I have never done a double back before . . ."

"It's okay," she answered. "Just set your arms up, circle them back, grab your legs and pull your flip around twice, until you hit the pit."

"Alright," I conceded. I was not totally convinced. When I got back in line, I was asking all of my friends who had done a double before, "Is it hard? Is it scary?" They all told me it was a piece of cake and that I'd be fine.

It was almost my turn. I visualized all of the double backs I had seen before and tried to picture myself doing the same motions. The line moved up, I was next. Panic rushed through my body.

"Okay," I told myself. "Just set, circle and keep pulling, I will be fine." Around me, my team chanted and cheered my name, encouraging me to go for it. But I was in my own world. With my body shaking, I closed my eyes, took a deep breath and prepared . . .

of Greek and Latin word elements as well as the histories of words, or **etymology**. This insight affords more nuanced understanding and appreciation of words and their use, across disciplines and literary texts.

Students' writing at this stage may display complex analysis and interpretation, reflecting a more sophisticated, discipline-specific vocabulary. The degree to which students develop this insight in their writing will depend on the support and guidance they receive from their teachers. Twelve-year-old Catherine's personal narrative in *Student Artifact 1.5* shows her understanding of how the form of this genre, including the first person as narrator, may be used to develop suspense. Also apparent is Catherine's more sophisticated use of the conventions of writing such as semicolons and ellipses, and her correct spelling of more complex words such as *competition* and *visualized*. Her vocabulary knowledge is suggested through her appropriate and effective use of the word *conceded* in this context, and she has effectively used and punctuated dialogue.

This stage represents a level that many students do not attain, though most are capable of developing the language and thinking skills to grow into this level. Some students at the upper elementary level, and many more in the middle grades and beyond, are capable of this level of development.

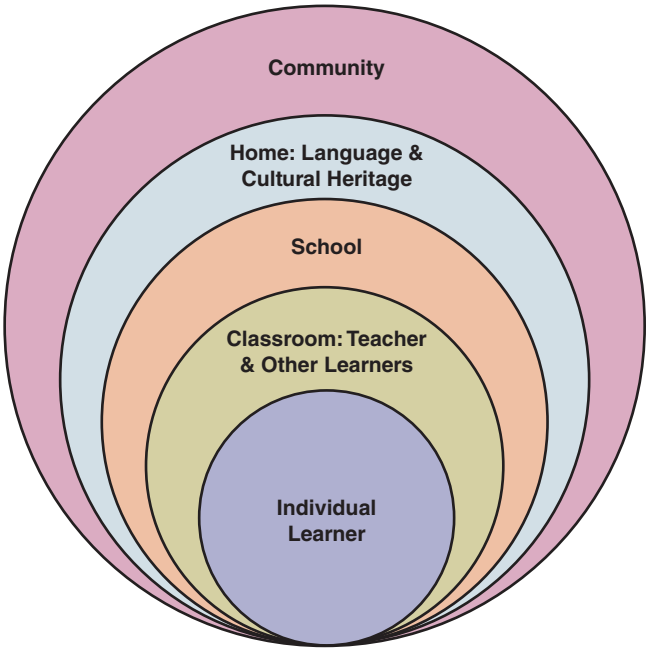
The Sociocultural and Language Contexts of Literacy Learning

1.4 Explain the importance of teachers' awareness of the sociocultural and language contexts of literacy learning.

We talked earlier about the digital age and its implications for literacy instruction. That is a very important context, but social, cultural, and language contexts are equally if not more important in terms of how they impact your teaching and your students' learning of literacy. When your students walk through the door in the morning, they bring their identity,

language, family, community, and cultural heritage with them. If you are to be effective, your instruction must be **culturally-responsive**—sensitive to and inclusive of the cultures that identity, language, family, and community represent (Au, 2005a; Fleming, Catapano, Thompson, & Ruvalcaba Carrillo, 2016; Moll, 2005; Ryan, Hermann, & Wilmarth 2013; Ryan, Hermann, & Wilmarth, 2018). How our students see themselves, who and what they value, how they behave, and how they learn—all are a function of the embedded contexts in which they live, and in which you are such a very important figure. Figure 1.1 represents the embedded nature of these sociocultural contexts. Figure 1.2 offers resources for teachers' better understanding of diverse perspectives.

Figure 1.1 Embedded Contexts for Schooling



Learning Cultural Practices

For many of our students, it's not just content and a new language that they are trying to learn—it's a whole set of cultural practices as well. These practices are reflected in school and in the larger societal mainstream. Most middle-class English-speaking children have grown

Figure 1.2 Learning to Look at Schooling from Diverse Perspectives

Whether we realize it or not, we have all grown up in our own unique cultures, and sometimes our culture can be very different from that of our students. Learning to better understand ourselves and other cultures and life experiences will help us become better teachers, allies, and advocates. These resources will provide awareness of, insight into, and ways to connect the lives and experiences of diverse cultures and communities:

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *What fragility? Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
Emdin, C. (2016). *For white folks who teach in the hood . . . And the rest of y'all too. Reality pedagogy and urban education*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
Espana, C., & Herrera, L. Y., (2020). *En Comunidad: Lessons for centering the voices and experiences of bilingual Latinx students*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Gándara, P. (2017). The promise and potential of Latino students. *American Educator* (Spring), 1–14. Downloaded from: https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2017/gandara
Gorski, P. C. (2018). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Jung, L. A., Frey, N., Fisher, F., & Kroener, J. (2019). *Your students, my students, our students: Rethinking equitable and inclusive classrooms.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
Kendi, I., X. (2019). *How to be an antiracist.* New York: One World, an imprint of Random House.
Love, B. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
Minor, C. (2018). *We've got this: Equity, access, and the quest to be who our students need us to be.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Nieto, S. (2013). *Finding joy in teaching students form diverse backgrounds: Culturally responsive and socially just practices in U.S. classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Paris, D., & Alim, H. S. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Rich, J. (2018). How I talk to my White preservice teachers about diversity. *Education Week* (September). Downloaded from: https://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2018/09/12/white-preservice-teachers-diversity.html?intc=main-mpsmvs
Ryan, C. L., & Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M. (2018). *Reading the rainbow: LGBTQ-inclusive literacy instruction in the elementary classroom.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Tatum, B. D. (1997, 2017). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race.* New York, NY: Basic Books.
Thomas, E. E. (2019). *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the imagination from Harry Potter to the Hunger Games*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

up in these practices, hardly noticing them. For learners outside this population, however, these norms will need to be made explicit (Delpit, 1995). Because of the range of diversity in so many of the nation's schools, as these cultural norms are learned, there are also many opportunities to learn about students' diverse lives and experiences. If we as teachers are open, we will never cease to be impressed with the integrity of their lives and experiences, and open to ways in which those lives can inform and enrich our own and other students'. Not the least of these ways is the possibility of English-only students beginning to learn the new language spoken by some classmates, as the new classmates learn English. Surely, in more ways than one, language learning is a two-way street (Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Silverman, Barber, Doyle, & Templeton, 2016).

As you are also well aware, there are communities in which the out-of-school challenges are significant and daunting—such as poverty, hunger, and instability and insecurity at home and in the community—and they inevitably affect the classroom (Lesaux & Harris, 2015).

Broadly speaking, a **culture** reflects the language, beliefs, values, literature, art, and institutions of a group. A culture is a framework for making meaning (Templeton, 1997), and meaning is constructed within that framework through the language of the culture (Kramsch, 2014; Wertsch, 1991). The students in our classrooms see themselves in terms of the culture from which they come and the language of that culture. They have learned how to interact with children and adults, and bring this understanding into the classroom. The classroom offers the most promising context in which different cultural and language communities may interface, communicate, and learn from one another.

We've already talked about the critically important role that *you* will play in orchestrating this interaction and communication. You're a part of your students' sociocultural context, right down to how you feel on a particular day and how that affects your interaction with your students. We spoke earlier of the importance of your making literacy interesting and purposeful to your students. You will be successful with this to the extent that you understand and value your students' different backgrounds, expectations, and voices. If you keep this in mind and respond to these differences, you will be an effective teacher of literacy. Susan Florio-Ruane (2001) best summed this up when she observed that when we as teachers understand that "language, identity, education, and culture are inextricably entwined, we may approach the teaching of literacy with greater sensitivity, insight, and imagination."

Children's and Young Adult Literature Connection

Seeing Yourself in Books

Throughout history, marginalized populations have been underrepresented in texts that are available to readers: ethnic groups such as African Americans, Latina/Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Indigenous/Native Americans; groups with various language, learning, and physical disabilities; groups of immigrants that are not distinct from each other but that often overlap; and LGBTQ+ students. With time, as social movements for civil rights lead to legislative action, attitudes in the broader culture begin to shift, and what was once marginalized will move into mainstream culture.

Unfortunately, however, there remain biases and prejudices, the roots of which run deep in some subcultures. In such cases, education has not had the impact or the appropriate reach into such communities. So, even when once marginalized groups are in the mainstream, often creating a "minority-majority" in many communities, members of these groups will still encounter bias and prejudice within schools and communities.

As teachers, it's our job to create an environment that values diversity and champions equity and inclusion. To that end, we strive to make our curriculum and libraries reflective of the world in which we live. Throughout the chapters of this text, you will find "Literature Connection" features that recommend literary and informational titles that are inclusive of the rich diverseness of our schools, providing children and older students a mirror for seeing themselves and a window for other students to see into and come to understand these lives of others (Bishop, 1990; Emdin, 2016).

Developing a Culture in Your Classroom

As we explore briefly here and later in Chapter 3, you will work to develop a culture of the classroom that establishes norms for how your students use space, time, and resources, and how they behave and interact. This culture of the classroom will support the social engagements that underlie true learning, because we know that "any function ... in development appears twice: First, on the social level, and later, on the individual level" (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky went on to note that "all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals" (p. 57). This is true for our students' out-of-school learning as well as for their learning in our classroom.

The expectations you hold for the types of literacy you wish your students to develop are first addressed through social collaboration, in whole class and small groups. We, as teachers, are supporting our students in their growth toward "the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature" (CCSS, 2010) and in the reasoning processes with which they analyze and evaluate both literary and informational texts. This ability will grow through our support of students' developing *critical literacy* skills. These involve students learning how to evaluate information that is presented within a single text and in texts across multiple subject areas. They will learn that the creators of messages will be using and crafting information in certain ways in order to influence what they believe and how they think. This will ground their understanding of how different forms of media are linked, often in online environments, and how these forms are used to create information and narratives. These new information and communication technologies, including social media, will be explored for their potential to link individuals globally as well as here at home. The worldview and understanding you are helping your students construct through their literacy engagements may literally be informed by fellow students in other countries from different cultural and language contexts.

All students, including young children and older students in the intermediate grades and beyond, are often dealing with conflicts that arise from the larger contexts in which they live and are trying to understand—conflicts about race, prejudice, politics, gender identity, and so forth (Ryan, Hermann, & Wilmarth, 2018; Zwiers & Hamerla, 2017). These are not issues we try to hide but try to help them address—conflicts and disagreements are opportunities for dialogue, for growth, and for learning (Rogers, Ishimoto, Kwako, Berryman, & Diera, 2019). They are also opportunities for truly coming to understand others: "Just because something is not my lived experience doesn't mean that I can't step into my classmate's shoes and say, 'What does the world look like from your perspective?'" (Rogers et al., p. 52).

Pearson eText

Video Example 1.4

A responsive cultural classroom community influences student learning. What strategies promote critical literacy skills and encourage class participation for learners from diverse backgrounds?

The Language of Your Instruction

Talking with, Not Just to, Your Students

As novice teachers, and often as experienced teachers as well, we must step outside our own view of how "school" works and our own role in schooling. We've begun that process of reflection by discussing our awareness and understanding of the different backgrounds our students bring with them into the classroom. This process continues with thinking about how we use language to structure our interactions with our students.

(*Continued*)

Your language conveys the following messages:

- What is important and therefore what learners should pay attention to
- Who your students *are* as individuals in the culture of the classroom and in the wider world
- How students may use language to think about themselves and one another
- Who *you* are—a facilitator and guide or a judge and the source of "truth"?

Although we may never say it explicitly, *how* we address and talk with our students may send a message that they are not as bright or valued as much, or have the potential to learn very much, or are not included as much, if they:

- Speak a variant dialect of English
- Are striving to learn English as a new language
- Make errors in their reading and writing
- Have difficulty self-monitoring or concentrating
- Answer a question with a response that may be thoughtful but not what the curriculum guide suggests is correct or acceptable

In his important and instructive books, Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning (2004) and *Opening Minds: Using Language to Change Lives* (2012), Peter Johnston demonstrates how the teacher's language "actually creates realities and invites identities" (2004, p. 9) and underscores the ways in which "each conversational exchange ... provides building material for children's understanding of a wide range of literate concepts, practices, and possibilities, and helps shape their identities" (p. 10). Our language is powerful, Johnston reminds us. It's not just the way we try to teach children how to read and write—it's also the way we help *or hinder* our students' construction of their own identities and sense of self-worth.

Levels of Support

1.5 Describe the importance of different levels of support in teaching literacy.

As with the teachers in Compello Elementary School, because you are teaching literacy developmentally, you will balance whole-class instruction with small-group instruction. To teach the essential components of literacy in a developmentally responsive way, the daily "literacy diet" you provide your students includes reading, writing, word study, and *your* reading to the students (Flanigan et al., 2010; Gehsmann & Templeton, 2013). The proportion of time you allocate to these ingredients will vary depending on the developmental level of your students, but you will work to ensure that the ingredients will be addressed—whole class, small group, and independent work.

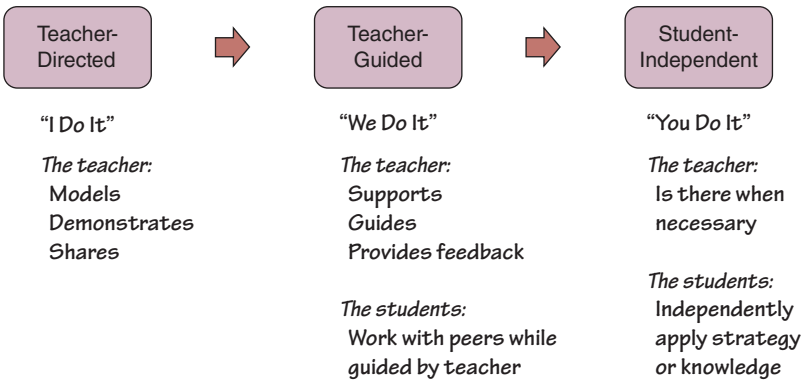
It's a significant undertaking to orchestrate these different class and group configurations to support your classroom culture. You will experience more success (and far fewer headaches!) if you walk your students through these configurations and involve them in evaluating how successfully they can negotiate movement and responsibility. This will take time at first, but gradually, students will build behaviors and expectations that can be maintained over the course of the year (Boushey & Moser, 2014). Your goal is for both younger and older students to be trusted to handle most of their interactions and tasks on their own.

Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

In teaching tasks and expectations, but most definitely in teaching literacy strategies and content, most educators agree that we should follow the **Gradual Release of Responsibility** model (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2016; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). See Figure 1.3.

For generations, an "I Do It" (or "I Say It") and then "You Do It" model prevailed in most classrooms. Ironically, this model left out perhaps the most essential

Figure 1.3 Gradual Release of Responsibility



Based on Pearson, P.D., & Gallagher, M.C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8, 317–344.

aspect of teaching: the *social* aspect in which teachers support students' application of what they have modeled, demonstrated, or shared. The teacher-guided step is the critical bridge linking Vygotsky's (1978) "first on the social level, later on the individual level" insight. This model will be applied, in the developmental context, throughout this text.

Differentiating Instruction

You will be able to demonstrate, share, and model a great deal in a whole-class format, and because you will have learners at different points along the developmental continuum, you will also meet your students in small groups. It is critical that instruction be *differentiated* in this manner, to provide more appropriate instruction—both in what is taught and in "face time" with your students (Connor et al., 2011; Duke & Mesmer, 2017/2018).

For example, after reading a chapter in Katherine Paterson's (2004) *Bridge to Terabithia* to his fourth-grade class, Kevin Hiatt had his students respond to the following statement: *Most boys of Jesse's age wouldn't become involved in either the real or make-believe world of Terabithia.* Most of his students were able to discuss, argue, and evaluate their responses at a fairly critical level. The level of difficulty of this text allows students to read with greater fluency and stamina, thereby allowing them to more readily access and discuss the meaning of the text. Later, when Kevin meets his *transitional*-level readers in small groups, they read and discuss a transitional-level text with the theme of friendship.

At the present time, you will very often hear **differentiated instruction** discussed in the context of **tiered instruction** (Walpole, McKenna, Philippakos, & Strong, 2019). Often addressed in the *Response to Intervention (RTI)* model (Lipson & Wixson, 2013), reading instruction is conceptualized in three tiers: Tier 1 is the "core" grade-level instruction that should be provided every student. This level of instruction is differentiated based on students' stages of development, strengths, and instructional needs. For those who still experience difficulty, however, instruction is further differentiated. First, they will receive Tier 2 instruction—usually small-group, more focused, with more support. Students who are still experiencing difficulty are evaluated for Tier 3 instruction—generally intensive, one-to-one, and usually sustained over a period of time. We'll discuss in Chapter 11 the particulars of this model, and our extension of it, as we apply the model to students who are experiencing difficulty in their literacy learning.

Pearson eText

Video Example 1.5

Teaching reading is a great responsibility. Why is learning how to teach reading well so important?

Chapter Summary

Literacy is the ability to read and write. *Print literacy* refers specifically to the skills necessary to understand information and stories that appear in both printed texts and digital formats. Reading and writing are *reciprocal* processes, each set of abilities supporting the other. Proficient reading and writing depend on the following literacy essentials:

- **Comprehension**—*An active and not a passive process*, comprehension is constructed as we read a text, drawing on our background knowledge and the information "blueprint" that the text provides.
- **Writing**—*Constructing a "blueprint" for readers who in turn construct the meaning we intend*. What and how we write depends on our understanding of literature and of informational texts—how we create a narrative world or present information.
- **Vocabulary**—*Understanding the concepts that words represent and the relationships among those concepts*. Learning vocabulary involves learning specific words and learning *about* words, such as how prefixes, suffixes, base words, and roots combine to form words.
- **Word structure**—*The ways in which words are written or spelled and the information that the spelling represents*. This information is at the levels of *sound* and *meaning*.
- **Fluency**—*The ability to identify printed words quickly and accurately and to read orally with expression*.
- **Motivation**— *Key to success in learning*. Engagement in reading driven by interest. Related to *growth mindset*—how to persist, perhaps struggle, and persevere when facing a challenge.

Becoming literate is a *developmental* process that occurs across five developmental stages: emergent, beginning, transitional, intermediate, and proficient. Determining where each of your students is along this continuum gives you more precise insight into what you will teach.

Literacy instruction occurs in embedded sociocultural contexts. Students' ability to learn is influenced by the classroom, school, language, and cultural heritage of the home and the larger community.

The Gradual Release of Responsibility model for instruction makes explicit what and why something is to be learned. This model provides teachers a vehicle for ensuring that students will be successful in applying and using what they have learned.

Recommended Professional Resources

Gehsmann, K., & Templeton, S. (2011/2012). Of stages and standards in literacy: Teaching developmentally in the age of accountability. *Journal of Education, 192*(1), 5–16.

Henderson, E. H. (1981). *Learning to read and spell: The child's knowledge of words*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois Press.

Johnston, P. (2004). *Choice words: How our language affects children's learning*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Morrow, L., Shanahan, T., & Wixson, K. K. (Eds.). (2013). *Teaching with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, preK–2*. New York: Guilford.

Morrow, L., Shanahan, T., & Wixson, K. K. (Eds.). (2013). *Teaching with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, 3–5*. New York: Guilford.

Online Resources

To familiarize yourself with some of the online resources for literacy instruction, explore the following websites of some of the most important and supportive professional organizations in literacy education:

International Literacy Association
https://www.literacyworldwide.org

National Council of Teachers of English
https://www.ncte.org

National Writing Project
https://www.nwp.org

Chapter 2

Streex/E+/Getty Images

Language, Thought, and Literacy Development

Learning Outcomes

2.1 Describe the ways in which the development of oral language and the development of thought are related.

2.2 Explain why *orthographic knowledge* is a critical foundation for reading and writing.

2.3 Describe the characteristics that affect the complexity of *literature* and *informational* texts.

2.4 Explain how your understanding of literacy development will affect what you teach.

MIKE WALLIN, a third-grade teacher at Lake Cantrille Elementary, is talking with Donita Grolin, literacy coach for Lake Cantrille and two other elementary schools in the district. Mike is concerned about Amato, a new student who transferred into his class the previous week. Amato's stage of literacy development is below grade level. Mike has managed to pull Amato aside a few times to talk with him and shares that Amato's oral language level might be similarly behind. Although Amato seems to hang back and not engage much—Mike acknowledges that this is normal for a new student—he tells Donita that he thinks this is more than just shyness. Mike has listened to Amato read and has examined his spellings on a qualitative spelling inventory; he's concluded that Amato is at the *beginning* literacy stage. The student reads haltingly, pausing on several words, and has difficulty in recalling what he has read. His spellings confirmed this level: He spelled *bed* and *ship*, for example, as *bad* and *sep*. Mike thinks he knows what type of instruction Amato needs, but is seeking Donita's advice in how to provide appropriately differentiated instruction for Amato in the regular classroom, as well as make sure he is able to get intensive, one-to-one additional literacy instruction as soon as possible.

Donita confirms with Mike that addressing Amato's oral language is crucial—building vocabulary and syntactic knowledge, over time, should be front and center. Although Amato will be reading primarily from materials on his independent and instructional levels in the classroom, he will be listening to texts that he could not read on his own and afterwards talk about the text with other children. He will listen to a text several times over the course of a week, looking at and following along with the highlighted words on an e-tablet screen as he listens. This is where he will be exposed to more vocabulary and more complex syntactic structures.

Amato will also benefit from Mike's read-alouds—the language in the books will provide excellent models of vocabulary and syntax. When Mike pauses to talk with the children about an aspect of the read-aloud, he often has them turn to a buddy to talk; this, too, will support Amato's language development in a comfortable and nonthreatening way. This focus on oral language will support Amato's literacy growth as well.

Because she sees so many classrooms and children, Donita is able to reassure Mike that his concentrated developmental focus on Amato's language and literacy will certainly help Amato. And, if he should move again, it may be just the right amount of support and encouragement to give Amato the lift he needs to continue, having experienced success in an instructionally appropriate and socially welcoming environment at Lake Cantrille Elementary.

In Chapter 1 we explored how the processes of reading and writing involve language and thought. In this chapter, we look more closely at the characteristics of language and thought, setting the stage for (1) how they support the development of literacy and (2) how literacy supports and extends the development of language and thought.

Characteristics of Oral Language

2.1 Describe the ways in which the development of oral language and the development of thought are related.

At all developmental levels, learners bring their language knowledge to the task of reading and writing. Language users possess four types of knowledge, and they are in play just about every time we use language:

- **Phonological knowledge.** *How* we speak our language—the sounds we make as well as the emphasis or stress we place on words and phrases.
- **Semantic knowledge.** Our *understanding* of the meaning of words and of word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and roots).
- **Syntactic knowledge.** Our *ability* to order or arrange words into phrases and sentences.
- **Pragmatic knowledge.** How we use our language in different situations and contexts.

These types of knowledge interact in real time as we communicate. Much of the knowledge underlying these four types is subconscious—we just seem to "know" it without thinking about it (Templeton, 1986; Tomasello, 2008). Effective teachers help students bring these types of knowledge to the surface, developing and extending them, and applying them in their learning. Let's look at each of these types of knowledge more closely.

Phonological Knowledge

Phonological knowledge refers to the sounds and contours of language. When we hear the words *sit* and *bit*, how do we know they are different? We know only by the sounds we hear at the beginning of each word. How about *rip* and *ripe*? We can tell the differences between these two words by the sounds we hear in the middle of each word. These individual sounds are called **phonemes**, and they are the smallest unit of speech that helps us distinguish one word from another (*sit* vs. *bit*). Figure 2.1 presents the major phonemes in Standard American English along with their most common spellings. Our knowledge of the phonemes in our language is part of our *phonological* knowledge. In Standard English, there are 44 distinct phonemes. Phonemes combine into **syllables**. Using knowledge of phonemes in listening and speaking is pretty much subconscious (Karmiloff, Karmiloff, & Smith, 2001; Templeton, 1986). Becoming consciously aware of phonemes, however, is a more challenging task.

Figure 2.1 Major Phonemes of Standard American English

Consonants					Vowels			
/b/	*b*it				ă	b*a*t		
/ch/	*ch*ick	stre*tch*			ā	c*a*ke	p*ay*	
/d/	*d*og				â	r*a*re	*air*	w*ear*
/f/	*f*it	stu*ff*	*ph*rase	tou*gh*	ä	*f*ather		
/g/	*g*et	ta*g*			ĕ	w*e*t		
/h/	*h*ot	*wh*o			ē	m*e*		
/hw/	*wh*ich	*wh*en			ĭ	s*i*t		
/j/	*j*ump	*g*entle			ī	s*i*de		
/k/	*c*at	sa*ck*	sch*o*ol		î	p*ie*rce		
/kw/	*qu*oir	*qu*een			ŏ	h*o*t		
/l/	*l*ap	need*l*e	fa*ll*		ô	p*aw*		
/m/	sla*m*	co*m*b			ō	sm*o*ke		
/n/	*n*ot	hidde*n*			oi	spo*i*l		
/ng/	so*ng*	pi*nk*			ou	cl*ou*d		
/p/	*p*an				ŭ	s*u*m		
/r/	*r*oar	*rh*yme	*wr*ap		û	t*ur*n		
/s/	*s*ip	mo*ss*	*sc*ene					
/sh/	*sh*op	fi*sh*	i*ss*ue		o͝o	sh*oo*k		
/t/	*t*op	misse*d*			o͞o	m*oo*n		
/th/	ma*th*	*th*ink			/ə/	*a*bout	mitt*e*n	
/*th*/	ba*th*e	*th*at						
/v/	*v*an	wa*v*e						
/w/	*w*in							
/y/	*y*es							

Note: The symbols for the sounds used here are those used in the *American Heritage Children's Dictionary*. They are the most common symbols for these sounds in materials intended for use by elementary and middle grade students.

In addition to phonemic awareness, phonological knowledge includes awareness of **rhyme**, **onset-rime**, and **alliteration** (defined in Figure 2.4 and described later in the chapter). **Prosody**, the rhythmic flow of speech, is yet another part of phonological awareness. This flow varies in terms of loudness, duration, pitch or intonation, and pausing. Speakers use these features to give particular emphasis to what they are saying. Where we place stress or accent, for example, as well as the rising and falling intonation in our language, convey meaning. For example, think about how the change in emphasis affects the meaning in the sentence "Jeb ate the kumquat":

Jeb ate the *kumquat*? (instead of the cauliflower)
Jeb ate the kumquat? (rather than Suzie)
Jeb *ate* the kumquat? (as opposed to throwing it, which he usually does when he doesn't like a particular food)

Semantic Knowledge

Semantic knowledge involves *meaning.* It's the relationship among spoken and written words, word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and roots), and the underlying concepts they label. We organize our experiences and our world in terms of concepts and their interrelationships. For example, the *Civil War* and the *Revolutionary War* are different concepts, but they are related in that they are both important wars that are part of American history. They differ in terms of their historical context and their significant individuals and personalities. They are similar in terms of geography and in terms of slavery being an issue in both. As we'll explore throughout this text, vocabulary learning has to do with the exploration, extension, and differentiation of semantic knowledge—of concepts and of their labels.

Words have **denotations** and **connotations**: The literal or dictionary meaning of a word is what it *denotes*. The connotative meaning of a word is the associations that the word takes on—what the word *connotes* or suggests to us, how it makes us feel, and the personal associations we bring to it beyond the word's denotative meaning. For example, one of the denotative meanings of *absent* is "not present." For many students, however, the word *absent* in connection with *parent* takes on a sad or unpleasant connotation—a father or mother, for example, who is on an extended tour of duty overseas.

In addition to denotation and connotation, words can be used *figuratively*: for instance, compare a *bouquet* of flowers with a *bouquet* of ideas. **Figurative language** refers to words or phrases that are not used in their literal sense but instead to compare, emphasize, clarify, or open up a new way of looking at and thinking about our world. When we look more closely at figurative language we see that language scholars have broken it down into several categories: for example *simile*, *metaphor, hyperbole*, and *personification*.

In *Al Capone Does My Shirts*, Moose metaphorically describes Mrs. Kelly as "a short round ball of a woman with hair the color of plumbing pipes" (Choldenko, 2004, p. 126). Mrs. Kelly isn't *literally* a "ball," but this metaphorical use of this word provokes a pretty vivid mental image of her. (Had Moose said she is *like* a ball, we would call that a *simile.* The only difference between a simile and a metaphor is that similes use "like" or "as"; metaphors do not.) And hair "the color of plumbing pipes" gives us another pretty vivid image!

Knowing a word is not an all-or-nothing, "either you know it or you don't" situation. There are *degrees* of knowing a word. Before beginning a unit on "Oceans," for example, Kim Leslie has her fifth-grade students self-assess their knowledge of the important vocabulary words that will be addressed in the unit: For the word *plankton*, for instance, each student indicates if they: