SIXTH EDITION

Teaching Reading in the 21st Century

MOTIVATING ALL LEARNERS

Peter Dewitz • Michael F. Graves
Bonnie B. Graves • Connie Juel

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Dedication

This text is dedicated to my wife, Pam Dewitz, who provided continual support and encouragement and dealt with undeserved neglect as this new edition was being written. We continue to dedicate this text to Michael Graves' sister, Susan Jones, who in her 35 years of teaching led well over a thousand second-graders toward the high level of literacy they needed to succeed in the 21st century.

About the Authors

In writing and revising this book, each of us brought to the task his or her experiences and expertise, and we would like to briefly introduce ourselves.

Peter Dewitz

is an educational consultant and researcher who spends most of his time working with teachers and children in public schools. Peter has taught at the University of Toledo, the University of Virginia, and Mary Baldwin University and worked as a visiting researcher at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He taught in the upper elementary grades and his major research interests are educational materials—specifically the efficacy of reading programs—the development and instruction of reading comprehension and the uses and abuses of assessments in our schools.

Michael F. Graves

is a professor emeritus of literacy education at the University of Minnesota and a member of the Reading Hall of Fame. Mike taught in the upper grades, and his research and writing focus on vocabulary learning and instruction and comprehension instruction. His current major research effort is an IES-funded research and development project on teaching word-learning strategies.

Bonnie B. Graves

is a full-time education writer and the author of 15 books for children. Bonnie taught in third and fourth grades, and her major interest is making literature enticing and accessible to beginning- and middle-grade learners. In addition to writing, Bonnie currently spends time working with children, teachers, and other educators on children's writing.

Connie Juel

is a professor of education at Stanford University. Her research centers on literacy acquisition, especially as it is affected by school instruction. She is noted for both her longitudinal research on reading development (often following children across multiple school years) and her work on interventions to help struggling readers. She was awarded the National Reading Conference's 2002 Oscar Causey Award for outstanding contributions to reading research and was elected to the Reading Hall of Fame by the International Reading Association in 2001.

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Preface

Welcome to the sixth edition of *Teaching Reading in the 21st Century*. In this edition we reaffirm the values that set our text apart. We believe that motivation underlies everything we do in school. Technology and efficiency can take us only so far down the road to fostering a new generation of students who read avidly for enjoyment and enlightenment. Motivation leads to children who read widely and deeply and with that their fluency, vocabulary and comprehension grows. Every chapter of this book is focused on developing students who *will* read and therefore *can* read. We believe this is especially vital in the digital age that dominates our lives.

When the fifth edition of this book was published in 2011 we were just digesting the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act and we paid little attention to the Common Core State Standards that were in their final draft. Since then the impact of NCLB has stayed strong, reinterpreted through the Every Student Succeeds Act and that of the CCSS has risen and begun to decline. The focus of all these national initiatives has been to make teaching and learning more precise and efficient. Assessment has taken a center stage in schools. In this text we put assessment in its proper perspective and give teachers the tools to determine what their students need, reaffirming the prerogative of the teachers in the classroom and questioning whether computer-based assessment should drive instruction.

The digital world plays an increasingly more prominent role in our classroom as a site for reading and writing. Students read for information online, write and revise online, and take tests online. In this edition of the book, we want to help new teachers and their students use these new technologies effectively and carefully. The Internet makes new demands on our students. They must know how to search for information, evaluate its truthfulness, and synthesize what they read. Not an easy task for an adult let alone a student.

New to This Edition

This new edition of *Teaching Reading in the 21st Century* is a significant rewrite of the previous editions of the book. We listened to the reviewers of the fifth edition, considered how the research was evolving, and rewrote the book in a number of ways. Rather than update each of the past chapters, we decided that new chapters were needed, especially in the areas of assessment, comprehension, and a careful consideration of the texts, both print and digital, we use for teaching students to read.

- **Rethinking assessment (Chapter 5).** Since the last edition, assessment has become a more powerful force in our schools, not just measuring the results of instruction but influencing the type of instruction. It is not just the high-stakes tests that have a critical effect on how we teach reading, but the increasing number of progress monitoring and interim computer-based assessments that are directing what we teach and how we teach. We wrote a new chapter on assessment to help teachers use intelligently the many assessments that pervade our schools. We believe that teachers are better suited to make instructional decisions than test developers within publishing companies who create new assessment products. We also added assessment advice to many chapters so that teachers can create their own tools to assess students' growth in word identification, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

- **New chapter on texts for reading instruction (Chapter 6).** The Common Core State Standards made the reading of complex texts one of its ten anchor standards, and the Rand report on comprehension made text one of the four pillars when teaching comprehension. We wrote a new chapter to discuss how to select the right texts for beginning reading instruction and for developing comprehension. We also updated all of the children's literature suggestions and included more contemporary literature that reflects the diversity in our schools.
- **A focus on digital text.** Reading informational text continued its movement from the pages of trade and reference books to digital texts on the Internet. Throughout the book we have provided information and research on how to help elementary and middle school students learn to use Internet resources effectively and critically. We have provided strategies on how to find trustworthy, useful, and readable websites. We have included in several chapters strategies to help students comprehend and learn from digital text. In Chapter 6, we present strategies for helping students locate and assess the trustworthiness of Internet information. In Chapter 12, we help students comprehend and synthesize digital information.
- **Reading comprehension reinterpreted (Chapters 11 and 12).** The research on teaching children to comprehend has not changed, but our view of that research has evolved. Because much of what children read for information comes from the Internet, we devoted a full chapter to comprehending informational text and another to narrative text. Within each chapter we placed a stronger focus on developing students' knowledge and leading effective discussions. We also provided guidelines for developing curriculum that are more inviting and motivating than the skill-a-week pacing guides.
- **Understanding the history of literacy.** The teaching of reading has a long history and we believe it is important for all educators to understand it. When we can, we give you a look into the past and help you understand why new ideas were adopted, why some ideas persist, and why some old ideas should be rethought. In Chapters 1 and 2, we focus on the tortured history of reading instruction. Understanding that history will help you become a better consumer of new instructional ideas.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

- **Chapter 1, Reading and Learning to Read.** Because schools were not created yesterday, we begin with a look at the crises, trends, and fads of the past 20 years and sketch the current state of reading education in America. We remain focused on the belief that if teachers have a strong model of how children learn to read they will make the best choices for their students.
- **Chapter 2, Reading Instruction.** As we examine the basics of reading instruction, we take note of the slowly declining influence of the Common Core State Standards, the still rising influence of high-stakes assessments, and the enduring research-based principles of effective instruction. We believe that reading is a constructive act and through careful guidance when needed, all students can learn to read.
- **Chapter 3, Motivation and Engagement.** The increasing impact of digital devices on American children makes a focus on motivation vital. We have added to this chapter ideas on how to create or foster interest in children, not just discover it. We describe more motivating activities and provide our readers with a tool to determine what motivates individual students.

- **Chapter 4, Organizing Instruction So All Will Succeed.** The chapter helps teachers organize instruction so that all students can succeed because there are multiple reasons why children struggle to learn to read and enjoy reading. We believe and the evidence suggests that many learning problems can be handled in the general education classroom before the students need to go down the hall for extra help. We added information on interventions for English learners and students with learning problems.
- **Chapter 5, Classroom Assessment.** We completely rewrote this chapter to reflect the rising and negative impact of assessment on reading instruction and learning. We doubt that high stakes tests and the many tests that followed have improved teaching and learning. We have also provided teachers with many new tools to assess their own students and these tools are spread throughout Chapters 7 through 14, where we focus on specific components of reading.
- **Chapter 6, Choosing Texts for Reading Instruction.** This is a brand-new chapter. The Common Core State Standards pushed for students to read complex text. Other reports placed the text right next to the reader, the activity, and the context as the focus of reading instruction. In this new chapter, we help you evaluate texts, select them, organize them, and help children make the best use of the Internet.
- **Chapter 7, Emergent Literacy.** Emergent readers have not changed much in ten years, but our understanding of the factors that propel the development of literacy have. We have placed more emphasis on vocabulary as a driving force and on how it influences other components of the process. We have also added emergent literacy assessment tools.
- **Chapter 8, Word Recognition.** Learning to recognize words was central to the previous editions of the book. We continue to believe in the vital role of phonics, but every student needs a different dose. We have updated this chapter by adding more information on linkage between word identification and vocabulary and provided some resources for assessing students' development of word recognition skills.
- **Chapter 9, Fluency and Independent Reading.** We switched our focus from fluency as an activity to fluency as the outgrowth of motivating students to become independent, avid readers in school and out. Reading volume is critical. While isolated fluency activities are useful, our overall goal is to help you develop students who will read. We added some suggestions for developing fluency in small group and individual activities plus suggestions for assessing it.
- **Chapter 10, Vocabulary Development.** We continued our focus on a four-pronged approach to developing students' vocabulary and provided new material on selecting words for instruction and activities for teaching word learning strategies. Building knowledge of the world and of words is a major factor in becoming a strong reader.
- **Chapter 11, Teaching Reading Comprehension: Focusing on Narrative Text**. This is a new chapter pulling together what the research says about assisting children with literary texts. We compare and contrast different approaches to comprehension including basals, guided reading, scaffolded instruction, and a novel approach and merges read-alouds and book clubs. We have a strong focus on the importance of discussion and techniques for assessing students' comprehension.
- **Chapter 12, Comprehending Informational Text.** This, too, is a new chapter. Here we describe the knowledge, strategies, and motivation students need to read for information. Much of this reading now takes place on the Internet. We included new information on how to help students read for information on the Internet, a confusing, often untrustworthy place. We have added new information on teaching about text structure and fostering discussions that cause students to think deeply.

- **Chapter 13, Writing and Reading.** In this chapter we have added some new ideas on the integration of reading and writing. We have also described how teaching writing can improve students' reading comprehension.
- **Chapter 14, Reading Instruction for English Learners.** The number of English learners in schools is rising, and it is increasingly important for teachers to understand strategies for differentiating instruction. The revisions in this chapter have focused on new ideas about developing oral language skills and vocabulary.

Special Features

This text has a number of features designed to make understanding our sometimes-complex ideas easier. We have included different features for the print and the digital versions of the text.

In the print and digital versions:

- We start each chapter with a set of **Learning Outcomes** that list our purpose in writing each chapter. Each major section of the chapter addresses one of the learning outcomes.
- Within each chapter we have provided **In the Classroom** examples that offer specific lesson plans or teaching and assessment tools for measuring students' competence in each area we address.
- The **Reading Corner** in each chapter offers an updated list of children's books that can be used for specific curriculum goals. Some lists are focused on a genre, some on topics, and some reflect a range of text complexity.
- Within each chapter we provide **Reflect and Apply** questions and activities that we hope will help you think through the ideas and issues within each section of the chapter.
- We also provide references to the appendix for this book, where you can download lesson plans and other documents for your classroom instruction.

Acknowledgments

Clearly, *Teaching Reading in the 21st Century* continues to change and evolve. With each new edition we have built on the combined expertise of many colleagues throughout the country who are dedicated to literacy education. To you, we extend a special thank-you for your valuable feedback and assistance.

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- The reviewers: Carol L. Butterfield, Central Washington University; Deborah A. Farrer, California University of Pennsylvania; Marie A. Fero, Eastern Illinois University; Kitty Y. Hazler, Morehead State University; Susan Hendricks, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Kimberlee Sharp, Morehead State University; Maureen Siera, St. Martin's University; Linda Skroback-Heisler, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Christina D. Walton, Morehead State University.
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Chapter 1
Reading and Learning to Read

Learning Outcomes

After reading and studying this chapter you should be able to:

1.1 Discuss and debate the reading proficiency of students in the United States and identify where our major problems exist.

1.2 Explain how the cognitive view of the reading process influences instructional decisions and why it is important to understand this model of reading.

1.3 Describe the essential components of a reading curriculum and the knowledge teachers need to teach this curriculum well.

Classroom Vignette

It was the first day of summer vacation, and 10-year-old Carmella couldn't wait to meet up with her best friend Amber at the community pool. Just as she was considering which bathing suit to wear, she heard the patter of rain on the roof and looked out the window. "Daaang," she muttered. "No pool today." She flopped back on her bed and reached for Kate DiCamillo's *Because of Winn-Dixie* on her nightstand. Within minutes, she was deep into India Opal Buloni's new life in Florida, thoughts of the pool temporarily forgotten.

On the other side of town, when Carmella's friend Amber woke up and saw that rain had spoiled their plans for the community pool, she never thought of picking up a book. Unlike Carmella, she had not mastered the complex process of reading. Reading wasn't much fun for her, and she didn't do it often. Amber will probably spend most of the rainy day with her iPad, watching movies and playing video games.

For some children, like Carmella, mastering the complex process of reading comes easily, and by fourth grade they are quite accomplished readers. For others, like Amber, this is not the case. As Carmella and Amber progress in school, they both will face increasingly challenging reading tasks, and both will need help in meeting those challenges. Amber—and other students who struggle in reading—will, of course, need more assistance than Carmella and other accomplished readers, but all your students will need the very best instruction and encouragement you can provide if they are to become the sort of readers the 21st century demands.

The Reading Proficiency of U.S. Students

Critics of the U.S. educational system have frequently lashed out at what they perceive as the inability of U.S. schools to educate students as well as they once did, the poor performance of U.S. students compared to students in other countries, and the general failure of U.S. schools to teach all students to read. Crisis is a continual theme in American education, and many presidents including Eisenhower, Johnson, Reagan, Bush I, Clinton, Bush II, and Obama have staked part of their political reputation on solving the crisis in our schools. Almost always, the crisis centered on reading and mathematics.

The first contemporary educational crisis was an outgrowth of the Civil Rights movement, because the 1964 Civil Rights Act required that the government report on the equality of educational opportunity. James Coleman (1966) conducted a massive survey of our educational system, and his 737-page report concluded, in part, that there was a significant achievement gap between African American and White children. He also found that peers mattered more than materials. "If you integrate children of different backgrounds and socioeconomics, kids perform better" (Coleman, 1966, p. 537). Others in the U.S. Department of Education saw things differently and urged increased federal funding for reading and math. Congress them passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, that became No Child Left Behind (NCLB), then Race to the Top (RTT), and now Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The next educational crisis was identified in a report written in 1983 titled *A Nation at Risk*. This report stated, "Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world . . ." The reading community responded with its own report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). The report had wide-ranging recommendations about teaching reading based on the best research at the time and concluded, "America will become a nation of readers when verified practices of the best teachers in the best schools can be introduced throughout the country" (p. 116). Some people, such as David Berliner and Bruce Biddle, saw this as *The Manufactured Crisis* (1995), that many of these claims were "myths, half-truths, and . . . outright lies."

Soon we were on to the next crisis under President George W. Bush. The *Report of the National Reading Panel* (NICHD, 2000) identified the five crucial components of reading instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—but its detractors lamented the lack of emphasis on the child's oral language, the overemphasis on systematic phonics instruction and the total neglect of motivation. The National Reading Panel influenced No Child Left Behind and the $6 billion appropriated for Reading First, a program that leaned heavily on teaching phonological awareness, phonics, and fluency. NCLB put teeth into the nascent standards movement by creating mandatory testing in reading for all third- through eighth-graders and some high school students.

Under the President Barack Obama administration, the response to the crisis in education in general and reading in particular continued as states were urged to employ more carrots and sticks. End-of-the-year testing in reading was not sufficient, as Race to the Top pushed schools to regularly monitor the performance of their students. As of this writing, the backlash to testing has begun, but if past is prologue, a new educational crisis is just over the horizon.

Our task now is to carefully examine the reading proficiency of students in the United States looking at how students' proficiency has changed over time and how it compares to the reading achievement of students in other nations. Finally, and most importantly, we consider the sorts of reading proficiency required in today's and tomorrow's world. This, of course, is the proficiency you want to help all students to achieve.

The Current Reading Proficiency of Our Students

Frankly, achieving a clear picture of the reading ability of U.S. students is difficult. We will walk you the through the data, present our conclusions, and encourage you to draw your own interpretations. There is no right answer in this exercise.

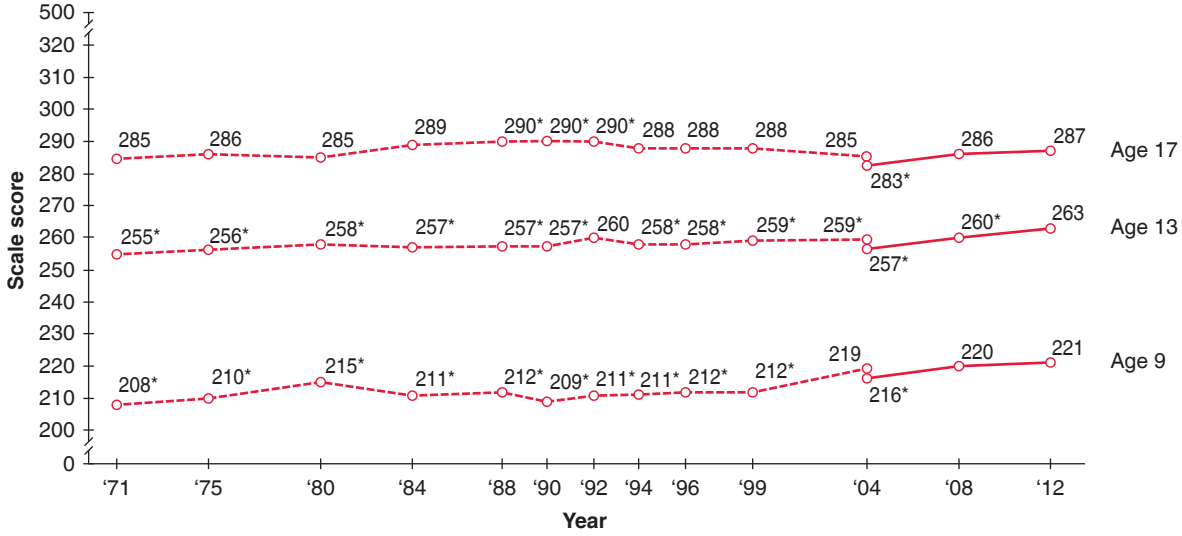
We base our response primarily on three sources that provide the most reliable large-scale assessment data available—the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, also known as PIRLS; and some new data that directly compare the reading proficiency of U.S. students in 1960 to the present.

NAEP was established by the federal government 45 years ago to provide a periodic report card on U.S. students' achievement in reading and other academic areas. In other words, it was established to do exactly the job we are trying to do here—communicate about how U.S. students are doing in school. The NAEP reading achievement tests for long-term trends about every four years and reports data for ages 9, 13, and 17. Figure 1.1 shows NAEP results since 1971 (U.S. Department of Education, NCES Long Terms Trends, 2013). The trend line for 17-year-olds is basically flat, indicating little or no change in reading performance at the high school level since 1971. The trend line for ages 9 and 13 goes up very slightly from 1971 to 1999 and then just a bit more steeply from 1999 to 2012, indicating a small improvement in reading for this age level. Thus, over the past 45 years, the reading performance of 9- and 13-year-old U.S. students has gone up just a bit, and those of 17-year-olds has remained very much the same.

The picture becomes more complicated when we examine the data by racial or ethnic groups. While the gap in Black and White achievement has narrowed considerably since 1971, and since 1999, there is still a large gap between the performance of the two groups (see Figure 1.2). Similar results exist for 13-year-olds, eighth-graders, and between White and Hispanic students. Although overall reading achievement is improving, we have more work to do to bring all children to the same level of proficiency.

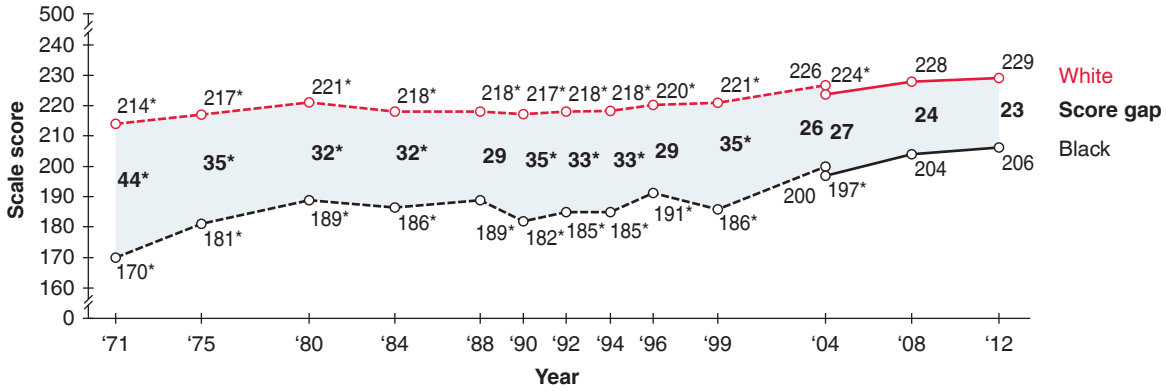
The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) was established in the late 1950s to conduct international studies. Its most recent study of reading, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), was conducted during the 2015–16 school year in 65 countries (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Hooper 2017a). Figure 1.3 shows the results of this study, which gathered data from more than

Figure 1.1 U.S. Students' Reading Proficiency 1971–2012



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science. National Center for Educational Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Trends in Academic Progress, Reading 1971–2012.

Figure 1.2 Trend in NAEP Reading Average Scores and Score Gap for White and Black 9-Year-Old Students



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Science. National Center for Educational Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Trends in Academic Progress, Reading 1971–2012.

Figure 1.3 PIRLS Overall Reading Average Scores of Fourth-Grade Students, by Education System 2016

Educational System	Overall Scaled Score	Educational System	Overall Scaled Score
Russian Federation	581	Slovak Republic	535
Singapore	576	Israel	530
Ireland	567	Portugal	528
Finland	566	Spain	528
Poland	565	Belgium (Flemish)	525
Norway	559	New Zealand	523
Chinese – Taipei	559	France	511
England	559	PIRLS scale centerpoint	500
Latvia	568	Belgium (French)	497
Sweden	555	Chile	494
Hungary	554	Georgia	488
Bulgaria	552	Trinidad & Tobago	479
United States	549	Azerbaijan	472
Lithuania	548	Malta	452
Italy	548	United Arab Emirates	450
Denmark	547	Bahrain	446
Netherlands	545	Qatar	442
Australia	544	Saudi Arabia	430
Czech Republic	543	Iran	428
Canada	543	Oman	418
Slovenia	542	Kuwait	393
Austria	541	Morocco	358
Germany	537	Egypt	330
Kazakhstan	536	South Africa	320
Slovak Republic	535		
Israel	530		

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Progress in International Reading Study (PIRLS) 2016.

150,000 fourth-graders. As you can see, the United States ranked thirteenth among the 65 countries. The United State scored below Russia, Ireland, Finland, and England, but above 26 other European, Asian, and Middle Eastern nations. Our students scored 49 points above the international average of 500. This is a very respectable showing indeed.

A second piece of the PIRLS study, ePIRLS, examined fourth-grade students' ability to read online for information (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Hooper, 2017b). The study took reading into the digital age and examined how students can select, interpret, and integrate information while reading for information on the Internet. The students were given science and social studies tasks, each requiring students to read three websites with five to ten web pages per site. Students had to read text, study visual data, and work with pop-up and animated tasks. They had to use hyperlinks and navigate from one site to another, integrating visual and print information. All of the tasks required the students to answer multiple-choice and constructed response questions.

Fourteen countries participated in the ePIRLS study, all of which also participated in the regular PIRLS study. The students from the United States were ranked sixth out of the 14 nations. Students from Singapore, Norway, and Ireland performed better than our students, who scored the same as students from Sweden and Denmark. Students from China (Taipei), Canada, Israel, Italy, Slovenia, Portugal, Georgia, and the United Arab Emirates scored significantly lower than our students. Two other findings are worth noting. Our students performed better on the ePIRLS than on the regular PIRLS, and girls performed better than boys.

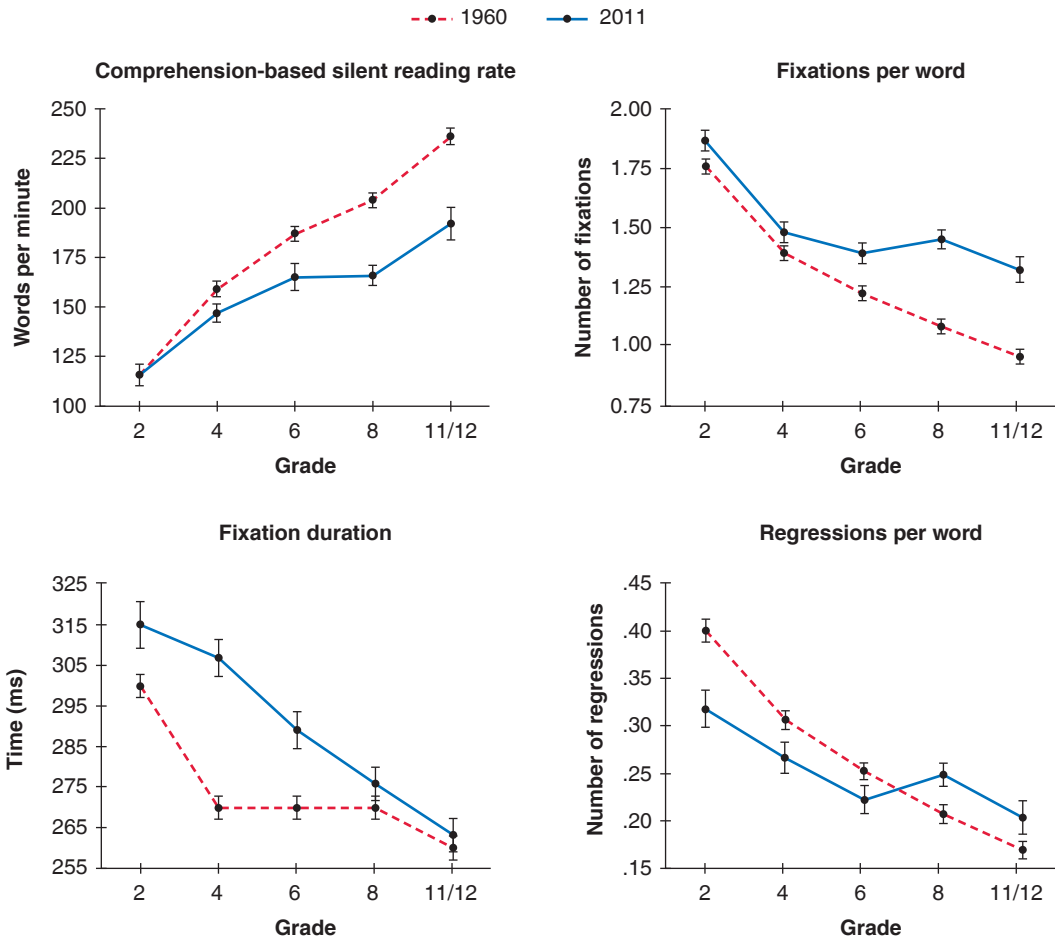
The final piece of data is a study that compares the reading efficiency of U.S. students now to students in 1960 (Spichtig, Hiebert, Vorstius, Pascoe et al., 2016). In the study, the students in both decades read the exact same texts under the exact same conditions. Two thousand students from grades 2 through 12 participated in the study. The students read graded passages silently, their eye movements and reading rate were recorded, and their reading comprehension was assessed. The study shows that the silent reading efficiency of U.S. students has declined and the severity of the decline is most apparent at the secondary level, as Figure 1.4 indicates.

The study demonstrates that comprehension-based silent reading rates are slower now than in 1960 (See the top left chart in Figure 1.4.). The gap first appears with fourth-grade students and widens over the next eight years. Students in middle school have hit a plateau, demonstrating no growth over three years. Eleventh- and twelfth-graders today read about as well as sixth-graders in 1960. These data provide a partial explanation why NAEP scores have changed little in middle school and high school. The other charts in Figure 1.4 demonstrate that students today make more eye movement fixation per word, dwell longer on each word and engage in more regressive eye movements. All this indicates that student today are less efficient readers.

The best data available presents an ambiguous picture of U.S. students' reading proficiency. Our students perform as well or better than students in other industrialized nations. However, the comprehension-based silent reading efficiency of our students has declined most strikingly in the upper grades. Our students perform better with digital tasks than with more traditional reading. Our interpretation of the NAEP data over the past 45 years suggests a troubling pattern of performance among U.S. students. By fourth grade, the vast majority of students can read easy material and answer simple questions. However, once the texts become slightly more difficult—the sorts of reading middle-grade students are expected to deal with—a large percentage of middle school students cannot read and understand the material, and neither can a sizable percentage of high school seniors. Once both texts and questions become demanding—the type of material one would need to read to understand political and social issues or enjoy relatively sophisticated literature—very few students, even those about to graduate from high school, can deal with them.

However, at the school level, NAEP is not an issue. Most schools are focused on their state high-stakes test, which will determine whether the school is accredited or punished at the end of the year. Compare state test results to NAEP and you will

Figure 1.4 Silent Read



SOURCE: Spichtig, A. N., Hiebert, E. H., Vorstius, C., Pascoe, J. P., David Pearson, P., & Radach, R. (2016). The Decline of Comprehension-Based Silent Reading Efficiency in the United States: A Comparison of Current Data with Performance in 1960. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *51*(2), 239–259.

discover that, 40 percent of the students considered proficient on their state tests are not proficient on NAEP, and 75 percent of the states have a passing score that is below a basic level of reading on the NAEP (Koretz, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The individual states are setting their standards low and may be institutionalizing a set of low expectations. Anthony Applegate and his colleagues compared state tests to NAEP and found startling differences (Applegate, Applegate, McGeehan, Pinto, & Kong, 2009). On the state tests, only 22 percent of the questions demand higher-order thinking, whereas 68 percent of NAEP questions do. Forty-six percent of NAEP questions ask readers to make interpretations and inferences about characterization and plot, but only 24 percent of the questions on state tests assess these skills. If state high-stakes tests continue as the norm and teachers teach students to pass these tests, we may undermine the literacy standards we have embraced, sacrificing higher-order thinking.

An increasing number of experts believe that high-stakes testing corrupts education (Koretz, 2017; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Teaching to these high-stakes tests inflates test scores without improving basic reading ability. High-stakes tests narrow the reading/language arts curriculum, undermine the attention to science and social studies, and distort how reading is taught—too many short passages and not enough books. At its worst, the focus on test scores has led to cheating scandals in several major school districts, with a few teachers and administrators serving jail time (Koretz, 2017).

The other continuing literacy concern is the persistent achievement gap in the United States. Many children raised in poverty score lower than their middle-class counterparts.

The same is true of many Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students when compared to White students. On the last NAEP assessment, the achievement gap between Black and White students had narrowed slightly but was still significantly wide. The United States still has a long way to go to ensure that all students become proficient readers.

Literacy for Today's and Tomorrow's World

It is important to understand how well U.S. students read, it is even more important to understand present-day literacy requirements and how those requirements are changing. At one time, literacy was defined as the ability to sign your name. At another time, it was defined as the ability to read aloud a simple text with which you were already familiar—typically a passage from the Bible (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986). Today, although there is no single definition of literacy, there is universal agreement that everyone needs a far higher level of literacy than at any time in our past, and that this requirement will continue to grow. Irwin Kirsch and Ann Jungeblut (1986) define present-day literacy as "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge." Lauren Resnick (1987) views present-day literacy as a "higher-order skill" and notes that it requires thinking that is complex, that yields multiple solutions, that involves multiple criteria, and that demands nuanced judgments. David Perkins (1992) notes that contemporary education must go beyond simply presenting students with information and must ensure that students retain important concepts, understand topics deeply, and actively use the knowledge they gain. Finally, the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) notes that the United States today "demands a universally higher level of literacy achievement than at any time in history" and goes on to say that "it is reasonable to believe that the demand for a literate populace will increase in the future."

Present-day literacy requires much more than passively absorbing what is on the printed page. It requires attaining a deep understanding of what is read, remembering important information, linking newly learned information to existing prior knowledge, knowing when and where to use that information, using it appropriately in varied contexts in and out of school, and communicating effectively with others. Literacy for today's world requires that readers be able to *do* something as a result of reading, not merely know something. Moreover, literacy for today's world requires that readers be able to do something with a variety of different texts—not just short stories, novels, poetry, and history texts, but also tax forms, computer manuals, complex directions for operating ever more complex machines, and increasingly the text that informs us about the critical issues of our democracy—immigration, health care, national defense, and the economy. These issues cannot be understood by listening to one-minute sound bites from CNN or MSNBC or by reading the latest tweet on your iPhone or Galaxy 8.

More and more, literacy means knowing how to use the Internet, reading digital text, and making complex decisions about the veracity of information on various websites, blogs, and tweets. These are New Literacies (Lew, Zawilinski, Forzani, & Timbrell, 2015). The Internet is the textbook of today, for most it will be the textbook of the future. The strategies that have been developed for printed textbooks and informational trade books must give way to new strategies. Readers today must search for information using key words, verify the trustworthiness of website, and synthesize information across a number of websites. These search tools will replace lessons on the Table of Contents and the Index.

Some suspect that the process of reading digital text is different from reading print on paper and presents new challenges for all readers. With digital text, we often resort to skimming, sacrificing deep reading understanding. With these new literacies "instead of hiking the trail yourself, the trees, rock and moss move past you in flashes with no trace of what came before and no way to see what lies ahead" (Jabr, 2013, p. 6). Kaufman and Flanagan (2016) demonstrated that young adults reach higher levels of abstractions when reading on conventional paper than they do when reading on

screens. "The ever-increasing demand of multitasking, divided attention, and information overload that individuals encounter in their use of digital technologies may cause them to 'retreat' to the less cognitively demanding lower end of the concrete-abstract continuum" (Kaufman & Flanagan, 2016).

Literacy is the ability to read critically from a variety of sources, but literacy is also the desire to read for both pleasure and information. Without the inclination to read, without the habit of reading, higher-level reading skills are useless. In today's world, teaching children to read is only half the battle; we must motivate them to want to read. When the iPad and the Xbox One S are more engaging than a novel and cable news sound bites are easier than the *New York Times*, reading is hard to sell. Teaching the love of reading and inspiring children to use print for information may be the most difficult task, one for which we have not yet developed an effective curriculum. The child who can read but does not has no advantage over the child who cannot read.

To be sure, elementary and middle school students do not read all of these complex texts, but their early reading experiences should provide a foundation for dealing with complex material in the future. Moreover, given the lower level of reading proficiency demonstrated by many children raised in poverty and many Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students, we need to work especially hard to dramatically improve the reading instruction and the opportunity for these students to read. We particularly need to improve all children's higher-order skills and the desire to seek answers in complex materials. We must nurture and encourage students to become competent readers, who seek to read, in today's increasingly complex and demanding world.

Reflect and Apply

The arguments about the quality of education in the United States are old and increasingly political. To help you understand this debate, we include Reflect and Apply sections periodically throughout the text. Ideally, with many facts at your disposal you will discuss your responses with others—a study group, your class, or your course instructor.

1. Suppose you are sitting with a small group of parents at a school open house when one woman abruptly demands to know why today's students read so poorly compared to those in her day. A man picks up her prompt and with similar abruptness wants to know why American kids can't read as well as those in other countries. Compose a response in which you cite data to reassure these parents that U.S. students are certainly holding their own.
2. The concept of present-day literacy is complex. At this point, describe your understanding of the concept in a paragraph or two. Keep your description and add to it as you gain a broader knowledge of present-day literacy in later chapters.

The Reading Process

Why should you care about the reading process? Why is it vital to develop a deep understanding of it? The answer is straightforward. Regardless of what you learn about the specifics of teaching reading from this text, your university courses, in-service sessions, Pinterest, and discussions with other teachers, much of what you do in the classroom will result from your personal understanding of the reading process. The number

of teaching options you have is so great, the needs of different students so diverse, and the specifics of a particular teaching situation so unique that it is impossible to anticipate all of the decisions about literacy instruction that you will make each day. But understanding the mental processes of a reader can prepare you to make wise choices.

Reading instruction is regularly buffeted by fads, and publishers create hundreds of reading programs, all claiming to be "research-based." Each new reading program is "new and improved" like a box of Tide, and is "guaranteed" to fix your students' reading problems and inspire them to reach the heights of literacy. Beyond the published programs, you have access to 2.4 million resources on Teachers Pay Teachers (www.teacherspayteachers.com) and an overwhelming number of suggestions on Pinterest. Much of what is available on the Internet is poorly conceived and not very useful. The only way to use these sites intelligently is to have solid grounding in the reading process.

Although different authorities view the reading process somewhat differently, over the past 40 years a widely accepted, balanced, and strongly supported view of the process has emerged. Here, we call this the *cognitive-constructivist view of reading*. This construct forms the foundation of the approach to reading presented in this book. In the next section, we explain several theories that elaborate, complement, and supplement this concept.

The Cognitive-Constructivist View of Reading

The cognitive-constructivist view of reading emphasizes that reading is a process in which the reader actively searches for meaning in what he reads. In fact, the reader makes connections between ideas in the text and then integrates these understandings with prior knowledge. This search for meaning depends very heavily on the reader's having an existing store of knowledge. The active contribution of the reader is significant enough to justify the assertion that she actually constructs much of the meaning she arrives at while reading.

For example, as Carmella reads *Because of Winn-Dixie*, she learns that India Opal is sad because her mother recently walked out on her and her father. Later in the book, when Carmella learns that Amanda Wilkinson, a girl India Opal does not at first get along with, is sad because her younger brother recently died, Carmella can construct the inference that Opal and Amanda share a similar experience and may become friends. Nothing in the text tells Carmella this; the inference comes from her knowledge that people who have things in common often become friends and from her active processing of the text. Notice in the accompanying classroom example how teacher Martin Cummings highlights this use of background knowledge and encourages active processing with his sixth-graders (In the Classroom 1.1). Mr. Cummings is helping his students realize that readers actively search for meaning in what they read and that the meaning they construct from a text depends on their own knowledge about the world and its conventions.

THE COGNITIVE ORIENTATION

The earliest influence on this view of reading came from cognitive psychology, the orientation that became the main perspective of American psychology beginning in the 1960s (Gardner, 1985). Cognitive psychologists view the learner and her background knowledge as central to learning and the study of learners' thought processes as a fundamental focus of their work. They also view learners as active participants, who act on, rather than simply respond to, their external environment as they learn. In the cognitive view, reading is very much an active process in which the meaning the reader gleans from a text is heavily influenced by the cognitive work that she puts into the reading process. Both the beginning reader—whom we might observe carefully sounding out words as she reads orally—and the accomplished reader such as Carmella—who appears to be effortlessly absorbing *Because of Winn-Dixie*—are in fact actively engaged in making meaning from the text.

In the Classroom 1.1

Using Background Knowledge

Martin Cummings wrote the first paragraph from Sharon Flake's novel *The Skin I'm In* on the board:

> The first time I seen her, I got a bad feeling inside. Not like I was in danger or nothing. Just like she was somebody I should stay clear of. To tell the truth, she was a freak like me. The kind of person folks can't help but tease. That's bad if you're a kid like me. It's worse for a new teacher like her.

He read the paragraph aloud to his sixth-graders and then said, "What does this paragraph tell us? What meaning do you get from it?"

Chris: The narrator's someone young, maybe our age.

Mr. Cummings: What makes you think so?

Chris: 'Cause it says "a kid like me" and sounds like the way kids talk.

Lateisha: Yeah, Black kids, not White kids. I think the person talking is Black.

Mr. Cummings: So you think the narrator's Black. What else do we know about the narrator from this paragraph?

Kyle: She has a low opinion of herself.

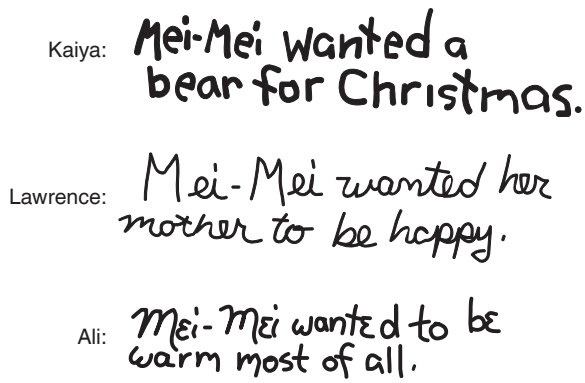
Mr. Cummings: How do you know that?

Kyle: 'Cause she calls herself a freak.

CONSTRUCTIVISM

The view of the reading process described here derives from a theory called *constructivism*, a political (Searle, 1993), philosophical (von Glaserfeld, 1984), social (Gergen, 1985), and psychological construct. We are using the term in its psychological sense. Constructivism emphasizes the idea that comprehending a text is very much an active process. Constructivism holds that the meaning one constructs from a text is subjective—the result of one particular person's processing of the text. Each reader is influenced by the sum total of her experience as well as by her unique intellectual makeup. Because of this, each reader constructs a somewhat different interpretation of the text, the text as she conceptualizes it (von Glaserfeld, 1984). The three student journal entries listed in Figure 1.5 illustrate this concept. All three students were responding to a prompt for the picture book *Mama Bear* by Chyng Feng Sun. The story tells of a girl who bakes and sells almond cookies in order to earn enough money to buy a large, expensive stuffed bear for Christmas because she thinks it will help keep her and her mother warm. The students were asked to respond to this question: "What did Mei-Mei want most for Christmas?" Each answer in Figure 1.5, is, of course, correct, yet points to a different perspective on the story.

Figure 1.5 Three Students' Responses to the Same Question About a Story They Read



Having noted that constructivism emphasizes the subjectivity of meaning, we should also note that different texts vary dramatically in how much they constrain it (Stanovich, 1994). An abstract poem may prompt many appropriate interpretations, but a manual on how to install new software should prompt only one. In between these two extremes lies a range of texts that invite various degrees of individual interpretation. However, when reading straightforward stories and a good deal of informational material, most readers will construct quite similar meanings for what they read.

As noted, constructivism is a social construct as well as a psychological one. Most constructivists emphasize that the social world

in which we live heavily influences the meaning that we derive from our experiences, including our experiences with text. Thus, constructivism strongly supports the inclusion of a variety of discussion arrangements and group work as part of reading and learning (Calfee & Patrick, 1995).

Reading and Understanding Words

WORD RECOGNITION

Before the reader can make connections, before he can bring his knowledge and experience to bear on the text, he has to read the words. Reading is an ongoing, recursive process. Many operations happen at once, but we have decided word recognizing is a good place to start in describing the reading process. For the mature reader, word recognition is an effortless process beyond our awareness. Most words we read are recognized automatically, with the reader processing all the letter-sound associations simultaneously or recognizing the word as a whole unit. Only when a new word is encountered, such as *Bangladesh,* is the reader aware that some process must be invoked to identify the word. He may know that he has to break the word into chunks or syllables and then use patterns he knows—*ang*, *la*, *esh*—to pronounce the new word. These abilities come to most readers easily but not before moving through several developmental stages. We will outline these developmental stages when we discuss word recognition in Chapter 8.

AUTOMATICITY

Achieving automatic word recognition is vitally important because automaticity underlies reading ability. Charles Perfetti (2007) has developed a comprehensive theory called word reading efficiency, which links fluent word recognition and the automatic retrieval of word meanings from memory. When you see the word *cantankerous*, you should read it effortlessly and quickly know its meaning. If not, you resort to decoding the pronunciation and using context clues to infer its meaning.

The concept of automaticity is both crucial and straightforward. An automatic activity is one that we can perform effortlessly and with very little attention. As David LaBerge and S. Jay Samuels (1974) pointed out in their pioneering work on automaticity in reading, the mind's attentional capacity is severely limited; in fact, we can attend to only about one thing at a time. Recent research suggests that multitasking, despite what you may believe, is nearly impossible unless one of the tasks is automatic and requires no attention, like listening to music on your iPhone (Ophir, Nass, & Wagner 2009). If we are faced with a situation in which we are forced to attend to too many things at once, we will fail. For example, a number of people have reached a level of automaticity in driving a stick shift car. They can automatically push in the clutch, let up on the accelerator, shift gears, let out the clutch, and press on the accelerator—and they can do all this while driving in rush hour traffic. Beginning drivers cannot do all of this at once; they have not yet automated the various subprocesses, and it would be foolish and dangerous for them to attempt to drive a stick shift car in an attention-demanding situation such as rush hour traffic.

Reading includes a number of subprocesses that need to take place at the same time—such as recognizing words, assigning meanings to words, constructing the meanings of sentences and larger units, and relating the information gleaned from the text to information we already have. Unless some of these processes are automated, readers simply cannot do all of this at once. Specifically, readers need to perform two processes automatically: They need to recognize words automatically, and they need to assign meanings to words automatically. For example, if a student is reading and comes across the word *imperative*, she needs to automatically recognize the word and automatically—immediately and without conscious attention—know that it means "absolutely necessary." If the student needs to pause often and struggles to recognize and assign meanings to words, reading will be difficult and laborious, and the student will not understand much of what she is reading.

Fluency is the ability to "read a text orally with speed, accuracy, expression and comprehension" (Samuels, 2002b). The component of fluency should also include endurance, because good readers can sustain fluent reading page after page. Reading well for one minute, a common test of fluency, might not be the best way to assess it (Deeney, 2010). Fluency is not just an oral phenomenon—it applies to silent reading as well. Because fluent readers can decode a text automatically, they are able to decode and comprehend at the same time, resulting in oral reading that is accurate, smooth, and fairly rapid, with proper expression.

To become fluent readers, students need to do a lot of silent reading in material they find interesting, enjoyable, and relatively easy. To become fluent oral readers, students can engage in a variety of different reading activities such as paired reading, echo reading, and repeated readings (Rasinski, 2003). These and many other techniques for creating fluent readers, as well as the many prerequisite skills that underlie fluent reading (Pikulski & Chard, 2005), are discussed in Chapter 9. The bibliography on page 28 of this chapter provides examples and information about books beginning readers can use to build automaticity and fluency.

Achieving fluency is often a particular challenge for students learning English as a second language. In addition to going through the processes that native speakers do, nonnative speakers may need to translate English words into their own language in the process of arriving at meaning. Thus, becoming automatic in processing words and fluent in reading texts is extremely important for English language learners.

English learners need a strong emphasis on vocabulary if they are to achieve reading fluency. It is difficult and artificial to read quickly, with expression, a passage you do not understand. To build fluency with English learners, teachers need to actively build vocabulary. As words are encountered, teachers need to discuss meanings and relate them to prior knowledge. Pictures provide support for new words and new concepts, especially for young students. Cognates should be stressed to create links between the students' first and second languages. *Artistico* is *artist* and *conflicto* is *conflict*.

VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE

Vocabulary knowledge is crucial to learning to read and understanding what you read. Children who enter school with a rich store of words will make relatively rapid progress learning to read. Disadvantaged students who enter school with smaller vocabularies will have more difficulty developing word identification and comprehension (Language and Reading Research Consortium, 2015; August, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005). Vocabulary or word knowledge is essential for comprehension, and the relationship of vocabulary and comprehension is reciprocal. Reading engaging and challenging text with comprehension builds a student's vocabulary. If the reader does not know the meaning of the essential words in a text comprehension suffers. Teaching vocabulary build comprehension. This is true for native English speakers and English learners.

Building vocabulary knowledge requires an instructional program with many parts (Graves, 2016). Students need rich language experiences in the classroom, including interactive read alouds, engaging discussions, and ample time during which they can read independently. Teachers need to directly teach individual words, especially those essential to comprehending the texts. Teachers need to develop students' word learning strategies so that they can use word parts, context clues, and the dictionary to infer word meanings. Reading is a self-teaching process if students have the right tools and the opportunity to use them (Share, 1995). Finally, teachers need to foster word consciousness so that students find words interesting and a delight to learn. In Chapter 10 of this book we will focus directly on vocabulary instruction.

The Process of Comprehension: The Construction-Integration Process

CONSTRUCTION-INTEGRATION

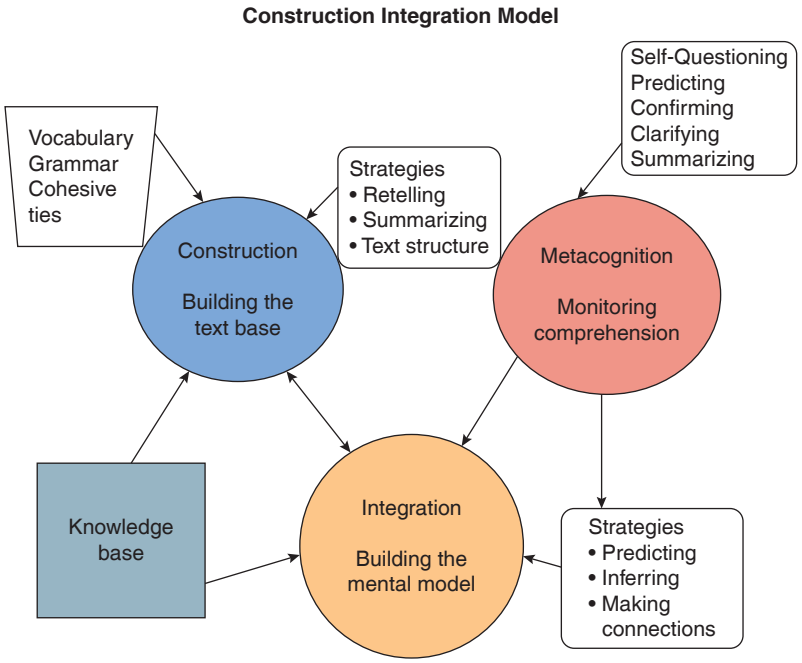
While our reader is fluently recognizing the words, she also comprehends the message. We can break the comprehension process into at least three recursive parts—construction, integration, and metacognition. To grasp the process of comprehension, we turn to the theory with the greatest clarity—the construction-integration model, a detailed example of constructivism. Developed by Walter Kintsch (1998, 2004) and others, the process begins with construction, in which the reader comprehends sentences and then links ideas from one sentence to another. Integration is the process of using prior knowledge to expand and interpret the meaning the author has put on the pages. Consider these three sentences: *John got a cup of coffee. It was very hot. Now there is a big mess on the rug*. Construction is necessary to link the first sentence to the second. The pronoun *it* links the coffee and its temperature. The first two sentences are integrated with the third when the reader, using her prior knowledge, makes the inference that hot coffee was dropped, perhaps over an expensive rug. In the third phase, metacognition, the reader confirms that this makes sense.

We illustrate the construction-integration process in Figure 1.6. To construct ideas, the reader first applies his knowledge of vocabulary and syntax, grammar, to understand each sentence, a process used in oral language comprehension. Then the reader links one sentence or one idea to another using what he knows about the cohesive ties of language. A reader knows that the words *but* and *however* mean that the next idea somehow qualifies the first, that *because* and *since* signal that one idea caused another, and that *some* and *few* refer to a portion of the ideas already mentioned. As the reader integrates ideas using these cohesive ties, he is building a textbase—a relatively literal understanding of the text. A textbase is fleeting and it might be what a reader could immediately recall if you stopped his reading in mid-passage and asked him to retell it.

To preserve this textbase, the reader integrates text information and prior knowledge, creating his own mental model. This is the essence of the constructivist process. Reading the text—*Mary looked at the menu carefully trying to find the cheapest entrée, while John gazed lovingly in her eyes*—we know immediately that she is in a restaurant, concerned about money or at least wanting to make a good impression, and John is smitten. We have used our prior knowledge to interpret the text.

When psychologists first developed this constructivist view of cognition and reading, they wanted to explain how readers use knowledge and they developed the concept of schema theory, a theory that preceded the construction-integration model. Schema theory is concerned with knowledge, particularly with the way knowledge is represented in our minds, how we use that knowledge, and how it expands. According to the theory, knowledge is packaged in organized structures termed *schemata*. David Rumelhart (1980) states that schemata constitute our knowledge about "objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions, and sequences of actions." We have schemata for

Figure 1.6 The Construction Integration Model of Comprehension



Based on: Kintsch. (1998) *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

objects such as a house; for situations such as being in a class; for events such as going to a football game; and for sequences of events such as getting up, eating, showering, and going to work.

When we read the small scene with John and Mary, we use our dating schema to interpret the text. When a couple is having dinner together, it is likely a date. The word *menu* invokes the setting—a restaurant. *Gazed lovingly* signals affection or love, and reinforces the concept of a date. The words *cheapest entree* signals Mary's lack of money or her sensitivity to John's financial situation. We interpret our experiences—whether direct encounters with the world or vicarious experiences gained through reading—by comparing and, in most cases, matching those experiences to existing schemata, which constitute a vast and elaborate network of interrelationships. These networks of *organized* knowledge are virtually endless and constitute much of the intellectual capital that human beings have to work with.

One very important consequence of readers having these rich, internalized networks of schemata is that, once a particular schema is evoked, a huge store of knowledge becomes instantly available. Even when watching a motion picture, the director counts on us to have a rich background of information or schema to fill in what was left out. The more we know about the subject, the easier it will be to deal with that topic and learn more about it. Schemata assist the reader in initially making sense of what she reads, relating newly acquired information to prior knowledge, determining the relative importance of information in a text, making inferences, and remembering (Anderson & Pearson, 1984).

Good readers simultaneously rely on the text and on their background knowledge as they construct meaning. We as teachers need to provide students with the sorts of texts and tasks that promote this interplay of text and background knowledge. Sometimes we provide too little knowledge and comprehension suffers or too much knowedge and the students have little to do. Figure 1.7 depicts situations that encourage too much or too little attention to the text, and that should be avoided.

METACOGNITION

The third component of the construction-integration process is metacognition. Someone has to keep an idea on the whole meaning construction process and ensure that it makes sense. Hence, think of your mind's eye, a part of your brain that observes your own cognitive functions, giving frequent thumbs-up when things are progressing well and a thumbs-down and stopping the whole process when it does not make sense. Active awareness of one's comprehension while reading and the ability to repair misunderstandings when comprehension breaks down are absolutely essential tools

Figure 1.7 Situations That Encourage Too Much and Too Little Attention to the Text

Situation	Result
A reading selection with an unfamiliar topic and difficult vocabulary	The reader will give too much attention to individual words and will bog down in the reading.
Too much oral reading with an emphasis on being correct and a penalty for being incorrect	The reader will focus on individual words, rather than on sentences, paragraphs, and ideas.
A less-able student's reading orally in front of the class	The reader will focus attention on correctly pronouncing individual words and give little attention to meaning.
Only silent reading with no postreading follow-up discussion	The reader will pay too little attention to the ideas in the text and guess at the meaning with little use of the text to confirm meaning.

for becoming an effective reader, and lack of such metacognitive skills is a particularly debilitating characteristic of poor readers.

Metacognitive readers have the ability to mentally step outside of themselves and view their own reading. By stepping outside of themselves, they can become self-regulated learners—learners who generate thoughts, feelings, strategies, and behaviors that help them attain their learning goals (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998). Accomplished readers have several types of metacognitive knowledge, which we illustrate in Figure 1.8.

Metacognition begins with setting a purpose—why am I reading this text? For example, at the beginning of this section, you might have realized that you have no prior knowledge about metacognition (self-knowledge), noticed that the section is brief (task knowledge), and decided that the strategy of reading the section through several times would be fruitful (strategy knowledge). Thus, you exhibited metacognitive knowledge prior to beginning reading.

STRATEGIES

To keep the meaning construction process on track and to solve comprehension problems, the mature reader has at his disposal a set of cognitive tools or strategies. For example, if a reader comes across an unknown word as he is reading, one very reasonable response would be to read ahead a little to see if the context suggests a meaning; this is a strategy, something done automatically or deliberately to assist meaning construction. The list of comprehension strategies varies from one expert to another, but most agree that readers need to: set a purpose for reading, preview a text, predict, activate prior knowledge, monitor and clarify, create visual representation of text, draw inferences, self-question, and summarize or retell. Some strategies help drive the construction of the textbase, others assist the development of the mental model, and still others assist metacognition. A strategy like self-questioning might do all three. Asking questions before reading helps to set a purpose and build the mental model. Asking questions while reading, especially inferential questions, can drive the integration of text information and prior knowledge. When a reader asks himself a question after reading a portion of the text, he is checking his understanding. Figure 1.9 categorizes these research-based comprehension strategies by their functions. Some strategies do double duty.

In the teaching of reading, we use the terms comprehension skills and strategies loosely and interchangeably. In some reading curricula, finding the main idea is a skill while determining importance is a strategy (Dewitz, Jones, & Leahy, 2009). In fact, these skills/strategies are one and the same and share a type of thinking that is also critical to summarizing. Most of the mental processes of comprehension start out as strategies, something that requires deliberate thought and effort. At some stage of development,

Figure 1.8 Types of Metacognitive Knowledge

Types of Metacognitive Knowledge	What We Say to Ourselves
Self-Knowledge	"I love figuring out clues in detective stories." "If the book is too long, I know I won't finish it."
Task Knowledge	"It is best to skim the chapter first to learn what it is about, before reading it to take notes." "I wonder, what is the author's point? Why did he write this book?"
Strategy Knowledge	"When I get stuck on a word, I never use a dictionary and I should." "I am going to summarize this section of the chapter to see if I understand it."

SOURCE: Based on Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.). (1998). Self-regulated learning: From teaching to self-reflective practice. New York: Guilford Press.

Figure 1.9 How Comprehension Strategies Affect the Process of Meaning Construction

Textbase (Strategies that help readers relate ideas to each other)	Mental Model (Strategies that help readers relate text ideas to prior knowledge)	Metacognition (Strategies that help readers monitor and repair comprehension)
Anaphoric relationships	Predicting	Self-questioning
Retelling	Making inferences	Predicting-confirming
Summarizing	Making connections	Clarifying
Narrative structure	Self-questioning	Rereading
Expository text structure		Summarizing

comprehension strategies become automatic and readers can generate an inference or self-question without conscious effort. At this stage, we call strategies *comprehension skills* (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008). We want readers who are skillful and strategic.

Reading online within and across websites requires some additional strategies not typically used when reading print. Afflerbach and Cho (2009) argue that Internet reading requires a completely different style of reading because the reader is faced with multiple texts and multiple decisions about how and when to navigate from one text, image, or video to another. Some of us, especially children, are unschooled in this new media (Le Bigot & Rouet, 2007). Internet reading, compared to single text reading, requires more decisions about what to read and when (Afflerbach & Cho, 2009). The purpose for reading must remain fixed, or the disciplined reader becomes a random shopper. Leu, and his colleagues (2008) argue that there are distinct categories of strategies necessary for Internet reading. They include defining the problem, locating information sources by using key word search terms, critically evaluating information and determining its trustworthiness, deciding on the usefulness of information and integrating information from multiple websites.

MOTIVATION

Comprehension is more than skill; it is very much a matter of *will*. Students need to care whether they comprehend and be motivated to think and use strategies, especially when the going is difficult. Knowledge and strategies will only take the reader so far; the reader must want to comprehend the text (Alexander, 2003). That means reading that is enjoyable and interesting; reading that is personally valuable. The reader must have an important purpose for reading the text, and the reader should have some choice in what to read. The goal of reading instruction is much more than creating better readers. Reading is just a tool to enjoy text and understand ourselves, others, and the world. Adeptness with comprehension strategies can enhance motivation because the reader knows she has the tools to tackle a difficult text. The following factors help build motivation.

1. Read interesting texts. Texts written for the purpose of teaching comprehension (instructional websites, workbooks, leveled books) lack the interest of authentic novels, magazines, and informational trade books (Dewitz, Leahy, Jones, & Sullivan, 2010).
2. Allow students some choice in what they read. Choice gives students a sense of control. Choice allows them to seek out the genres they love—mysteries, adventures, fantasy—and engage their own curiosity.
3. Create tasks that students value. Reading to become a better reader is not as motivating as reading to learn or reading to enjoy.

4. Focus on student efficacy. When students believe that they have the tools to succeed, the strategies and the knowledge, and they attribute their success to these tools, their motivation grows. Students develop a sense of control and confidence.
5. Challenge your students. Many students like challenging projects. It is satisfying to read something difficult and create a complex report.
6. Stress competition at times. Some students thrive on competition. They like doing better than their peers or better than they did before.
7. Stress the social relatedness of learning. For many students, working in groups, being part of a larger effort is an important catalyst for effort.
8. Minimize the use of points, pizza, and other extraneous rewards.

The Meaning We Construct

As we pointed out earlier in this chapter, we do not all construct the same meaning from a text. The meaning we construct is influenced by our purpose for reading, the background and beliefs we bring to the text, and the social context in which we read. Take the often controversial Second Amendment to the Constitution.

> *A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*

A political liberal who is in favor of stricter gun controls emphasizes the "*well regulated militia*" part of the sentence and infers that guns exist for the militias but individuals do not have unrestricted rights to guns. Conservatives focus on the "*right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed*" and want as little gun control as possible. Each constructs a different meaning from the same sentence.

Before constructivism and the construction-integration model, two other theories competed to explain how we read and how we should read. These theories were New Criticism (see Ransom, 1941, 1979; Brooks & Warren, 1938), and Reader Response Theory (Rosenblatt, 1938/1995, 1978). Each of these theories can find a home within the construction integration model, and each emphasizes how the mental or situation model is built. Each of these theories has relevance for how to teach reading in today's classrooms.

New Criticism emphasizes that the meaning is in the text and the readers' task is to find and interpret the text. The contemporary example of New Criticism is close reading (Boyles, 2012), a style of reading in which the reader pays close attention to the ideas in the text and minimizes the role prior knowledge plays—if this is possible—in the construction of meaning. One consortium of educators, which developed assessments for the CCSS, offered this definition of close reading.

> Close, analytic reading stresses engaging with a text of sufficient complexity directly and examining meaning thoroughly and methodically, encouraging students to read and reread deliberately. Directing student attention on the text itself empowers students to understand the central ideas and key supporting details. It also enables students to reflect on the meanings of individual words and sentences; the order in which sentences unfold; and the development of ideas over the course of the text, which ultimately leads students to arrive at an understanding of the text as a whole. (PARCC, 2011, p. 7)

Reader-response theory puts greater emphasis on the reader; the meaning one gains from text is the result of a transaction between the reader and the text. Readers will have a range of responses to a literary work. Over the past 30 years, reader-response theory has had a very prominent influence on literature instruction (Beach, 1993; Galda & Graves, 2007; Marshall, 2000). When reading complex literary texts, students will derive a variety of interpretations. Many literary texts simply do not have a single

correct interpretation, and readers should be allowed and encouraged to construct a variety of interpretations—if they can support them.

One important fact to keep in mind when considering reader-response theory is that it applies primarily to literary texts and certain purposes for reading. As part of explaining when and where reader-response theory applies, Rosenblatt (1978) points out that there are two primary types of reading: efferent, or informational, reading and aesthetic reading. In efferent reading, the reader's attention is focused primarily on what she will take from the reading—what information will be learned. Much of the reading of both students and adults is done for the sake of learning new information, answering questions, discovering how to complete a procedure, or gleaning knowledge that can be used in solving a particular problem. Most reading done in such subjects as health, science, math, and geography is informational reading. These texts, unlike many literary texts, often constrain meaning substantially, do not invite a variety of interpretations, and should yield quite similar interpretations for various readers (Stanovich, 1994).

The other sort of reading Rosenblatt considers, aesthetic reading, is quite different. In aesthetic reading, the primary concern is not with what students remember about a text after they have read it but with what happens to them as they are reading. The primary purpose when reading aesthetically is not to gain information but to experience the text. Although the aesthetic reader, like the reader whose goal is gaining information, must understand the text, he must "also pay attention to associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas" that the text arouses (Rosenblatt, 1978). For the most part, literature is written to provide an aesthetic experience. Most adults read literature for enjoyment; they do not read literature to learn it, but often we do learn from it. And students need to be given opportunities to do the same. Before we leave the topic of meaning construction, we should consider sociocultural theory.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory extends the influence on the cognitive-constructivist view out from the reader and the text into the larger social realm. Learning is viewed as primarily a social rather than an individual matter. This theory is still very similar to constructivism, in that learning is viewed as an active and constructive task and what is learned is viewed as subjective. As described by its originator, Vygotsky (1978), or by Vygotskian scholars such as James Wertsch (1998), sociocultural theory is complex. However, its implications for the view of reading and learning described here can be succinctly listed.

First, the social and cultural backgrounds of students have a huge and undeniable effect on their learning. Unless we as teachers take students' social backgrounds and modes of learning and thinking into account, little learning is likely to occur. Second, because learning is quintessentially social, much learning—particularly the best and most lasting learning—will take place as groups of learners work together. Dialogue—give-and-take, face-to-face discussion in which students strive to make themselves understood and to understand others—is a mainstay of learning. Third, the classroom, the school, and the various communities of students in a classroom are social contexts that have strong influences on what is or is not learned in the classroom, and each of them must be carefully considered in planning and carrying out instruction.

We take you into a fourth-grade classroom (see In the Classroom 1.2) where the students are reading *Shiloh* (Naylor, 1991) to illustrate how these various theories of meaning construction operate within the same book and occasionally in the same day.

In concluding this section on the reading process, it is worth pointing out that although constructivism as a theory was developed nearly 30 years ago, it is fully consistent with the model of reading comprehension developed by the RAND Reading Study Group (2002), a group commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education to review the research on reading comprehension: "We define reading comprehension as

In the Classroom 1.2

How Students Construct Meaning

In Ms. Gladwell's fourth-grade classroom, the students in one of her groups are reading *Shiloh* (Naylor, 1991), a novel about Marty, a ten-year old, who rescues an abused dog and faces several moral dilemmas. This is the first novel they will read during the school year and for several students, it is the first novel they have ever read. As the students read and discuss the book, Ms. Gladwell is aware that she must address their comprehension from an efferent, or close reading, perspective, and allow an aesthetic response to the text. She hope they become captivated by Marty's problem. Several theories of comprehension underlie her instruction.

At the beginning of the novel, Ms. Gladwell has the students focus on the facts and the structure of the text. They construct a character list and draw a map of the setting. In the character list, they identify each of the major characters and their relationships to the other characters. The characters are entered onto the chart as they are encountered in the text. Ms. Gladwell writes the list on a large piece of chart paper, and students copy the list into their reader's notebook. They are encouraged to update their list as new information is encountered (Collinge & Robinson, 2015).

From this largely efferent stance, collecting information and attending to text structure, the teacher gradually shifts the students' thinking into an interpretive stance. As the students read into the second quadrant of the novel, they discover the moral dilemmas that plague Marty. Marty wants to save Shiloh from his abusive owner, Judd, but Marty must do so secretly, lying to his parents. At this point, Ms. Gladwell and her students construct a new character list, one that grapples with the beliefs of each main character. They soon discover what Marty is learning about the complexity of moral life.

Character List

- Marty – 11 years old, likes animals.
- Dara Lynn – Marty's sister
- Becky – Marty's sister
- Ma – Mother
- Dad – a hunter, kind toward dogs
- Shiloh – dog, beagle, skinny
- Judd Travers – Shiloh's owner, hunter, cruel to his dogs

As the students read deeper into the novel, they are living through Marty's problem, what is the right thing to do. How can Marty save Shiloh, defying Judd, without incurring the wrath of his parents, punishment, and the loss of the dog?

What the characters believe about right and wrong

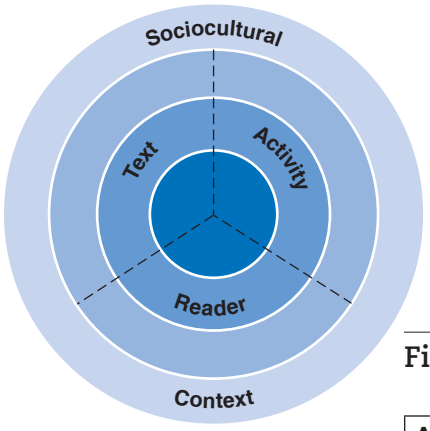
Character	Belief
Marty	Shiloh's safety is more important than the law.
	You can lie by not saying anything.
	The Bible isn't always clear about what is right and what is wrong.
	It is wrong to steal from your family.
Dad	Right and wrong are defined by the law.
Judd	Right and wrong are defined by you. You should have the freedom to do what you want.

At this point, the students are engaged in close reading, studying the book to extract the nuances of the plot, but they are also engaged in an aesthetic experience as they live through Marty's fears, indecision, and anxiety. Ultimately, they must be critical readers, taking a moral stance toward the book and in their own lives. As readers, they have to decide how to make decisions about right and wrong. This is why we read fiction to learn about the values, ethics, and morality of human life and to revel in the excitement of the story. The strategies and text structure knowledge that often are at the center of our curriculum are the tools that foster our pleasure and enable us to grapple with these deep human questions.

the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language." The RAND group goes on to note that comprehension entails three elements:

- The *reader* who is doing the comprehending,
- The *text* that is to be comprehended, and
- The *activity* in which comprehension is a part.

Figure 1.10 RAND Study Heuristic for Thinking About Reading Comprehension



SOURCE: RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). *Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension*, MR-1465-OERI. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education. Copyright 2002. Reprinted with permission.

Furthermore, the RAND group notes, these three elements operate within and are heavily influenced by a *sociocultural context*, as illustrated in Figure 1.10. The RAND group's orientation, in addition to being consistent with the interactive model, is consistent with the view of the reading process just discussed and with the program of instruction we recommend throughout this book.

Constructivism and the construction-integration model is also consistent with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that currently drive the reading curriculum in many states. The CCSS states four major goals. We present these goals in Figure 1.11 and indicate how they align with the construction-integration model. The CCSS set the goals for our reading curriculum, but with one glaring exception: the CCSS do not speak to the vital issue of motivation, and we will in Chapter 3.

Figure 1.11 How the Construction-Integration Model Aligns with the Common Core State Standards

Anchor Standards in the Common Core State Standards	Elements of the Construction-Integration Model
Key Idea and Details Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.	This standard aligns with the **construction** phase of the comprehension model.
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	This standard aligns with both the ***construction*** and ***integration*** phase of the comprehension model.
Craft and Structure Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	These standards align with both the ***construction*** and ***integration*** phase of the comprehension model.
Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	These standards align with the **integration** phase of the comprehension model.
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	The construction integration model operates with any level of text complexity.

SOURCE: Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010a. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers & National Governors Association.

Reflect and Apply

Comprehension is an active, constructive process that we will reinforce throughout this book. This means if you are to understand and remember the ideas we present, as well as use them in your teaching, you must mentally manipulate them in some way. Ideally, as constructivist

and sociocultural principles suggest, you will discuss your responses with others—a study group, your class, or your course instructor.

3. Suppose that one teacher taught the word *relax* by simply saying, "*Relax* means to loosen up," while another taught it by having students view several pictures of people relaxing, having them assume relaxing positions themselves, and then having them talk about situations in which they have felt comfortable and relaxed. Explain how the second teacher is demonstrating a cognitive-constructivist perspective.
4. Identify a schema that both inner-city students and suburban students are likely to have, one that inner-city students are likely to have but suburban students might lack, and one that suburban students are likely to have but inner-city students might lack. Why do certain groups of students share some schemata but not others? What does sociocultural theory say about the importance of students having different schemata?
5. As noted, a reader can be metacognitive before reading, during reading, or after reading. Now that you have read this section of the chapter, exercise your metacognitive skills by characterizing your understanding of it and noting some of the steps you could take to better understand the concepts presented.

The Reading Corner

Books to Help Build Automaticity and Fluency in Young Readers

As we have stated, to become automatic in reading, students need a lot of practice with easy, understandable, and enjoyable texts. For children who are just beginning to read—typically first-graders—books that include frequently repeated common words (for example, *run* and *book*) and common word parts (for example, phonograms such as *-ick* and *-ake*) are ideal. Consider series books like Junie B. Jones, Nate the Great, or the Magic Treehouse series. Like their predecessors, The Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, and The Baby-sitters Club, the repetitive nature of these books builds fluency. The following list shows specifically designed, easy-to-read books from series that help build beginning readers' automaticity and fluency. Also provided are several sources of information on easy-to-read books.

Easy-to-Read Series Books

Norman Bidwell. *Clifford Goes to Dog School*. Scholastic, 2002. Clifford proves to be quite a challenge for dog school. Just one of dozens of books in the Clifford series. 32 pages.

Denys Cazet. *Minnie and Moo: The Attack of the Easter Bunnies* (I Can Read Book 3). HarperCollins, 2005. In this Minnie and Moo adventure, these unconventional cows try to find an Easter bunny for Mr. and Mrs. Farmer's traditional Easter egg hunt. 48 pages.

Lillian Hoban. *Arthur's Birthday Party*. Harper-Trophy, 1999. At his gymnastics birthday party, Arthur the chimp is determined to be the best. 48 pages.

Arnold Lobel. *Frog and Toad Are Friends*. Harper & Row, 1970. The earliest adventures of these two friends. 64 pages.

Cynthia Rylant. *Henry and Mudge and the Tall Tree House*. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2002. Henry gets a new tree house but worries that his dog Mudge won't be able to share it with him. 40 pages.

Jean Van Leeuwen. *Oliver and Amanda's Halloween*. Dial Press, 1992. Oliver and Amanda scramble to get just the right costume for Halloween. 48 pages.

Information on Easy-to-Read Books

R. L. Allington. *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers: Designing Research-Based Programs*. Longman, 2001. Chapter 3, "Kids Need Books They Can Read," provides a number of suggestions for choosing books young readers can read.

I. C. Fountas & G. S. Pinnell. *Leveled Books (K–8): Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching*. Heinemann, 2005. Lists thousands of books leveled for grades K to 8.

M. F. Graves & B. B. Graves. *Scaffolding Reading Experiences: Designs for Student Success* (2nd ed.). Christopher Gordon, 2003. Chapter 10, "Assessing Text Difficulty and Accessibility," discusses features that make books easy or difficult.

A Literacy Curriculum for Today's and Tomorrow's World

We are now going to describe the components of a reading program that lead students to the high level of literacy required in the 21st century. Before continuing, we should point out that the focus in this book is reading; therefore, some aspects of a comprehensive literacy curriculum are not discussed, including spelling and handwriting. Also, although we consider writing as it relates to reading, we do not present a comprehensive writing program. Finally, we do not present curricula for specific subjects such as history, science, and the like. However, the reading curriculum we describe in this book is both broad and deep.

In recent years, the federal government has taken an increasingly active role in influencing reading instruction. The federally sponsored report of the National Reading Panel (2000) and the Reading First provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 identified five curricular components as having strong support from research and being key to effective reading instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading First—the massive federal program designed to ensure that the curriculum endorsed by the National Reading Panel (NRP) is implemented in kindergarten through third-grade classrooms—will likely continue to have an effect on reading instruction in the primary grades because the Common Core State Standards (NGA & CCSSO, 2010) has incorporated most of its recommendations.

Like most literacy educators (for example, Allington, 2002; Krashen, 2004; Pressley, 2002; Routman, 2002; Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2003), we believe a comprehensive and balanced literacy curriculum that addresses the needs of primary-grade students, upper-elementary students, and middle-grade students includes more than the five components endorsed by the NRP and Reading First. We specifically believe that motivation is vital and was ignored by these national reading initiatives, and it will be the central focus of our book.

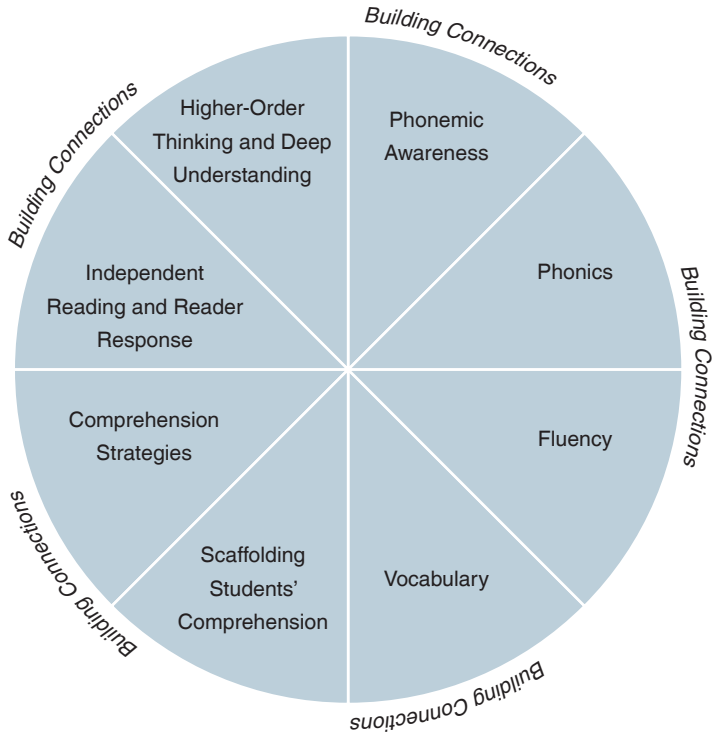
Not long after the influence of NCLB and Reading First began to wane, the Common Core State Standards sought to redefine the goals of reading instruction in the nation. The Standards were reinforced by the federal Race to the Top (2009) initiative that provided funds to develop tests that assessed the Common Core. The standards, originally published in 2010 and adopted by 45 of the states and the District of Columbia, attempted to shift reading instruction in three key ways (Coleman & Pimental, 2012).

1. Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language. At each grade, students should be guided to read increasingly complex text and learn the vocabulary within so they are reading texts they will encounter on the job and in college.
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational. The Standards pushed the students to read closely and write informative and persuasive texts that were grounded in their reading.
3. Building knowledge through content-rich information. The reading curriculum in the elementary grades should include a 50/50 balance of literary and informational

texts, and the texts should be selected so that they build students' knowledge from one text to another and from one grade to another.

As of this writing, the influence of the Common Core is beginning to diminish under pressure from conservation politicians in the states and at the federal level. The assessments that were created to measure the impact of the CCSS, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), have been dropped by more than half of the states that originally adopted them. Recent history suggests the Common Core will not be the last literacy reform we will experience. Something new is just over the horizon. In the meantime, in this text we will discuss what we believe are the essentials for developing students who can and will read. In this section, we describe eight components that we believe are vital to help all students achieve the sort of literacy required for full participation and success in today's world (see Figure 1.12).

Figure 1.12 Components of the Present-Day Literacy Curriculum



1. **Motivation**
   Our primary concern is motivating students to become literate and sustains their interest in reading for years to come. It is easy to view reading as just a skill, but all skills are learned because we have goals beyond the effortless performance of that skill. We learn to read because it is a rite of passage into the adult world. Most kids just want to learn to read. After the pleasure of performance must come the satisfaction from the book. Reading is a source of entertainment and escape. Reading is a tool that enables us to learn and understand the complex scientific, economic, and political world in which we live. Reading is essential for success in higher education and on the job. As our children are increasingly captivated by big screens and little screens, iPhones and flatscreen TVs, a world where Amazon's Alexa can report the weather tomorrow or identify the leading actress in *The Wizard of Oz*, we must find a way to make reading tantalizing again. Motivation is our focus in Chapter 3.
2. **Selecting the Right Text**
   All teachers must select texts for reading instruction and help their students select texts. Whether texts are packaged within a reading program or selected individually, there are important criteria for selecting texts for beginning reading instruction and other criteria for texts designed to build vocabulary and comprehension. For decades, the primary criteria for selecting texts has been reading level or readability. However, a teacher should also consider the ideas in a text, the interest of the text, the text's structure, the language the author employed, and how the themes of the text will resonate with the wide diversity of students in our classrooms. We will tackle the topic of choosing texts in Chapter 6.
3. **Phonemic Awareness and Other Aspects of Emergent Literacy**
   As part of learning to read, students need to internalize a substantial body of knowledge about print and the relationship between print and speech. One very important component of such knowledge is phonemic awareness—the insight that spoken words are composed of somewhat separable sounds. But there are many

other aspects of emergent literacy. For example, students must recognize that the written language they are just beginning to learn about is in many ways similar to the oral language with which they are already quite proficient. Additionally, as part of emergent literacy, children need to develop positive attitudes about reading and about their ability to learn to read. We deal with emergent literacy in Chapter 7.

4. **Phonics and Other Word Recognition Skills**
   Phonics is the area of reading instruction that deals with the relationships between letters and sounds. Children use their knowledge of phonics to sound out written words they do not immediately recognize. If an adept reader comes to the word *bike* and doesn't immediately recognize it, she can follow a series of steps to arrive at its pronunciation. Phonics skills help children become independent readers. Other word recognition skills—for example, identifying syllables, blending sounds to form syllables and words, and dealing with word parts such as prefixes and suffixes—also assist children in becoming independent readers. We deal with phonics and other word recognition skills in Chapter 8.
5. **Fluency and Independent Reading**
   Fluency, as we have already noted, is the ability to "read a text orally with speed, accuracy, expression, and comprehension" (Samuels, 2002b). Additionally, it is important that students become fluent in their silent reading (Pikulski & Chard, 2005). When reading silently, students need to read smoothly, at an appropriate pace, and with good comprehension. There are a number of effective practices for building students' fluency, but none are more important than a powerful independent reading program in every classroom. Students need to do a lot of reading in appropriate texts, texts that are not too difficult and that they readily comprehend, learn from, and enjoy. It is not enough for students to read and comprehend texts they are assigned. Students must become independent readers who voluntarily choose to read for the pleasure, knowledge, and satisfaction that only reading can provide. We will discuss independent reading and fluency in Chapter 9.
6. **Vocabulary Learning and Instruction**
   A huge amount of research has been conducted on students' vocabulary knowledge, and reliable estimates indicate that many students have acquired reading vocabularies of something like 5,000 words by the end of the first grade and approximately 50,000 words by the time they graduate from high school (Graves, 2006). Obviously, vocabulary learning represents a significant task throughout children's years in school, and effectively fostering students' vocabularies requires a multifaceted and long-term program that includes rich and varied language experiences, teaching individual words, teaching word-learning strategies, and fostering word consciousness. Chapter 10 is devoted to vocabulary instruction.
7. **Teaching Reading Comprehension**
   Comprehension is both a complex process and the ultimate goal of reading, and, as a consequence, comprehension instruction needs to be powerful, long-term, and multifaceted. As one facet of comprehension instruction, we need to do everything possible to ensure that students comprehend and learn from each and every text they read—to scaffold their efforts with both narrative texts such as short stories, plays, and novels, and expository texts such as the chapters in their science and social studies texts and articles on the Internet. We want students to move beyond comprehension to higher-order thinking. Students should master such complex tasks as analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. As students read text, we want to promote deep and lasting understanding—teaching in such a way that students grasp topics deeply, retain important information, and actively use the knowledge they gain in a variety of tasks in and out of school.

   Comprehension is the product of knowledge, strategies, and motivation. Our comprehension curriculum must be organized so that knowledge builds from one

text to another. Comprehension strategies are mental acts that facilitate our understanding of text (Lysynchuk, Pressley, d'Ailly, Smith, & Cake, 1989). Although many strategies have been identified, a handful of them have been repeatedly singled out as particularly useful, including establishing a purpose for reading, using prior knowledge, asking and answering questions, making inferences, determining what is important, summarizing, dealing with graphic information, imagining and creating graphic representations, and monitoring comprehension (Duke, Pearson, Billman, & Strahan, 2011). The active use of knowledge and strategies is dependent on motivation. Students must care; they must want to learn and revel with the text. In Chapter 11, we will lay out our approach to reading comprehension and then focus on narrative texts, fiction, biography and autobiography. In Chapter 12, we will discuss informational text and reading on the Internet.

8. **Building Connections and Fostering Critical Thinking**
   The final component of the critical literacy curriculum cuts across all of the others. Students need to build connections in several directions. First, we want students to realize that what they bring to school—the wealth of out-of-school experiences that they bring when they enter first grade and that are constantly enriched each year—is relevant to what they are learning in school. For example, the pride they felt when they were first allowed to go to the grocery store alone can provide insight into a story character's feelings when she successfully meets a challenge. Second, we want students to realize that the various subjects they study in school are interrelated in many ways. The understanding of the American Revolutionary gained in social studies can help them understand the motives of Johnny in Esther Forbes's *Johnny Tremain*. Third, we want students to realize that ideas and concepts learned in school are relevant to their lives outside of school. For example, a character's discovery that persistence paid off in meeting her goal may suggest to a student that similar persistence may lead to success as she tries to help a younger brother develop the habit of putting his toys away neatly.

Reading has always required critical thinking but in the Internet age it becomes a survival skill. Information floods our lives and it is vital for students to evaluate the trustworthiness of information. Students need to consider who wrote the information, what are their credentials, and their political point of view. An article on the weather will take a different slant coming from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration versus a political website. Rather than devote a chapter to critical thinking and the Internet you will find it throughout the book in the chapters on selecting text, comprehension strategies, and reading informational text.

Making Instructional Decisions

To develop and implement a literacy curriculum, teachers must make instructional decisions, and they need the tools to do so. Over the last several decades, the populations in our schools have become more diverse. We have many English learners, large numbers of students living in or close to poverty, and increasingly large numbers of students who carry a special education label. The special education population increased from 8.3 percent in 1976 to 13.8 percent in 2015. English learners currently constitute 9.5 percent of the public-school population, whereas they totaled 7.3 percent in 1980 (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Each of these groups demands some well-thought-through instruction that might be carried out by the classroom teacher, a specialist, or both. We need to consider what instructional approaches work best for these students and how general education teachers coordinate their efforts with the specialists. In Chapter 14, we will discuss English learners, and in Chapter 4 we will discuss students who struggle to learn to read.

To meet the eight curriculum goals and the increasingly diverse needs of the students in your classrooms, you will need some tools.

- The first tool is an understanding of the reading process. Teachers need to understand how children read and how they learn to read. A theory of the reading process underlies all instructional decisions. If you believe that reading is a series of neatly separated individual components, you will employ a discrete skills approach, teaching them one at a time. If you view reading development as the product of knowledge, strategies, and motivation, you favor a more constructivist approach. We explored these theories in this chapter.
- Next, teachers need to understand the basic principles of reading instruction. What are the dominant approaches to teaching reading, and where did they come from? In Chapter 2, we will give you a brief history of reading instruction, so you can avoid making the same mistakes as did your forefathers and foremothers.
- You will need to know how to organize the space and time in your classroom. The physical layout in your room helps you teach to the whole class, work with groups of students, and meet with individuals. Time is also critical. You will soon discover that you do not have enough time to do all that you desire. We will help you create schedules for your classroom and guide your principal to provide the time that you need. We will explore these topics in Chapter 4.
- We work in an era that is dominated by assessment. There are state assessments designed to evaluate programs and the quality of schools and teachers. There are district assessments designed to prep students for the state assessments and evaluate your students' progress from month to month. There are assessments designed to measure what students have learned. There are diagnostic tests for placing students in the right text and for determining their strengths and weaknesses. Preparing, giving, and interpreting tests can easily consume a third of your instructional time. In Chapter 5, we will explain these assessments and help you manage them. Good teachers make observations, and they employ both informal and formal assessments to understand their students and to gauge their progress. Often teachers do not need to give a test, they can just look and listen. Finally, we will guide you through the process of developing a differentiated curriculum—one that addresses the skills, interests, and motivations of your students.

An Overview of this Book

We have designed each chapter to facilitate your reading and learning as effectively and efficiently as possible, and most chapters have the same components and the same organization.

Each chapter begins with a set of learning objectives and a brief scenario in which we capture a problem you are likely to face and that anticipates one or more of the major themes of the chapter. Following the scenario is the body of the chapter, usually consisting of two to four main sections and a number of subsections. Within each chapter we have placed some recurring features. We will regularly consider how to differentiate instruction for English language learners. Whenever needed, we will discuss the impact of digital technology on reading and how to teach students to use it. We will also consider how to motivate and assist struggling readers. Finally, we provide concluding remarks, a summary, and commentary on the chapter.

Each chapter includes a number of additional features. Samples of children's work illustrate their growth toward present-day literacy. Reading Corner boxes provide annotated lists of children's literature useful in teaching particular literacy skills and

topics. In the Classroom features offer a variety of examples of classroom interaction—student–teacher dialogues, vignettes, and the like—designed to nurture students toward literacy. We will also include features on motivation and differentiation throughout the chapters. To encourage reader involvement, Reflect and Apply sections are embedded at the ends of major sections to give you an opportunity to review and try out some of the central ideas presented.

Chapters end with two standard features. A section titled Extending Learning invites you to apply and elaborate on some of the major ideas presented by observing classrooms, talking with parents and teachers, or investigating a particular topic further. Following this, a section titled Children's Literature provides citations and brief annotations of the selections mentioned in the chapter and occasional citations of other sources of children's literature.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have emphasized four points. First, we described the concept of the reading process underlying this book—the cognitive-constructivist view. We also described several concepts that elaborate and complement this view—the construction-integration model of comprehension, automaticity, fluency, and metacognition. Second, we briefly characterized U.S. students' proficiency in reading, contrasted their proficiency today to what it was in the past and to the proficiency of students in other industrialized countries, and described the sort of literacy necessary in today's and tomorrow's world. Third, we listed the components of the present-day literacy curriculum that serve as the foundation for the book. Fourth, we gave an overview and explained the common organization that all chapters share.

The topics in this chapter are particularly important to internalize because they underlie the remainder of the book. As we have said several times, reading is enhanced by rich background knowledge. In the case of this book, the more you know about the view of the reading process that informs it, the level of present-day literacy it is designed to help you achieve for your students, the components of the curriculum, and the organization of the book and each chapter, the easier it will be for you to learn, remember, and use the information and procedures presented. We, therefore, strongly encourage you to review the chapter, take some notes, respond again to some of the prompts in the Reflect and Apply sections, make use of some of our suggestions in the Extending Learning section, and perhaps search out and read some works listed in the references.

Extending Learning

Here we suggest several activities that take you beyond this book—to schools, students, teachers, parents, libraries, and others sources of information—to help you more fully understand and appreciate your role in nurturing children toward present-day literacy.

1. One way to increase your understanding of new and complex concepts is to examine several perspectives on them. The concepts about the reading process that we have discussed have all been described in a variety of other texts, and all of them are complex enough to warrant further study. Pick two or three concepts that you would like to further explore, and read more about them either in the references that we have supplied or in a general text on psychology or educational psychology.
2. Go to the NAEP website (http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/reading) and print out a copy of the sample test items. Then go to your state website and compare the passages and questions from the national and state tests. Which test is the more rigorous assessment of reading? Which test demands higher order thinking?
3. List the components of the present-day literacy curriculum we have outlined and interview some elementary school teachers to find out which components they deal with, which they don't, and the literacy activities they engage in that are not part of the curriculum presented in this chapter. Try to include teachers from primary, middle-elementary, and upper-elementary grades. Once you have completed your interviews, sum up what you have discovered and comment on (1) the extent to which the teachers you interviewed employ the curriculum we have outlined and (2) any components of the literacy curriculum that are not among the components we consider but that you probably want to include in your classroom.

Children's Literature

DiCamillo, K. (2000). *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press. A poignant and well-told story of a young girl's building a new life after her mother left and she and her father moved to Florida—with, of course, a little help from her dog, Winn-Dixie. 182 pages.

Dolphin, L. (1997). *Our Journey from Tibet*. New York: Dutton. A true story based on interviews with a 9-year-old Tibetan girl, Sonam. Includes dramatic and stunning photos. 40 pages.

Flake, S. G. (1998). *The Skin I'm In*. New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion. Uncomfortable because her skin is extremely dark, 13-year-old Maleeka meets a new teacher with a facial birthmark and makes some discoveries about how to love who she is and what she looks like. 171 pages.

Forbes, E. (1998). *Johnny Tremain*. New York: Houghton Mifflin. Johnny Tremain, apprentice silversmith, takes on the cause of freedom as a message carrier for the Sons of Liberty in pre-Revolution Boston. CD available. 293 pages.

Giff, P. R. (2004). *A House of Tailors*. New York: Wendy Lamb Books. Set in the late 19th century, this novel for intermediate readers tells the story of how 13-year-old Dina adjusts to her new life in the United States after being sent from Germany to live in Brooklyn with her tailor uncle. 149 pages.

Lord, B. B. (1984). *In the Year of the Boar & Jackie Robinson.* New York: Harper and Row. In 1947, a Chinese girl comes to Brooklyn, where she becomes Americanized at school, in her apartment building, and by her love for baseball. Illustrated. 169 pages.

Snicket, L. (2002). *The Carnivorous Carnival: Book the Ninth*. New York: HarperCollins. The continued adventures and misadventures of the Baudelaire orphans in the Series of Unfortunate Events series. 286 pages.

Sun, C. F. (1994). *Mama Bear*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Young Mei-Mei bakes and sells cookies in order to earn enough money to buy a large and expensive stuffed bear for Christmas. Illustrated. 28 pages.

Chapter 2
Reading Instruction

Learning Outcomes

After reading and studying this chapter you should be able to:

2.1 Describe the history of reading instruction in America from the mid-19th century to the present and use that history to understand how the current approaches to reading reflect the tensions of the past.

2.2 Understand the cognitive constructivist-principles of instruction and apply them to the design of effective reading instruction.

2.3 Compare and contrast the three major approaches to reading instruction—basal programs, guided reading, and reader's workshop.

Classroom Vignette

It is the beginning of the school year and the principal of Fargo North Elementary School is meeting with the teachers from each grade level to review the results from last year and discuss possible changes in instruction for the new academic year. During the 2016–2017 school year, the school did not meet its Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goal, as proscribed by their state department of education and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), the successor to No Child Left Behind. According to the law, 85 percent of all students had to pass the state reading test, and that includes 85 percent of African American students, Hispanic students, low-income students, and special education students, with only a few exceptions. The fourth-grade teachers assembled at this meeting are not happy. Last year only 74 percent of their students passed the test, not the required 85 percent. The teachers were given a set of reflection questions before the meeting to frame the discussion about improving instruction and learning.

1. If your grade level performed well last year, what aspects of the curriculum and instruction accounted for that success? How will you sustain those practices?
2. If your grade level performed poorly last year, what aspects of the curriculum and instruction caused the problem? What changes will you make this year?

The teachers did their homework and came with written answers; they had clearly thought through the questions. In response to the first question, they produced a list of factors that accounted for their success. In the second column, they listed the changes they would like to make (See Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Fourth Grade Curriculum Reflections and Plans

What Made Your Instruction Successful?	What Would You Like to Add Next Year?
• Fluency program • Silent reading time • Timed readings • Graphic organizers • Accelerated reader • Small-group instruction • Reading coach • Practice books • Work stations • Websites • Reading consultants model lessons • Computer programs • Read-alouds • Highlighting • Data-drive instruction	• Weekly Reader • Workbooks • Novels • Parent involvement • Passages from ReadWorks • Vocabulary notebooks

The explanation for success was a scattershot of materials, instructional routines, and personal assistance from experts. Their suggested changes were additional materials and more parent involvement. Neither of the responses suggested that the teachers understood instruction. Their view of instruction consisted of materials (workbooks), outside assistance (the reading coach), classroom organizational practices (small-group instruction, workstations), and commercial programs (Accelerated Reader) where students take tests on the books they have read and earn points. They did not define instruction as a series of explicit teaching moves or student tasks.

Instruction is the procedures and practices teachers use to help students acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes. To help students with these acquisitions, teachers explain concepts and skills, show students how to use them, provide assistance as students try out new tasks, and provide ample opportunity to practice. Teachers organize the instruction so that students will use their new knowledge and skills long after they have moved on to another topic or another grade. Good teachers try to make all of this as lively and interesting as possible, because motivated students are deeply engaged in reading and writing. Good teachers provide the slower students as much help as possible while guiding and encouraging those who are surging ahead.

All teachers have a theory of instruction that guides their decisions even if they cannot articulate that theory. In our opening vignette the teachers' theories of instruction were primitive. Some teachers believe that teaching is modeling. If you show children how to do everything including silent reading, they will imitate those models. During sustained silent reading time, the teacher kicks back with her latest novel hoping to inspire her students. Other teachers believe that practice makes perfect, and their classroom is a blizzard of workbooks and worksheets with which students practice their reading skills. Instruction is more than modeling and practice; it has many components. The purpose of this chapter is to help you understand the principles of instruction and by the end of the chapter we hope you will have developed your own theory of instruction, based on what researchers have discovered about effective teaching. We will then apply these principles of instruction to the rest of the chapters as we discuss word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Reflect and Apply

1. Think about the best teacher or teachers you ever had—elementary, secondary, or higher education. What made the instruction of these teachers particularly strong? Try to ignore for now the personality traits of these teachers.

A Brief History of Reading Instruction in the United States

We begin this chapter with a brief look at the history of reading instruction, because how to teach reading has always been controversial and continues to be so. The history of the United States and its schools reveals cyclical changes in which alternating political and educational ideas at first receive widespread support, only to later draw heavy criticism and disapproval (Cremin, 1990; Graves & Dykstra, 1997; Schlesinger, 1986). Understanding this history will help you understand the present and perhaps avoid the pitfalls of the past. As Pearson and Cervetti (2017) write: "Ideas and practices come with ancestors and precedents, even when they appear to emerge suddenly, and they persist long after their theoretical and research foundation appear to have been overturned (p.13)."

Since the early 19th century, there have been many debates about the best methods for teaching young children to read, but fewer arguments about promoting the reading ability of older children. To understand the development of contemporary approaches to teaching reading, the history of reading instruction in the United States is best studied against the backdrop of tensions between a direct, or didactic, approach to teaching the skills of reading and a more holistic or child-centered approach that puts meaning making first. In the brief history that follows—parts of which rely heavily on information taken from Nila Banton Smith's *American Reading Instruction* (2002), David Pearson's "Reading in the Twentieth Century" (2000), and Pearson and Cervetti's (2017) work on reading comprehension—we focus on these tensions.

The Colonial Period and the 19th Century

The period extending roughly from 1600 to 1840 was relatively free of tensions over instructional approaches. The emphasis was on content. The purpose of reading instruction early in the period was clearly religious, as revealed by this excerpt from the Old Deluder Act passed by the General Court of Massachusetts in 1647:

> *It being one chief point of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures.… It is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty households, shall then forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read*. (Quoted in Smith, 2002)

Beginning about the time of the American Revolution and continuing until about 1840, the purpose shifted, and reading instruction and textbooks reflected what Smith has termed a "nationalistic-moralistic emphasis," as exemplified in these lines from the preface to Lyman Cobb's *The North American Reader* (1835):

> The pieces in this work are chiefly American. The English Reader so largely used in our country does not contain a single piece or paragraph written by an American citizen. Is this good policy? Is it patriotism? (Cobb, 1835).

However, regardless of whether the reading material focused on religious or patriotic content, the method of instruction throughout the period was much the same—the

alphabetic-spelling method, a plodding, step-by-step approach in which students first learned the alphabet, next learned to spell a large number of syllables, and then spelled words before they read them. At this point they memorized sections of text (usually religious, moral, or patriotic in content) and read orally (Smith, 2002).

Comprehension was largely an afterthought. In the early 19th century, the goal of reading was to read aloud familiar texts, the Bible or a hymnal, with expression and intonation. Oral performance was the measure of good reading. There was a small minority, educated white men who did read with strong comprehension, but this was not the goal for all people. Developing comprehension was not an explicit goal of instruction but a byproduct of memorizing text.

Not surprisingly, this approach eventually came under fire, most notably by educational reformer Horace Mann, who advocated instead a focus on whole words and letter sounds. In an 1842 report to the Board of Education in Massachusetts, Mann displays his disdain for the alphabetic-spelling approach and pushed for a meaning focused approach that foreshadows the controversy that, though modified, continues today:

> *Compare the above method [the more meaningful approach Mann favored] with that of calling up a class of abecedarians—or, what is more common, a single child—and while the teacher holds a book or card before him, with a pointer in his hand, says, a, and he echoes a; then b, and he echoes b; and so on until the vertical row of lifeless and ill-favored characters is completed, and then of remanding him to his seat, to sit still and look at vacancy*. (*Mann, 1884/1965*).

The Evolution of Reading Programs in America

From the American Revolution through the early 1800s, children spent little time in school so only one or two books were necessary to teach reading. At the beginning of the 19th century the most popular text was Noah Webster's *The American Spelling Book*; it was first published in 1783 but it stayed in print for over 35 years. As students stayed in school longer Webster added a second and a third book, *The Little Reader's Assistant* (1790) and *An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking* (1787). All of these texts emphasized pronunciation and oral expression with reading selections on history, morality, religion, and popular speeches of the time. See Figure 2.2 for the list of rules for reading well by Joshua Leavitt (1832) in his Easy Lesson in Reading.

By the mid 1800s, reading programs and reading instruction began to evolve as society and schools changed. As the population of the country grew and children stayed in school longer, they were divided into grades, and eventually publishers offered one book for each grade. The most popular was the *McGuffey's Eclectic Readers* published

Figure 2.2 Rules for Reading Joshua Levitt, 1832

If you wish to know how to read well, you must learn these rules by heart.

1. Be careful to *call* your words right.
2. Learn to *pronounce* them properly.
3. Speak with a *clear* and *distinct* voice.
4. Do not read too *fast*. Read *slow* and *carefully*, so as not to make any *mistakes*.
5. Be very particular to observe all the *Stops*.
6. Learn to use the proper *Emphasis* and *Inflections* of the voice. Ask your teacher to show you what that means, and how to do it.
7. Endeavor to *understand* every word you read as you go along. *Study* your reading lessons very carefully as you read.
8. Try to read as if you were telling a story to your mother or talking with some of your playmates. *Reading is talking from a book*.
9. Take pains to *read* the poetry and not to *sing* it.
10. The emphatic words are printed in *Italic* letters.

SOURCE: Based on Joshua Leavitt. 1829. Easy Lessons in Reading: For the Use of the Younger Classes in Common Schools. J. & J.W. Prentiss.

from 1835 until 1920 and selling over 120 million copies. McGuffey included a lesson plan with each selection, an idea he "borrowed" from Samuel Worcester (1830) (Worcester sued McGuffey for plagiarism and won an out-of-court settlement for $2,000.) Before reading the selection, there were rules for reading, the teacher provided a bit of background information, and after the selection was read there were lists of words and definitions to study, comprehension questions, and guides to common pronunciation errors.

By the end of the 19th and into the 20th century, basal reading programs began to look a bit more like the approaches your parents might have experienced. More robust teacher's manuals were developed just as teachers received more education in the process of teaching reading. Consider the irony. In 1900, *The New Education Readers* (Demarest & Van Sickle, 1900) contained a 13-page teacher's guide for the first-grade program. Today, the teachers' guide for *Journeys* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016) numbers over 2,000 pages. Additional changes included carefully controlled vocabulary for introducing words based on word frequency, sequences for teaching reading skills, workbooks for practicing skills, tests for placing students and assessing their mastery, and grouping student by ability to differentiate instruction.

Basal Readers at the Beginning of the 20th Century

Basal readers at the beginning of the 20th century contained a collection of reading selections with accompanying worksheets, teacher's manuals, tests, supplementary material, and lots of workbooks. The books for the earliest grades employed strictly controlled vocabularies and generally contained very brief narratives, relying on pictures to convey much of their meaning. The books in the remainder of the primary grades continued to employ controlled vocabularies and contained largely fiction focusing on typical middle-class life, fantasy, safe adventures, and moderately preachy stories.

In the fourth-grade, selections became longer, vocabulary control eased, more genres of fiction were included, along with a few expository selections. Much of the instruction students received in these programs was organized around the directed reading lesson—which included preparation for reading, silent reading, and follow-up questions and discussion—on individual selections. These lessons were often punctuated by skills work in decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension, and students spent a good deal of time completing worksheets. Figure 2.3 shows pages from a first-grade reader in a 1950 basal series, typical of the readers of this period.

Figure 2.3 Pages from a Typical First-Grade Basal Reader of the 1950s

Oh, Jane.
Look and see.
See Baby go.
See Tim go.
See Spot and Puff go.

51

Sally said, "Come, Mother.
Come and see Father.
See Father jump and play.
Oh, oh.
Father is funny."

75

SOURCE: SCOTT FORESMAN, DICK AND JANE PRINT, ©1956 Reprinted and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., New York, NY.

As basal reading programs grew, they began to incorporate more skill work—comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills. Prior to the 20th century, work on reading skills was largely absent from reading instruction. Some argue that comprehension skills —finding the main idea, distinguishing fact from opinion, or grasping an author's organizational pattern—had their origin in survey work conducted by William S. Grey who was also the author of the Curriculum Foundation Series, better known as Dick and Jane (Dewitz, Jones, Leahy, & Sullivan, 2010). Others suggest that the new comprehension assessments and reading skills grew up together with each influencing the other (Pearson & Cervetti, 2017). The developers of comprehension tests had to test something, *skills*, and the authors of basal programs tended to teach what was tested, *skills*.

The increasing number of skills raised two important questions for the publishers. In what order should the skills be taught? How much time or emphasis should be given to each skill? To answer these questions, the publishers created scope and sequence charts, curriculum maps that guided instruction over the academic year. As the scope and sequence charts became more complex and the number of skills grew, there was a greater need to give teachers more explicit guidance in the teacher's manual. The complexity of reading instruction was only one of the issues that sparked a backlash.

Although many controversies about reading materials and reading instruction arose during the 1950s and 1960s, the most persistent and frequent involved the tensions between more holistic and more segmented instruction, centering on letters, sounds, and words. The alphabetic-spelling method had disappeared, but the whole-word method and various approaches emphasizing phonics continued to be in conflict. In the whole-word method children were introduced to high frequency, common words, and these were repeated frequently insuring that students remembered them. The conflict between the whole word method and phonics reached a crescendo in 1955 when Rudolf Flesch published his best-selling *Why Johnny Can't Read*. Flesch charged that American children were not learning to read because they were not taught phonics. A decade later, in 1967, Harvard University professor Jeanne Chall published a very influential review of research, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate (1967)*, in which she concluded that phonics produced at least somewhat better results than the whole-word method. In that same year, the largest study of beginning reading ever conducted, the First Grade Reading Studies (Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997), produced findings that tended to support Chall's conclusions.

Although these three publications did eventually change the content of basals (It took more than 20 years.), they did not seriously change the influence and prominence of basals in the schools (Pearson, 2000). Contrary to Flesch's charge, most basals had always included some phonics instruction, and basal publishers responded to criticisms by providing somewhat more phonics. As late as 1990, the vast majority of American children continued to be taught with basal readers, and most teachers, if asked, would have said that they used a basal reading approach.

Along with the basal reader, many school districts adopted a skills management approach to the teaching skills. A skills management system identified and sequenced the reading skills, provided worksheet for practicing the skills and provided tests to monitor students' mastery. The Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development (Otto & Askov, 1971) is an example of a management system for teaching word attack, vocabulary, comprehension, study skills, interpretative reading, and creative reading. Each of these broad areas was divided into a number of subskills numbering over 100. Each week, students, based on their need, would be working on different skills and taking tests to determine their level of mastery.

The skills management approach proved to be so popular that it was adopted by basal reading programs of the 1970s and early 1980s. The sequence of skills instruction

became more precise and robust, more skills were taught, the number of worksheets increased, and students took more mastery tests. This approach was so consuming that reading for pleasure and meaning became rare in many classrooms. Reading instruction was now driven by an accountability system that assessed a proliferating number of reading skills (Johnson & Pearson, 1975). The joy out of reading was sucked out for many educators.

The Challenge to Basal Readers: Whole-Language and Literature-Based Approaches

Advocates of more holistic approaches—whole-language and literature-based instruction—began to challenge basal reading programs in the late 1970s. Whole language was widely popularized in the writings of Kenneth Goodman (1970) and Frank Smith (1971). The basic charge was that basal approaches break up language and learning to read in a way that is unnatural and artificial and actually makes learning to read more difficult. More specific charges were that basals included too much skills instruction, that instruction in phonics and other subskills of reading was not integrated with actual reading, that vocabulary was much too controlled, that stories were banal and not well constructed, that separating students into ability groups had dire results for less skilled readers, and that teachers were over-programmed and over-scripted.

Critics also noted that the selections in basals dealt almost exclusively with White, middle-class characters, themes, and settings and that many of the reading selections were mundane from a literary standpoint. Advocates of literature-based programs had similar criticisms, though they tended not to be as adamantly against basal anthologies and structured programs as their whole-language colleagues. Both groups had a marked effect on basal readers and a huge effect on the reading instruction taking place in U.S. classrooms. In fact, literature-based basals became the most common type of basal in the 1990s.

Advocates of whole-language and literature-based instruction had a specific agenda, but they believed that the reading curriculum and the methods of instruction should evolve as teacher considered the needs and interests of the students. Three general characteristics of whole-language stand out: the use of authentic children's literature, a child-centered approach, and a focus on learning to read by reading. Advocates argued that authentic children's literature—books written by professional authors to engage and entertain children—should be the mainstay of reading instruction. Moreover, whole texts should be used; excerpts should be avoided. Students and their needs, desires, and interests should be the focus of attention, the primary concern. A preset curriculum is suspect. Student-initiated learning is favored over teacher-initiated instruction. Instruction comes when and as needed, while students are actually engaged in reading, and in quite brief mini-lessons.

The influence of whole-language and literature-based instruction produced a significant change in basal reading programs, especially in first grade. Publishers of basals now picked reading selections by their literary value and not the control and repetition of the vocabulary. Hoffman and his colleagues carefully documented these changes, examining basal programs from 1987 and 1993 (Hoffman, McCarthey, Abbott, Christian, Corman, & Curry, 1994). In the newer programs, students had to learn more than twice as many individual words than in the older programs. Each word appeared with far fewer repetitions, and the overall reading level for first grade text was significantly more difficult. On the positive side, the material was judged to be more engaging. Educators and publishers were betting that interest and engagement would trump vocabulary and phonics control.

Instruction in skills and strategies still played a prominent part in these new basal reading programs. Phonics instruction was not as robust, but teachers were still directed

to explain and model comprehension instruction even if these lessons were not always as explicit as they could be. These basal programs also included a process approach to writing, integration of reading with the other language arts, and the use of book clubs for literature study.

Comprehension instruction also changed during the 1980s and through the mid 1990s. Propelled by radical changes in psychological theory and by a large-scale research effort launched at the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois, researchers explored how knowledge influenced reading comprehension and how skilled readers used thinking strategies to make sense of text (Pearson & Cervetti, 2017). Because of these efforts, the creators of reading programs put a stronger emphasis on developing students' knowledge before they read passages and teaching comprehension strategies before and during reading. This made core reading programs even more complex as strategies took their place beside skills in the programs' scope and sequence.

Massive Federal Intervention in Reading and Core Reading Programs

In 1997, Congress directed the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), to convene a panel of experts to "assess the status of research-based knowledge, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read." This resulted in two reports. The National Research Council, a prestigious scientific organization, published *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), a book that reviewed and brought to prominence much of the research sponsored by the NICHD, on early reading. The report focused on young children and emphasized the importance of phonemic awareness and phonics especially for children who have difficulty learning to read.

In 2000, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Panel published the *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read (NRP)* (NICHD, 2000). In this report, the NRP identified five elements of reading instruction that it saw as strongly supported by research: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This report became the basis for many curriculum decisions in the years that followed. The National Reading Panel report was a back-to-basics movement that sought to fix the so-called poor reading skills of American students by strengthening early reading instruction. The message most educators took from the report was to put more focus on letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency than on the development of language skills. In part, this was influenced by the test most districts used to measure students' growth.

The NRP report had both very strong supporters and very strong opponents, but both supporters and opponents agree that it has had a huge effect on reading instruction. Most notably, a massive federal funding program titled Reading First was specifically designed to promote kindergarten through third grade instruction in each of the five areas endorsed by the report—that is, in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Reading First had a substantial influence on instruction despite the fact that the program had only marginal results. (Gamse, Jacobs, Horst, Bouley, & Unla, 2008). Only first graders improved in decoding ability, while second and third grade students did not improve in reading comprehension.

Basal reading programs responded to the Federal initiatives by updating their programs to reflect the new research priorities. They also changed their identity to become "core reading programs." The change in terminology was significant (Dewitz et al., 2010). Whereas *basal* means the base from which students begin reading instruction and then move into ever-wider ranges of literature, *core* conveys the idea that these published programs are *the* reading curriculum, encompassing the entirety of reading instruction. Core reading programs were marketed as being scientifically-based research programs after a number of states and one research lab certified the research