

The slide features a header with the 'OPPORTUNITY CULTURE' logo, which includes a red double-headed arrow and the text 'An Initiative of Public Impact'. Below the header, the title 'The Science of Reading' is displayed in a large teal font, followed by the subtitle 'Introduction: Understanding the Simple View of Reading' in a black font. The main content area is split: the left side is a solid teal rectangle containing the 'PUBLIC IMPACT' logo and a small URL, while the right side shows an illustration of five diverse professionals standing in a row. The footer contains the 'PUBLIC IMPACT' logo and a URL for copying or adapting the material.

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The Science of Reading

Introduction:
Understanding the Simple View of Reading

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Objective of this slide: Welcome

Facilitator says:


- Welcome to this training on the science of reading!
- We hope this tool will be a useful resource for you and your team as you deepen your knowledge of excellent reading instruction and pursue reading success with all of your students. This slide deck was designed by Public Impact and draws on the latest research in the science of reading. It and the companion Study & Action Guide slide deck aim to help multi-classroom leaders and teachers move to research-based instruction that helps more readers achieve at higher levels and become better readers.
- This does not include all research on reading. It focuses on the “simple view of reading”—the core reading skills that all beginning readers need to learn well.
- Future slide decks will address additional research for further enhancing students’ reading.

Literacy Challenges: What the Data Show


Kids who do not develop good word recognition skill in first grade begin to **dislike reading**.




They struggle to read **increasingly difficult texts** as they pass from grade to grade.





They **read less** than their classmates who are strong decoders.



They do not gain as much **vocabulary, background knowledge, and information** about texts.



Source: <https://www.pearson.com/learning-technologies/reading-worksheets/reading-comprehension/reading-comprehension-worksheets/reading-comprehension-worksheets-1>

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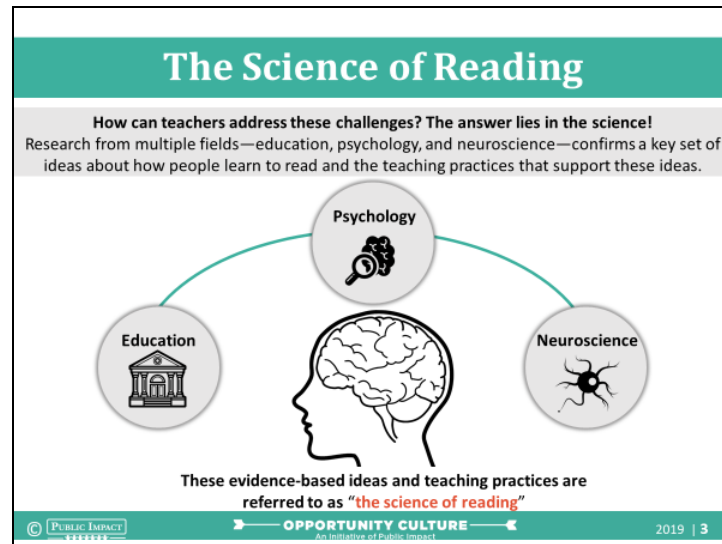
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Objective of this slide: To illustrate the critical importance of early literacy skill

Facilitator says:

- As teachers, we know many students who struggle with reading.
- We've also heard about the critical importance of early literacy skill for children's lives in both the short and long term. For example, a 2012 study found that third-graders who lack proficiency in reading are four times more likely to become high school dropouts.
- And, at some point, most of us have felt alone or unsure of what to do to support our readers.

Sources: Juel, 1988; adapted from <https://dyslexiaida.org/move-on-when-reading/>



Objective of this slide: Introduce the science of reading

Facilitator says:

- While the field of reading research can be difficult to navigate, scientists have now identified key components of early literacy skill that can go a long way in helping teachers build that skill and support children who are struggling to read.
- At this point, robust research from multiple intersecting fields including education, psychology, and neuroscience confirms a set of key ideas about the way people learn to read and how instruction can support that process.
- We can refer to those evidence-based ideas as “the science of reading.” Despite the research, this information and corresponding teaching practice is not always in schools. Alternative models not supported by hard research are prevalent in schools, but they hold many readers back.
- If you find yourself unsure of your own grounding in the science of reading, you are not alone.
- This slide deck and its companion study guide are designed to close any knowledge gaps you may have about this science and help you improve instruction immediately.

Thought Exercise: Learning to Read

What goes into a person's ability to comprehend written text?

Represent reading as a conceptual model: Draw a simple equation or recipe that ends in "reading comprehension."

Example: Jane's Reading Comprehension Recipe

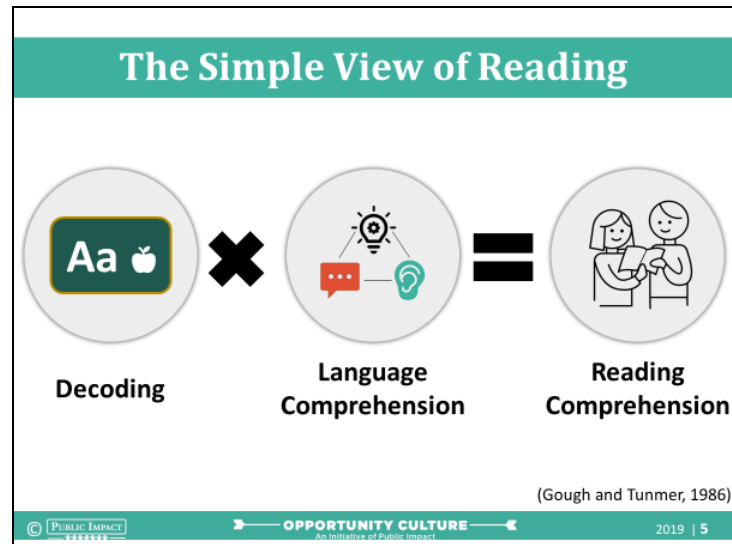
The diagram illustrates a recipe for reading comprehension. It features four ingredients in a row, each with a plus sign between them, followed by an equals sign and the final product. The ingredients are: Sight words (a blue bowl), Vocabulary (a white milk jug), Language (a box of sugar), and Phonics (a whisk). The final product is Reading Comprehension (a stack of books).

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Objective of this slide: To consider current conceptual understanding of what goes in to learning to read

Facilitator says:

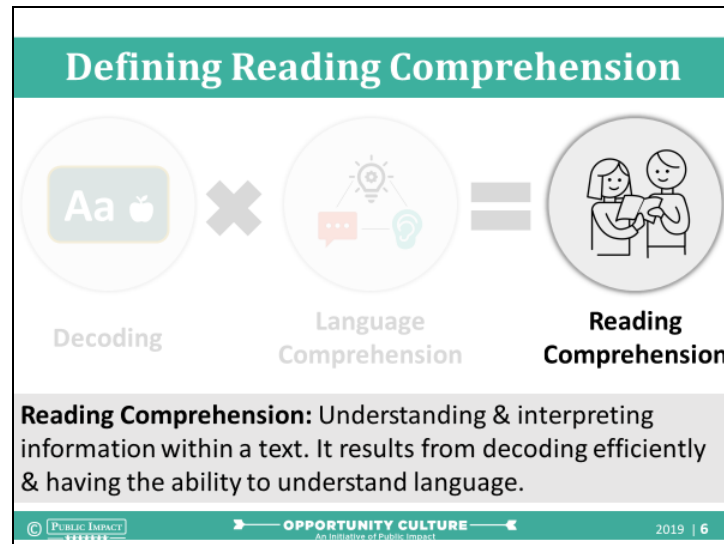
- Reading is a complex task. Depending on what you were taught in your teacher preparation courses, and the experiences you've had and learning you've done since, you most likely have a recipe for reading comprehension in your head.
- Take a moment to write down that recipe, or, if you prefer, to draw a quick model of what you think goes into developing a person's ability to comprehend written text. Label each part of your model as you go.



Objective of this slide: To introduce the simple view of reading, a research-based model of learning to read

Facilitator says:

- For many years now, researchers have developed different conceptual models of the way people learn to read and tested them with research studies.
- A great deal of evidence supports a simple equation as the most basic model of what it takes to read. Known as the “simple view of reading,” this shows us that reading comprehension is the product of two key skills: the ability to **decode written text** and the ability to **comprehend oral language**.
- Both decoding and language comprehension can be broken down into several component parts, with each being important for reading development. **These pieces are what really matter for early readers.** Every teacher should understand and know how to apply the simple view of reading to support students’ literacy development.

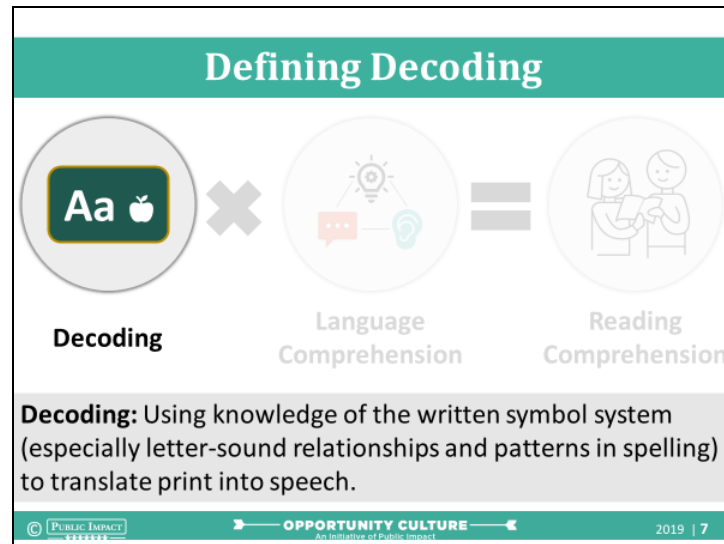


Objective of this slide: To establish a common understanding of reading comprehension in the simple view of reading

Facilitator says:

- Let's start with the end in mind. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand written language with purpose and meaning.
- Comprehension goes beyond just remembering words. It involves taking the words on a page and combining them with what you already know to grow knowledge of a subject, develop a meaningful interpretation of a story, or otherwise make sense of the text at hand. If a reader is weak in decoding or has difficulty understanding the language on the page, comprehension becomes very difficult.
- So what, exactly, is meant by decoding?

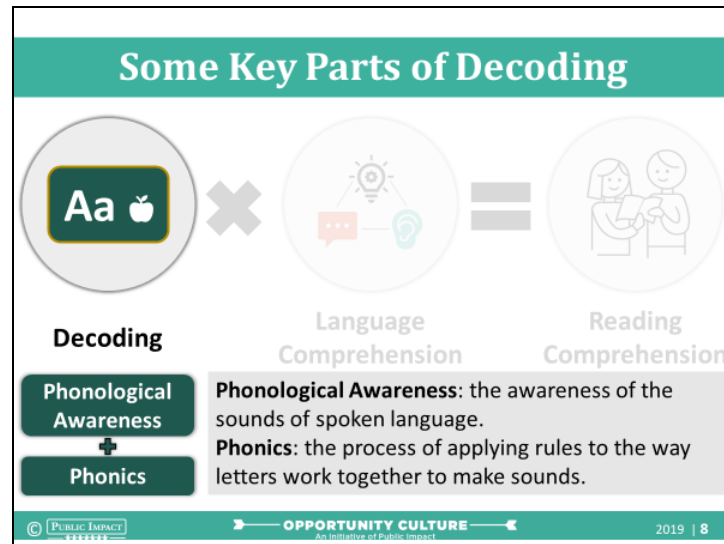
Adapted from: [ReadingUniverse.org](https://www.readinguniverse.org/)



Objective of this slide: To establish a common definition of decoding, especially within the simple view of reading

Facilitator says:

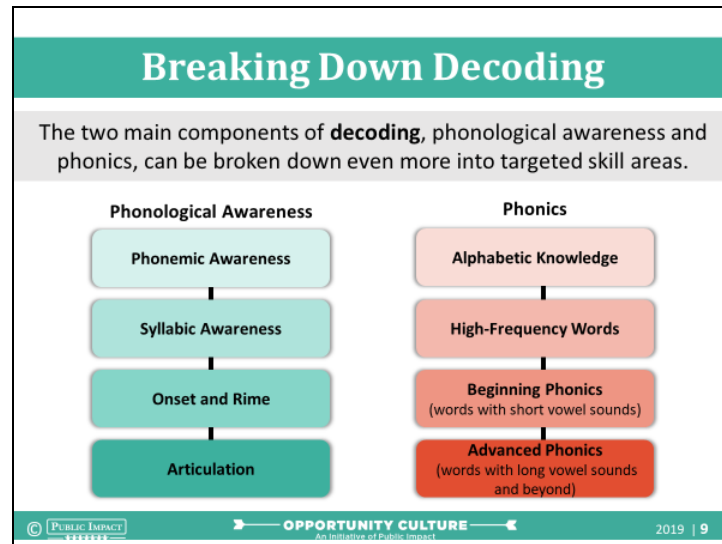
- Decoding is using your knowledge of letters and the sounds they make—alone and in combinations—to read, or translate, text into speech (either aloud or silently).
- For example, decoding is happening when early readers recognize that the letters c-a-t make the sounds |k|, |æt|, and |t|, and recognize that, in combination, this makes the word “cat.” Decoding is made up of a surprising number of component skills. We’ll go over just a few of them here, and then you may choose to follow up and learn more with resources in here and in the companion Study & Action Guide slide deck on [OpportunityCulture.org](https://www.opportunityculture.org).



Objective of this slide: To define two commonly misunderstood parts of decoding

Facilitator says:

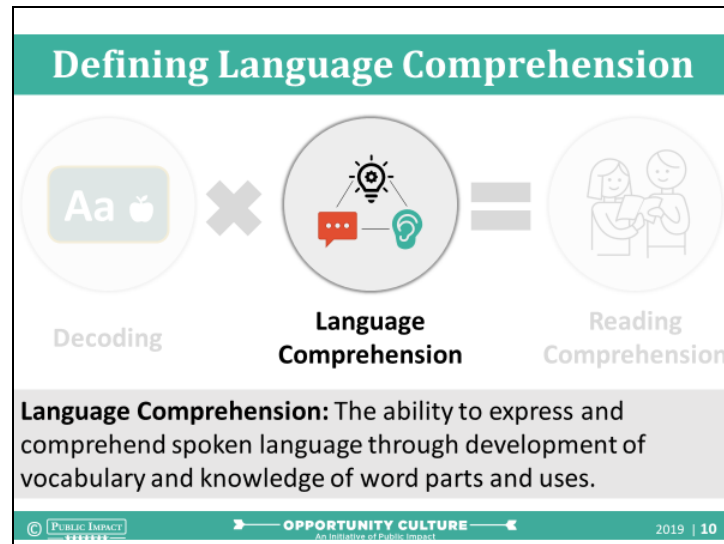
- Two components of decoding are phonological awareness and phonics.
- Phonological awareness, or awareness of the sounds of spoken language, is made up of all kinds of interesting parts that you might have thought about before. For example, when we build phonological awareness with early readers, we help them become aware that words are made up of parts called syllables. We might clap to help them identify the syllables and sounds in familiar words. Words can also be broken down into beginning sounds and ending sounds.
- Another part of phonological awareness is being able to identify these sounds, called onset and rime—the initial consonant followed by the vowel and remaining consonants (for example, the onset of the word "read" is the sound |r| and the rime is the sounds |eed|).
- Phonics is the process of applying rules or generalizations about the way letters work together to make sounds in the English language. Phonics typically refers to the teaching method for teaching decoding. There are many systematic and predictable ways that letters combine in English to make sounds. There are also many irregular ways! When we teach students to recognize the regular patterns and remember the irregular words, we teach them to decode.



Objective of this slide: To show that there are many component parts of decoding and to visualize how the simple view can help identify students' decoding strengths and weaknesses

Facilitator says:

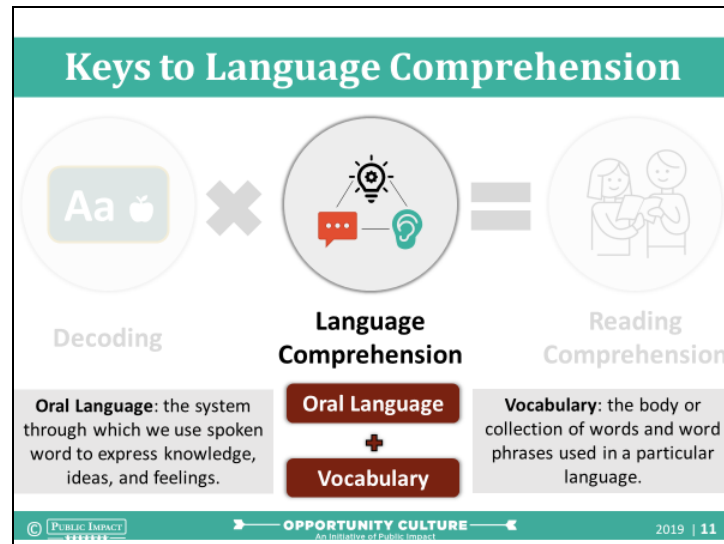
- The simple view of reading is helpful because it *is* so simple.
- The trick is that there are many levels of detail under each part of the equation. Fortunately, when we understand the simple view and its component parts, we can be much more precise in teaching students all of the pieces they need to know in order to become strong decoders.
- In addition, when we have knowledge of the parts of the simple view, we can identify students' strengths and weaknesses much more accurately. For instance, we might find that a struggling second-grade reader has strong phonological awareness but needs more practice with reading high-frequency, irregular words. This knowledge is critical for designing targeted interventions in areas where students really need them.
- The study & action guide provides you with help to improve each of these component parts of decoding in your instruction.



Objective of this slide: To establish a common understanding of language comprehension, especially within the simple view of reading

Facilitator says:

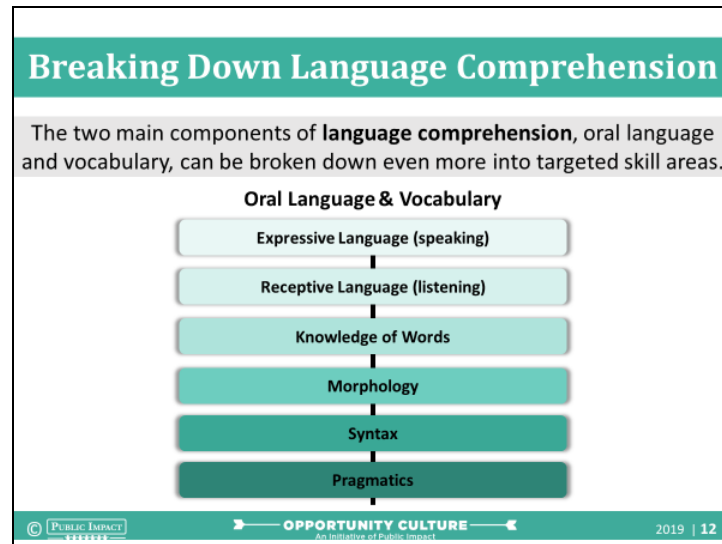
- Language comprehension is the ability to understand and express words and language. It's what you're doing basically any time you listen to someone talking or speak to others.
- The simple view of reading helps us understand that when readers decode the sounds of a word on a page and put it together into one full word, they then match that word to a word they know from spoken language, and voilà, they have read the word.
- For instance, a beginning reader might see the letters c, a, and t and identify the corresponding sounds as |k|, |æt|, and |t|. The reader combines the sounds together to pronounce the word "cat" and recognizes that they have just said the word for the furry animal that says "meow."



Objective of this slide: To define two component parts of language comprehension

Facilitator says:

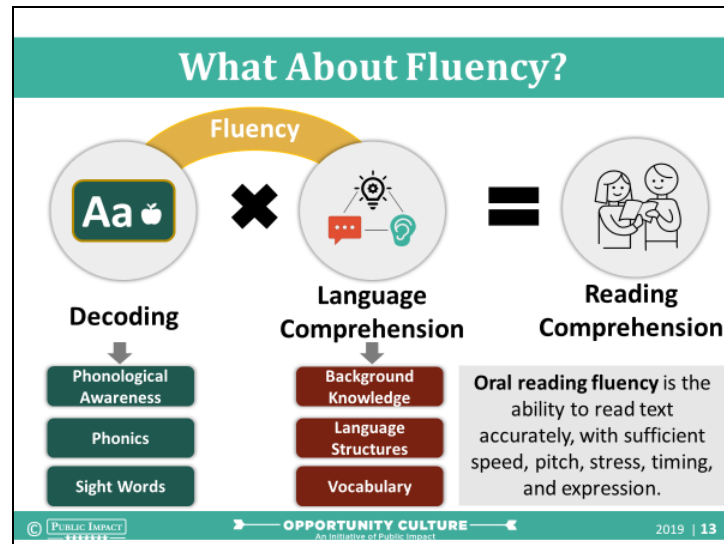
- Just like decoding, language comprehension has many parts, including oral language comprehension, or the ability to understand spoken language, and knowledge of vocabulary.
- Teachers can develop students' language comprehension through vocabulary instruction, read-alouds, and guided reading.



Objective of this slide: To show the many component parts of language comprehension and to visualize

Facilitator says:

- As with decoding, there are many levels of detail under language comprehension. Once again, the simple view helps us understand the importance of components for early reading development.
- When we have knowledge of the parts of language comprehension, we can identify students' strengths and weaknesses and respond with targeted interventions in areas where students really need them
- The study & action guide provides you with help to improve these component parts of language comprehension in your instruction.



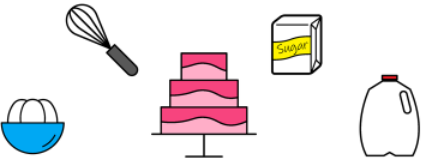
Objective of this slide: To explain the role that fluency plays in this equation

Facilitator says:

- Fluency is like the speed limit of reading—you don't want to go too far under the speed limit because you won't get anywhere, and you don't want to go too far over it because you'll have an accident. We want readers to become quick and automatic with their reading, but not too quick.
- Meaning can break down if readers read too slowly—they are not decoding words proficiently enough to make meaning out of what they read. Meaning can also break down if readers read too quickly—they read too fast to create meaning out of the words. Fluent reading is just right—it is accurate, automatic, and paced such that the reader can make meaning as she reads.
- We define fluency as the ability to read text accurately, with sufficient speed, prosody—that is, expressive reading through pitch, stress, and timing—and expression. Fluency is an essential component of reading because it permits the reader to focus on constructing meaning from the text rather than decoding words.
- Originally, fluency was not identified as a part of the simple view of reading, but we now know that reading at a just-right pace, or reading fluently, helps readers combine decoding and language comprehension skills to understand text.
- As readers become more proficient decoders and learn more and more vocabulary, their reading, either aloud or silent, becomes more automatic, and this contributes to fluency.
- The study & action guide provides you with help to improve the components of students' fluency in your instruction.

Making a Skilled Reader

Remember Jane's reading recipe?
Just as her ingredients made a cake, all the elements within
the simple view of reading come together
to make a skilled reader.



Each Element is Critical to Success

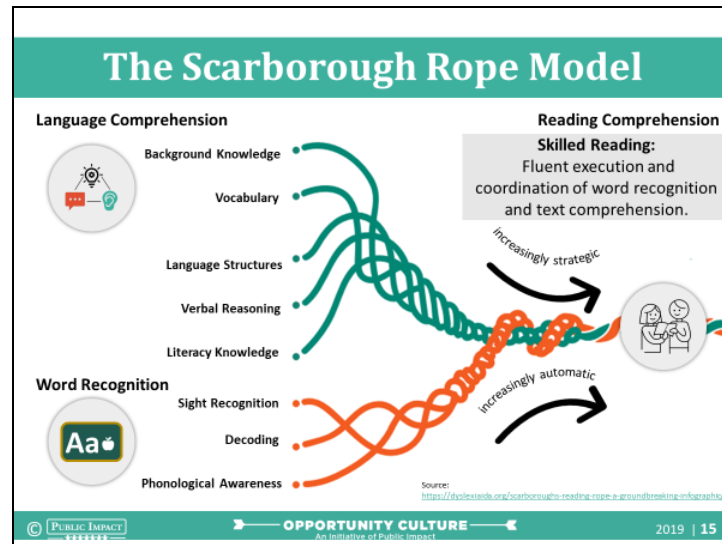
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Objective of this slide: To introduce a reading model that builds on the simple view of reading.

Facilitator says:

- Often, when people hear about the simple view of reading, they are confused because, as skilled readers, they don't think about all of the pieces of decoding or language comprehension as they read. In fact, they don't think about reading as they do it at all. They just read!
- For skilled readers, reading is like Jane's cake—we don't think about each individual egg or every turn of the whisk that went into it. We simply enjoy the cake.
- A second model of reading helps to represent how all of the components of the simple view come together to create skilled reading.



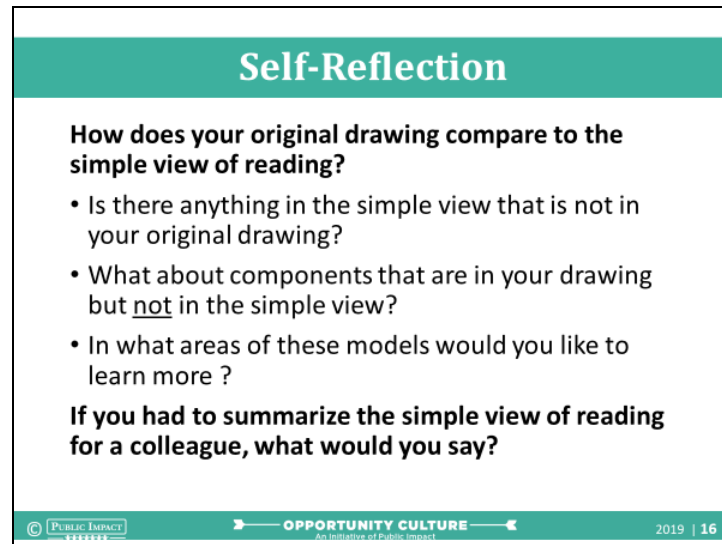
Objective of this slide: To introduce the Scarborough Rope Model, which shows how all of the distinct components contained within the Simple View of Reading come together as one increasingly automatic and strategic skill: reading

Facilitator says:

- Dr. Hollis Scarborough originally created the graphic of the "Reading Rope" to help parents understand the complexities of learning how to read.
- The rope has the same components as the simple view of reading, although they are organized slightly differently.
- The upper language comprehension strand weaves together with the lower, word recognition strand to produce a skilled reader.
- As you can imagine, this does not happen overnight; it requires skilled teaching and practice over time.
- The Scarborough Rope Model can help educators think about how the strands of reading skill interact with and boost one another. Without any strand, the rope is weaker. By strengthening each strand deliberately, teachers can help more readers become strategic and automatic readers.

Adapted from:

<https://dyslexiaida.org/scarboroughs-reading-rope-a-groundbreaking-infographic/>

A presentation slide titled "Self-Reflection" with a teal header. The main content is in black text on a white background, asking for a comparison between an original drawing and a simple view of reading, followed by three bullet points. The footer is a teal bar with logos and the year 2019 | 16.

Self-Reflection

How does your original drawing compare to the simple view of reading?

- Is there anything in the simple view that is not in your original drawing?
- What about components that are in your drawing but not in the simple view?
- In what areas of these models would you like to learn more ?

If you had to summarize the simple view of reading for a colleague, what would you say?


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Objective of this slide: To provide users with time to compare their models/recipes with the two models just introduced: the Simple View of Reading and the Scarborough Rope Model


Facilitator says:

- Take five minutes to think about these questions and jot down responses.
- If you are in a session with others, spend five minutes discussing your responses with your neighbor.
- Next we will examine some reading myths. Adhering to these myths will hold some readers back, even if you also introduce the science of reading.

Myths and Misconceptions #1





Learning to read is a natural process.



Learning to understand *spoken language*: a natural process.
Learning to *read*: requires skilled, systematic teaching.

Source: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

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Objective of this slide: To address reading myths

Facilitator says:


- It has been argued that children will learn to read if they are simply exposed to a environment rich with text, stories read aloud, and opportunities to explore books.
- While text-rich environments provide a valuable backdrop for learning to read (and make things fun, too!) most children will not learn to read by exposure alone like they do with oral language. Some will, but most will not read as well as they could, and many will remain at low levels of literacy.
- If reading were natural, we would not have to worry so much about how to teach it well.
- Teaching all children to read requires skilled teaching from focused and artful teachers who understand the science of reading.

Adapted from: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

Myths and Misconceptions #2





Children develop phonemic awareness by learning to read rather than the other way around.



Overwhelming evidence indicates that phonemic awareness is a key building block of early reading.

Source: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

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Objective of this slide: To address reading myths

Facilitator says:


- Some people have hypothesized that it is not beneficial to teach children phonemic awareness. They claim that phonemic awareness is a byproduct of learning to read rather than the other way around. Others believe that teaching phonemic awareness is unnatural or boring for students.
- The research evidence does not support this view. Phonemic awareness is a necessary prerequisite for decoding. Children’s phonemic awareness in early elementary school is one of the best predictors for later reading success. We can’t afford not to teach it well, because otherwise some students will not become readers.
- And phonemic awareness can be taught in a variety of engaging ways. See the study and action guide slide deck of this series for a tool with links to many resources for fun and engaging ways to teach phonemic awareness.

Adapted from: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

Myths and Misconceptions #3





Skilled reading requires using syntactic and semantic cues to guess words; good readers make many mistakes as they read text.



Good readers rely heavily on the information contained within words themselves (letter/word cues) to read words quickly and automatically. Context is used only to grasp word meaning.

Source: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

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Objective of this slide: To address reading myths

Facilitator says:


- Many reading educators (including very dedicated ones!) hold the belief that good readers use context clues to guess words in text rather than decoding them. In other words, the myth is that good readers read by making predictions about what the next right word will be based on context clues.
- In fact, many research studies have shown that this is not how skilled reading works. Good readers depend on the information in the word itself (phonics) rather than context clues to quickly and automatically **identify the word's sounds**.
- This is distinct from the "context clues" skills that we teach children later in their reading careers—using the context around an unknown word to determine **its meaning**. For example, a child could come across the word "vessel" in a text. He could use decoding skills to pronounce the word aloud, but he might not know the meaning. In this case, he might use the context, perhaps information about pouring liquid into something, to determine that a vessel is a hollow container that holds liquid.

Adapted from: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

Myths and Misconceptions #4





A “balanced” literacy curriculum is ideal for teaching children to read.



The majority of children need systematic phonics instruction to establish early decoding skills and ongoing, skilled, and multifaceted teaching to continue to develop as readers.

Source: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

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Objective of this slide: To address reading myths

Facilitator says:

- This is only a half-misconception. The importance of early phonemic awareness and decoding skills (that is, the simple view of reading) is clear.
- Many other instructional strategies support early readers' curiosity about books and reading and their knowledge of different types of texts. But without systematic instruction in the foundational skills identified in the simple view of reading, research shows that children will not develop as well as fluent and accurate readers.

Adapted from: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>

Key Contrasts	
Balanced Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasis on use of context clues for word recognition• Phonics instruction sometimes confined to whole group or through mini-lessons in guided reading• Skills instruction organized around leveled text or trade books• Assessment sometimes limited to informal reading inventory without a clear picture of early literacy skills gaps	Structured Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Normed and criterion-referenced assessments used to identify specific skills gaps• Phonics instruction follows a logical scope and sequence• Systematic, sequential, explicit phonics instruction using synthesis (combining single letter sounds)• Direct instruction for mastery of the code while supporting vocabulary and comprehension through read-alouds and guided reading <p><i>Source: The Barksdale Reading Institute</i></p>

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Objective of this slide: To show the contrast between balanced and structured literacy



Facilitator says:

- You might ask, what could be so bad about balance? The trouble is that, in some cases, the term has come to mean an approach to teaching reading that does not adequately address the skills that really matter for early readers (or that does not address them in a systematic way).
- Unfortunately, as practiced, balanced literacy often leaves gaps in students' ability to decode and understand texts. Remember the Scarborough Rope? The rope is weaker, leaving readers behind, when any strand is weak.
- Instead, systematic, sequential, explicit teaching of the reading skills included in the simple view of reading gives readers the foundation to understand increasingly complex texts.

Early Readers Need Literacy Instruction That Is...

- **Systematic**→ following a daily routine (for example, built into a lesson plan aligned to the simple view of reading)
- **Sequential**→ with logical and developmental progression (for example, short vowels before vowel blends);
- **Explicit**→ naming and modeling skills for students (for example, “now we will sort words ending in -tion”); and
- **Cumulative**→ building on concepts and skills previously learned, moving from simple to complex

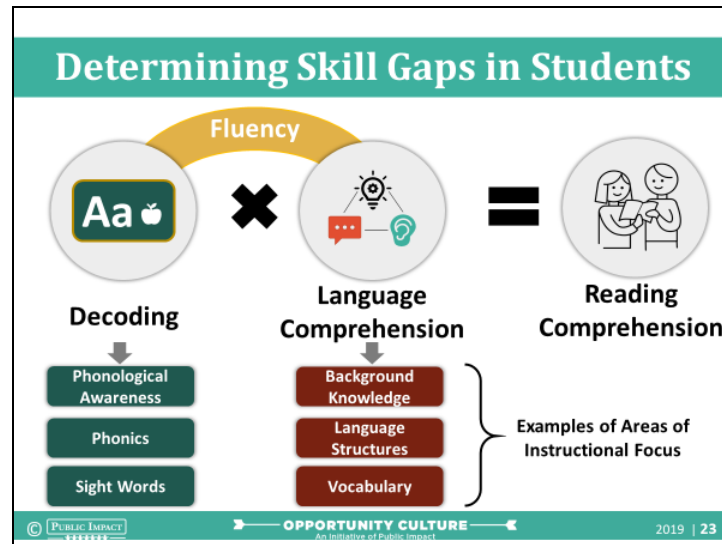
Source: [ReadingUniverse.org](https://www.readinguniverse.org)

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Objective of this slide: Review the elements of literacy instruction

Facilitator says:

- These elements of literacy instruction come from the Barksdale Reading Institute, an excellent source.
- Literacy instruction that follows these principles enables more students to read well over the long term. The study & action guide that is a companion to this deck provides a resource organized around these principles to help you improve reading instruction fast.



Objective of this slide: To demonstrate how an understanding of the Simple View of Reading and the way it is broken down into component parts can help teachers identify areas of instructional focus.

Facilitator says:

- So, what's next?
- Both of these models—the Simple View and the Reading Rope—can help teachers identify areas of instructional focus with their students.
- When we know and understand the components of skilled reading, we can identify areas of strength and growth for students.
- We hope that you are inspired to learn more and make a plan to ensure that your students receive reading instruction based in the science of reading! Turn now to the Science of Reading: Study & Action Guide slide deck available at [OpportunityCulture.org](https://www.opportunityculture.org) for a tool you can use to deepen your knowledge and improve your team's instruction fast.

1

Sources

- The Simple View of Reading:
Gough, P. B., & Tunmer, W. E. (1986). Decoding, reading, and reading disability. *Remedial and special education*, 7(1), 6-10.
- International Reading Association Literacy Glossary:
<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/literacy-glossary>
- Scarborough's Reading Rope:
Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy* (pp. 97-110). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
(Also appears at: <https://dyslexiaida.org/scarboroughs-reading-rope-a-groundbreaking-infographic/>)
- Ten Myths about Learning to Read:
<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/ten-myths-about-learning-read>
- Barksdale Reading Institute: <https://msreads.org/>

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