

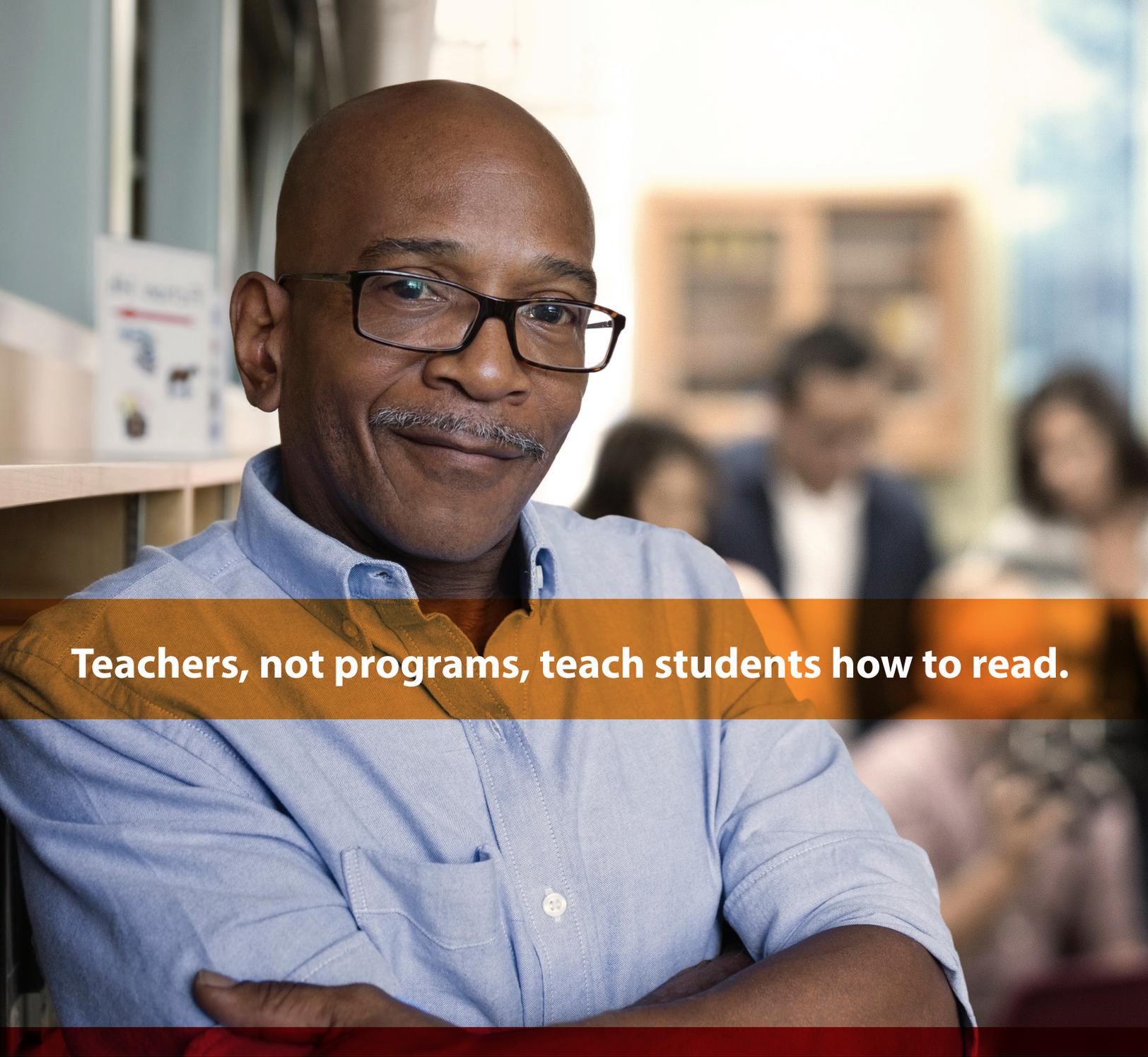


Language Essentials for Teachers  
of Reading and Spelling

Professional Development

Ever get the feeling  
your PD is **missing**  
something?





**Teachers, not programs, teach students how to read.**

Champion Change with **LETRS**<sup>®</sup> in your district



COMPREHENSIVE



FLEXIBLE



RESEARCH BASED



RELEVANT

# Your Professional development is Missing Five Essential Components

## Teachers Matter

When educators at Hilldale Elementary School in Oklahoma began the professional development program **LETRS**® (*Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling*), Principal Price Brown immediately realized, “This

by every reader. Teaching reading should be based on scientific research applied to the classroom, and tailored to individuals. Without a deep understanding of the science behind how we learn to read, why we spell the way we do, or how phoneme awareness



# You're Right.

is something that our teachers are missing, and I don't mean just our teachers. I'm talking teachers everywhere.”

Teachers matter more to student success than any other aspect of schooling. They, not programs, teach students how to read. Yet a study of most teaching institutions found only 29 percent actually prepare teachers with all five essential components of literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.\* Coincidentally, another national study found **63 percent of U.S. fourth-grade students are not proficient readers.**\*\*

## Learning to Read Is Complex

Reading requires multiple parts of the brain learning to work together. Visual symbols must be connected with language. For example, the letter b represents the sound /b/, which, in turn, distinguishes *bat* from *pat*. Brain pathways connecting speech with print must be built

and phonics lead to comprehension, teachers are left feeling ill-prepared—like riding a bike without wheels.

## LETRS Closes the Gap in Teacher Training

“Going through **LETRS**, you sit there, moment-by-moment, thinking, ‘I should have known this,’” said Ebony Lee, Ph.D., director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, Clayton County Public Schools, Georgia. “It’s the tool to change lives and change communities.”

In Ohio, where Niles City Schools implemented **LETRS**, students reading at or above average increased from 53 percent to 89 percent within one school year.†

With **LETRS**, decades of research translates best practice into everyday classroom success, including a systematic approach to building oral and written language to improve reading instruction overall.

\*National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), 2013

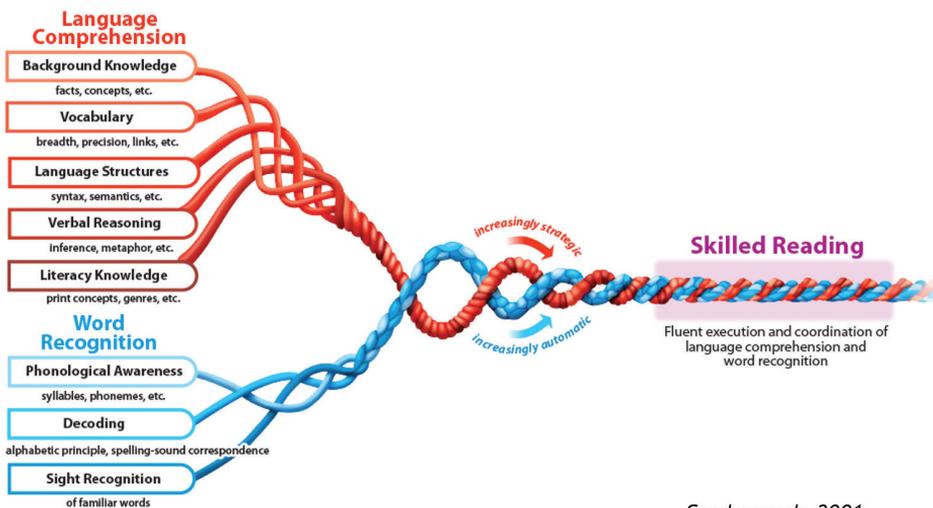
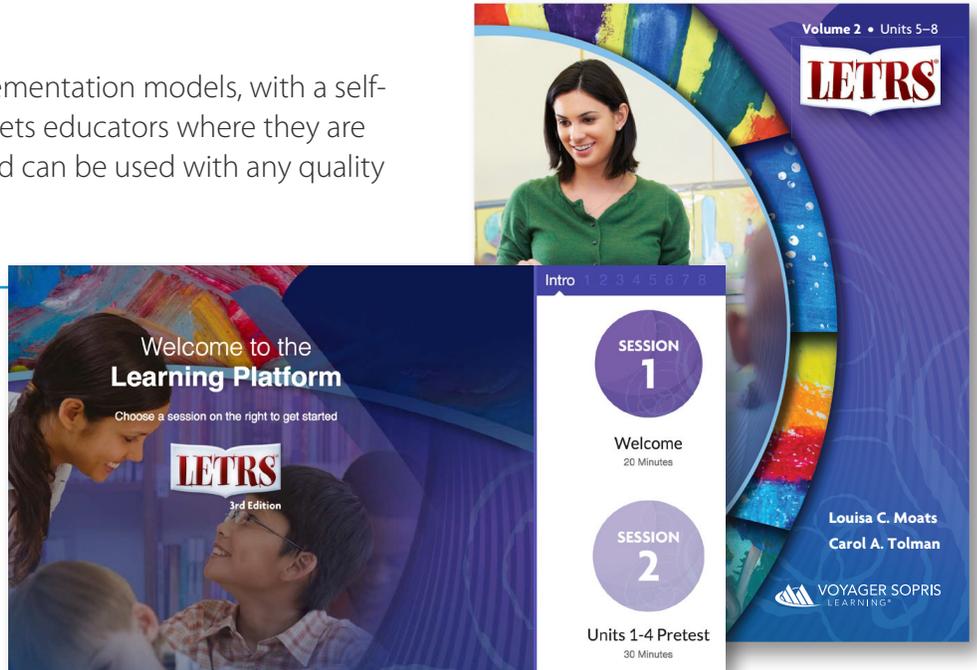
\*\*2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report  
tgo.voyagersopris.com/lettrs-niles-oh

# What Makes **LETRS** Unique

**LETRS**® is a professional development course that bridges deep, meaningful research into practical classroom success. **LETRS** provides educators with the background, depth of knowledge, and tools to teach language and literacy skills to every student. **LETRS** can be used regardless of the literacy program in use.

## Flexible

Flexible purchase, delivery, and implementation models, with a self-paced online component. **LETRS** meets educators where they are in terms of resources and options, and can be used with any quality literacy program in use.



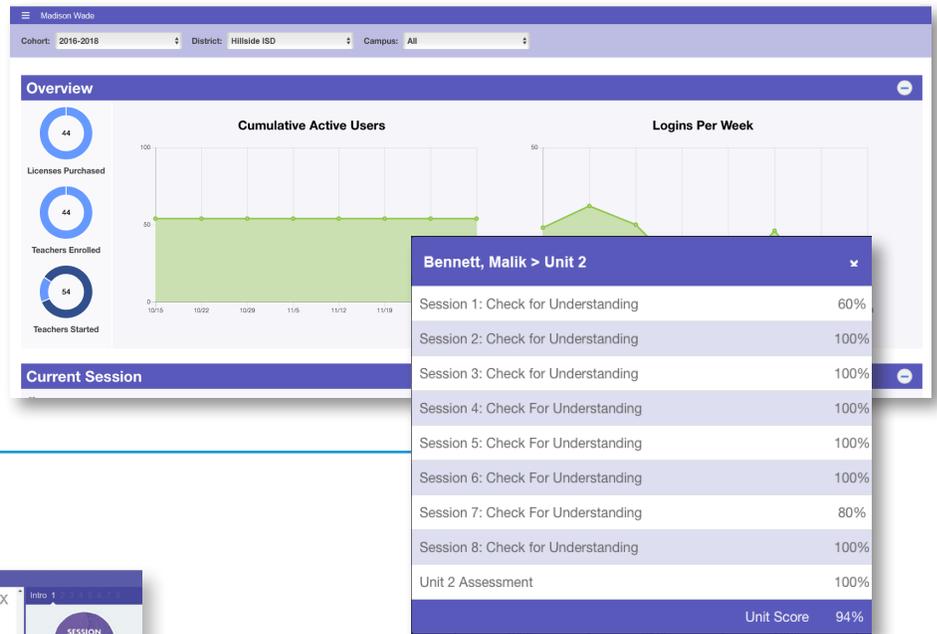
Scarborough, 2001

## Based on Strong Research with a Focus on Language

**LETRS** has more than a decade of demonstrated success in schools and districts across the U.S., and fills the gaps in language structure and language development that were not taught in teacher preparation courses.

## Detailed Reporting for Accountability\*\*

**LETRS** gives participants and administrators the ability to measure participation and knowledge gains.



The interface includes instructions for the 'Bridge to Practice: Oral Language Development' exercise, a 'Journal' section for reflection, and a 'Portfolio' section for analysis. A video player shows a woman speaking about 'Oral Language and Literacy'.

## Integrated Bridge to Practice Exercises\*\*

The exercises within **LETRS** are designed to bolster transference of knowledge to classroom practice.

## Embedded Video Modeling of Instruction\*\*

Embedded video demonstrates how to deliver effective instruction that teachers understand how to apply concepts to classroom practice.

The interface shows a video of a teacher interacting with students in a classroom. Below the video is a journal entry section for 'Exercising the Context Processor' with reflection questions.

\*\*Only available through the online platform.

# LETRS Fills in the Gaps in Teacher Preparation

Professional learning that comes from **LETRS** is relevant and applicable regardless of the literacy programs already in use within your state/district/school. **LETRS** is designed to be the cornerstone of a multi-year, systemic literacy improvement initiative and is backed by more than 30 years of research and more than a decade of proven success.



## COMPREHENSIVE

Provides a depth and richness of content that is beyond any other literacy PD solution on the market—covering all essential components of reading, language, spelling, and writing.



## FLEXIBLE

Presents comprehensive and consistent content in flexible implementation and delivery models to best meet the needs of your schedule and staff.



## RESEARCH BASED

Leverages decades of research including the latest neuroscience that reveals how we learn and teach reading. Educators learn to identify the source of the struggle and how to teach more effectively based on science.



## RELEVANT

Translates decades of scientific research and best practice into everyday classroom success in a way that is most relevant and empowering to educators.

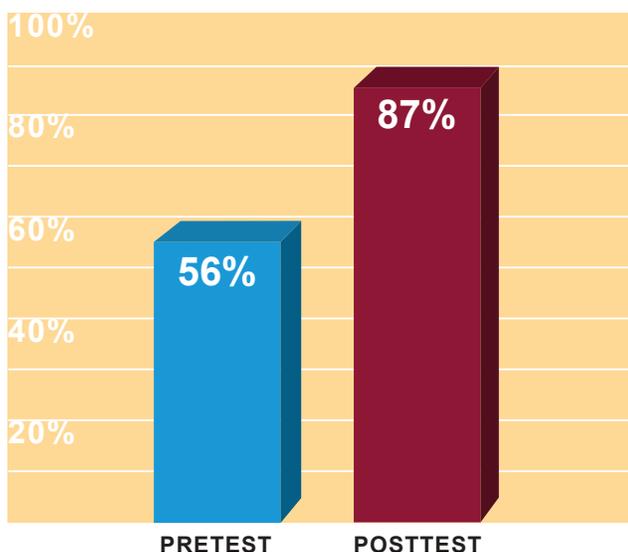
# Results

When regular education and intervention teachers learn and apply the information contained in **LETRS**, such substantive professional development has been shown to have powerful beneficial effects on student learning, such as:

- An increase in overall achievement levels and fewer students experiencing reading difficulties
- Effective teachers who are more content and whose sense of efficacy and empowerment will replace burn out and low expectations

## In Ohio

In Ohio, where Niles City Schools implemented **LETRS**, students reading at or above average increased from 56 percent to 87 percent within one school year.



## In Mississippi

Recent results have shown that **LETRS** completion in Mississippi has been associated with improvement in teacher knowledge and classroom practices. The Literacy-Based Promotion Act has yielded meaningful statewide gains on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for the students of Mississippi. **LETRS** has been their professional development piece for K–3 teachers since 2014.

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) at the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) conducted an independent study on Mississippi teacher behaviors in 2015. While **LETRS** was not the focus of the study, the report indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in knowledge of teaching early literacy skills between teachers who had been through **LETRS** training and those who had not. This positive change was evident in all four domains studied: teacher knowledge of early literacy skills, student engagement, quality of instruction, and teaching competencies.

Study Citation: Folsom, J. S., Smith, K. G., Burk, K., & Oakley, N. (2017). *Educator outcomes associated with implementation of Mississippi's K–3 early literacy professional development initiative*. Retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED573545.pdf>

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*“Going through LETRS, you sit there, moment-by-moment, thinking, ‘I should have known this. It’s the tool to change lives and change communities.’”*

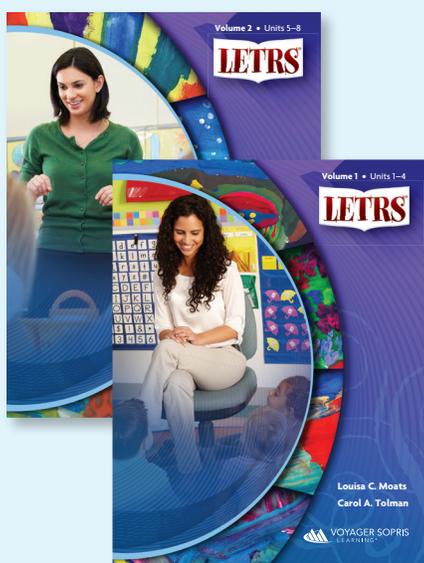
—Ebony Lee, Ph.D.  
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment  
Clayton County Public Schools, Georgia

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# Teachers matter more to student achievement than any other aspect of schooling

Teachers need professional development that provides deeper knowledge, skills, and practice to successfully address reading difficulties. Educators benefit from:

- Understanding the content and methodology of research-based, explicit, structured literacy instruction
- Deep knowledge of the cognitive and language factors that shape student learning, and of pedagogical detail
- Information on how to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students



## UNITS

**LETRS** units address each essential component of reading instruction and the foundational concepts that link each component.

### Units 1–4

Theoretical models from reading science; phonology, basic and advanced phonics; screening and educational diagnostic assessment

### Units 5–8

Teaching vocabulary, language and reading comprehension, and writing

### Unit 1 The Challenge of Learning to Read

- Why reading is difficult
- The connection between language and literacy
- What the brain does when a person is reading
- The skills that support proficient reading
- How children learn to read and spell
- Major types of reading difficulties
- How to use assessment for prevention and early intervention
- Using assessment to differentiate instruction

### Unit 2 The Speech Sounds of English

- Phonology related to reading and spelling
- How phonological skills develop
- The importance of phonemic awareness
- The consonant and vowel phonemes of the English language
- Recognize and respond to errors of English Learners and dialect speakers
- Recognize how allophonic variation in speech affects students' spelling
- How phonological skills should be taught, and which ones should be assessed

### Unit 3 Teaching Beginning Phonics, Word Recognition, and Spelling

- The role of the strands of the Reading Rope in word recognition
- The role of phonics in reading instruction
- Compare code-emphasis instruction with meaning-emphasis instruction
- Explore phoneme-grapheme correspondence system of English
- Classify phonics elements
- Understand some basic patterns of position-based spelling in English
- Instruction sequence: letter names and letter formation; key word for sound-symbol associations; teach correspondences explicitly; use sound-blending routines
- Word practice and word meaning routines
- How to teach spelling using dictation
- Decodable text and when it is important to use
- Using data to further student success

### Unit 4 Advanced Decoding, Spelling, and Word Recognition

- Advanced word study
- Position-based spelling correspondences and other orthographic conventions
- Phoneme-grapheme mapping
- The six syllable types and how they should be taught
- Distinguish syllables from morphemes
- Suffix rules
- Spelling screeners and how to interpret the results
- Best practices for teaching spelling
- Relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension
- Building word, sentence, and passage reading fluency
- Interpret phonological, phonics, spelling and fluency data
- Aligning practices with scientific evidence

### Unit 5 The Mighty Word: Oral Language and Vocabulary

- The relationship among vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, oral language proficiency, and reading comprehension
- Mental map of a well-known word
- Words that should be taught directly
- Introducing new words
- Effective practice of new words
- Creating a language-rich classroom

### Unit 6 Digging for Meaning: Understanding Reading Comprehension

- The language and cognitive skills that support reading comprehension
- Distinguish comprehension products from comprehension processes
- The goal of comprehension instruction is to create a coherent mental model of the text
- Characteristics of students who struggle with language and reading comprehension
- The connection among vocabulary, background knowledge, and reading comprehension
- Process for teaching texts
- The importance of syntax and how to teach it
- The importance of text coherence and its relationship to mental coherence
- How text structure affects comprehension

### Unit 7 Text-Driven Comprehension Instruction

- The balance of foundational skills with language comprehension
- Which comprehension strategies are supported by research
- Effective strategies during and after reading
- Student generated questions before, during, and after reading
- The importance of generating questions that deepen understanding of text
- Reread and revisit text for various purposes
- The process for planning an entire reading comprehension lesson
- Adapting instruction or special populations

### Unit 8 The Reading-Writing Connection

- Writing is important because it benefits reading
- Understand the foundational and language skills necessary for writing
- The phases of the writing process
- Letter formation and handwriting fluency
- Explicit instruction for spelling
- How students gain competence in building sentences
- Narrative writing development
- Informational and opinion writing development
- Methods for assessing student progress in writing

## Respected Authorship

### **Dr. Louisa C. Moats**

Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., is a nationally recognized authority on literacy education and is acclaimed as a researcher, speaker, consultant, and trainer. Dr. Moats received her doctorate in reading and human development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is widely published on reading instruction, the professional development of teachers, and the relationship between language, reading, and spelling. Dr. Moats' awards include the prestigious Samuel T. and June L. Orton award from the International Dyslexia Association for outstanding contributions to the field, and the Eminent Researcher Award from Learning Difficulties Australia.



### **Dr. Carol A. Tolman**

Carol A. Tolman, Ed.D., has a doctorate in educational psychology and has been a consultant at the state, district, and school levels for more than 15 years. Dr. Tolman also has more than 25 years of experience in public schools and the juvenile justice system. In addition to spearheading many successful, long-term literacy initiatives, Dr. Tolman organized and delivered curriculum for the Massachusetts Licensure Program and conducted a four-year project for the Maryland Department of Education supporting literacy knowledge for professors.



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*"Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure. While programs are very helpful tools, programs don't teach, teachers do."*

—Dr. Louisa C. Moats

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**Full biographies of all LETRS authors can be viewed online:**

[www.letrslink.com](http://www.letrslink.com)

# LETRS empowers teachers to understand the science behind why students struggle

LETRS empowers teachers to understand the *what, why, and how* of scientifically based reading instruction.

- **What** must be taught during reading and spelling lessons to obtain the best results for students
- **How** to explain spoken and written English language structures to students
- **Why** reading instructions have several key components and how they are related to one another, based on current scientific research
- **How** to interpret individual differences in student achievement, based on valid and reliable assessments and theoretical models
- **How** to implement instructional routines, activities, and approaches and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students



## Delivery Options

LETRS is offered in flexible delivery options to meet the specific needs of customers. We work with you early in the process to identify the delivery models and supports that produce the most impactful result.



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Face-to-Face Workshops



Print Participant Book

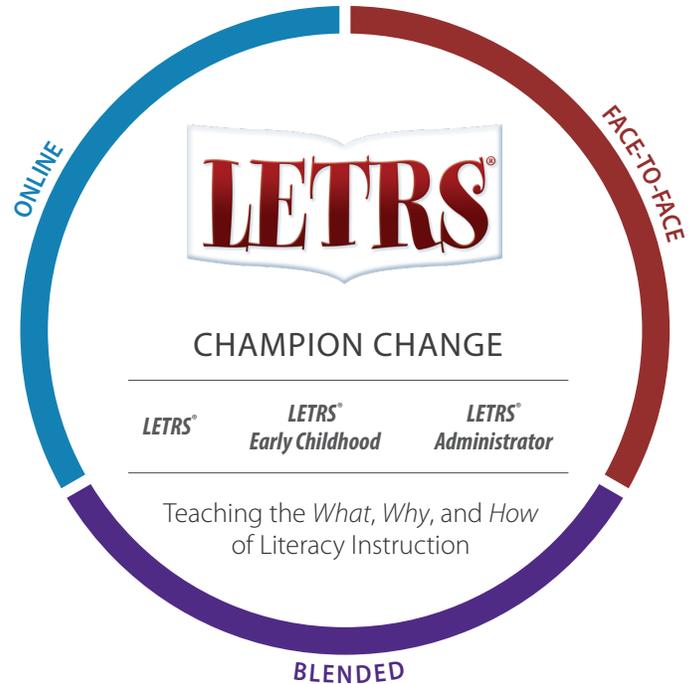


Face-to-Face Workshops

# The **LETRS** Family of Products

## The **LETRS** family of products helps literacy educators:

- Distinguish between the research base for best practices and other competing ideas not supported by scientific evidence
- Understand how language, reading, and writing are related to one another
- Make instructional decisions and program choices with reference to scientific research evidence, strategic use of assessments, and observations of students
- Deliver comprehensive, integrated, language, and literacy instruction as defined by standards and by research for a given grade, age, or ability level



*"Thank you for providing the most valuable training I've received in my entire educational career. I now have the knowledge, backed by research, to support my teachers as they create reading success for all students."*

**—Gary Robinson, Principal, Indiana**





## for Early Childhood Educators

### More Than the ABCs

The more children know about language and literacy before they begin formal schooling, the better equipped they are to succeed in reading.

**LETRS® for Early Childhood Educators** provides vital, applicable information about the foundational skills young children need before learning to read and write.

**LETRS** professional development for early childhood teachers:

- Empowers teachers to understand the *what, why, and how* of early literacy instruction
- Aligns with the recommendations of the 2008 National Early Literacy Panel on Developing Early Literacy
- Helps educators build deep understanding of oral language, phonological processing, and print knowledge
- Includes targeted practices



### For additional details, visit:

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-leters/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-leters/overview)



## for Administrators

Administrators can be the catalyst for facilitating change and implementing strong literacy instruction.

**LETRS® for Administrators** is a course of study that helps literacy leaders learn how to:

- Create highly efficient methods of analyzing student data
- Establish highly effective instructional blocks in literacy
- Examine resources for all tiers of instruction

Administrators are provided specific steps for facilitating change, developing a comprehensive assessment plan, managing resources, assembling a school leadership team, and making data-based decisions.



### For additional details, visit:

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/overview)

## What Educators Say About **LETRS**

According to Dr. Louisa C. Moats, research shows 95 percent of first-grader students can be taught to read, and much reading failure can be prevented if instruction builds the critical underlying language skills on which reading depends. “Teaching reading is complex and challenging, and most teachers benefit enormously from learning what we teach in **LETRS**.” Districts that have trained their teachers using **LETRS** say their teachers exit the course of study with the background and depth of knowledge to teach language and literacy skills to every student.



*“Overwhelmingly our fourth-grade teachers are telling us how the kids are coming out of third grade knowing so much more now than before we had **LETRS**. On a professional development level, things are clicking, and the results have been incredible.”*

—Alana Cohen  
District Curriculum Specialist  
Rapides Parish, Louisiana

*“**LETRS** allowed us to use a common curriculum, and that allowed for the use of common practices. We were able to see gaps in teaching and resources, evaluate what to keep and what to get rid of, and re-evaluate the use of pull-out vs. push-in for Title I services. It gave us the springboard to change our instructional practices.”*

—Ann Marie Thigpen  
Superintendent of Niles City Schools, Ohio

*“Going through the process, the one question we had to answer was, ‘Do our teachers really understand the reading process?’ For us, **LETRS** was the missing piece, especially with the shift in education where so many teachers are coming from nontraditional backgrounds to teach. It’s imperative to us—teachers need to know how students learn to read to be able to effectively teach reading.”*

—Kimberly Bennett  
Executive Assistant Superintendent  
Rapides Parish, Louisiana

*“The **LETRS** course is equipping Alabama’s preK–third-grade teachers with background knowledge about the science of reading, in order to fully support literacy instruction and provide individualized support for students who struggle with learning to read. The initial feedback has been extremely positive from **LETRS** participants and we hope to expand this opportunity.”*

—Barbara Cooper, Ph.D.  
Director of Strategic Initiatives  
and Family Engagement  
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education



# LITERACY SYMPOSIUM

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

Literacy educators from preK to higher education interested in improving student success in reading and writing.

- Teachers
- Instructional Coaches
- Administrators
- Curriculum Directors
- Professional Development



### LEARN MORE:

[voyagersopris.com/  
literacy-symposium](http://voyagersopris.com/literacy-symposium)

*A dynamic learning event for you and your staff*

## Register today for our annual Literacy Symposium

**LETRS** principles and concepts will be covered in this two-day event

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**July 8–9, 2019**

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### **Improve literacy instruction with our two-day online professional development event.**

**Literacy Symposium** is a premier professional development event, linking practitioners with the most current research in the science of literacy. Through recordings from the **Literacy Symposium**, educators can explore the relationships among language, reading, and writing and connect theory to practice in sessions conducted by leading experts in the field of literacy education. Inspired teachers lead to inspired learners.

### **Led by Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., and Carol A. Tolman, Ed.D.**

Both Dr. Moats and Dr. Tolman have spent their careers identifying and investigating the causes and remedies for reading failure. Dr. Moats is the former site director of the NICHD Early Interventions Project in Washington, D.C. Dr. Moats and Dr. Tolman are the lead authors of the new **LETRS® Elementary** professional development series.

Educators who participate in the Literacy Symposium receive a Certificate of Completion that may be submitted for continuing education credits.





## Are you ready to Champion Change?

**LETRS** is the only course of study to address the five essential components of effective reading instruction in a flexible delivery model, allowing educators to bridge research-based professional development into classroom success.

**Learn more and contact us  
for a demonstration today!**

**800-547-6747 or visit  
[voyagersopris.com/letrs](http://voyagersopris.com/letrs)**

