



*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**® 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 realized, “This is something

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 and phonics lead to



You’re Right.

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

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

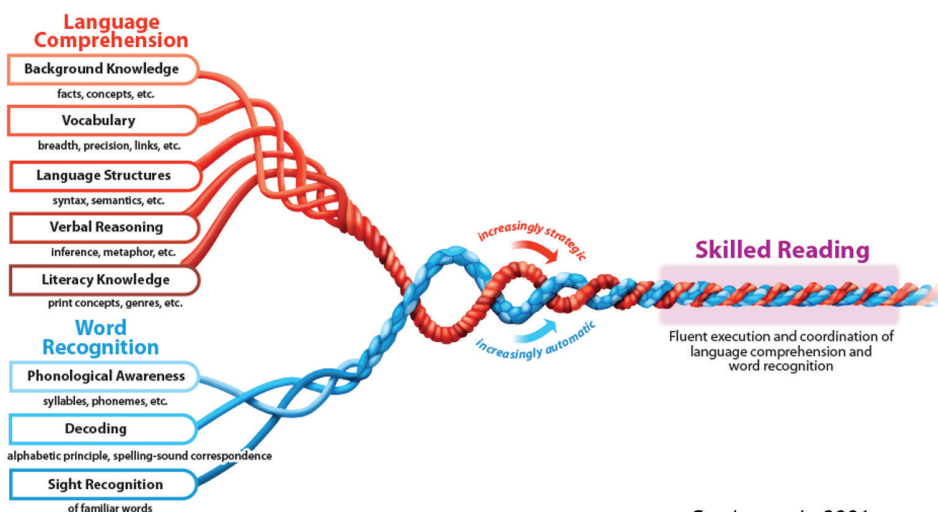
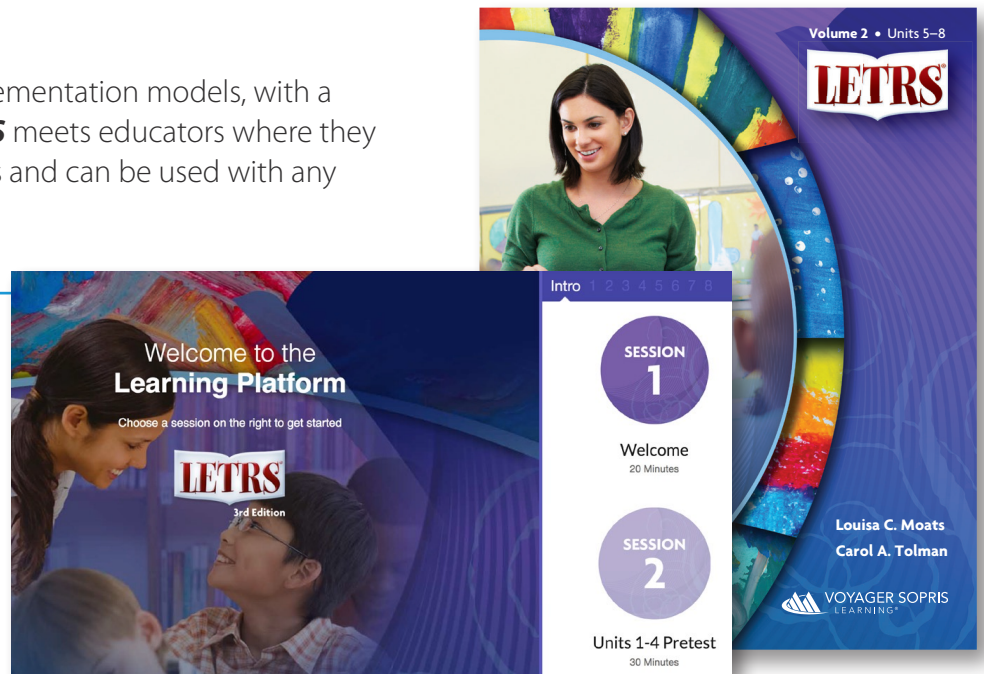
†go.voyagersopris.com/leters-niles-oh

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.



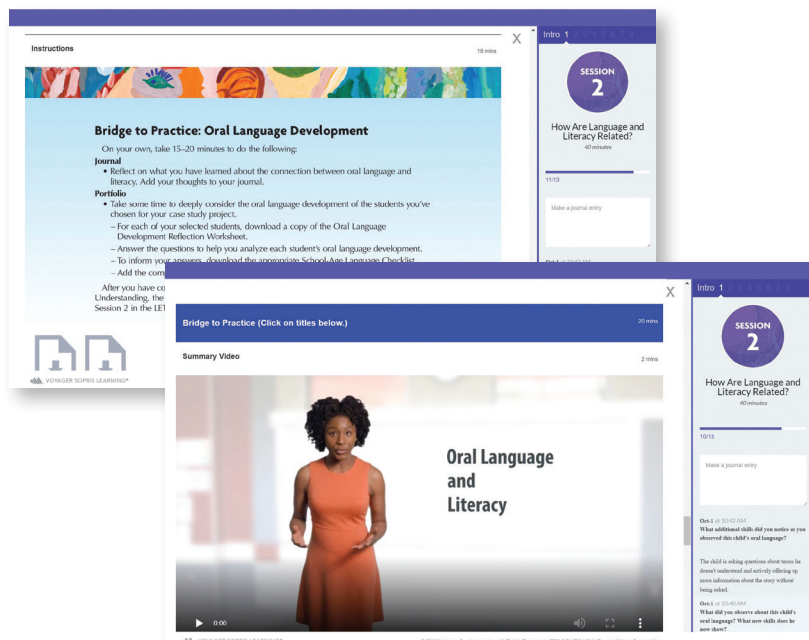
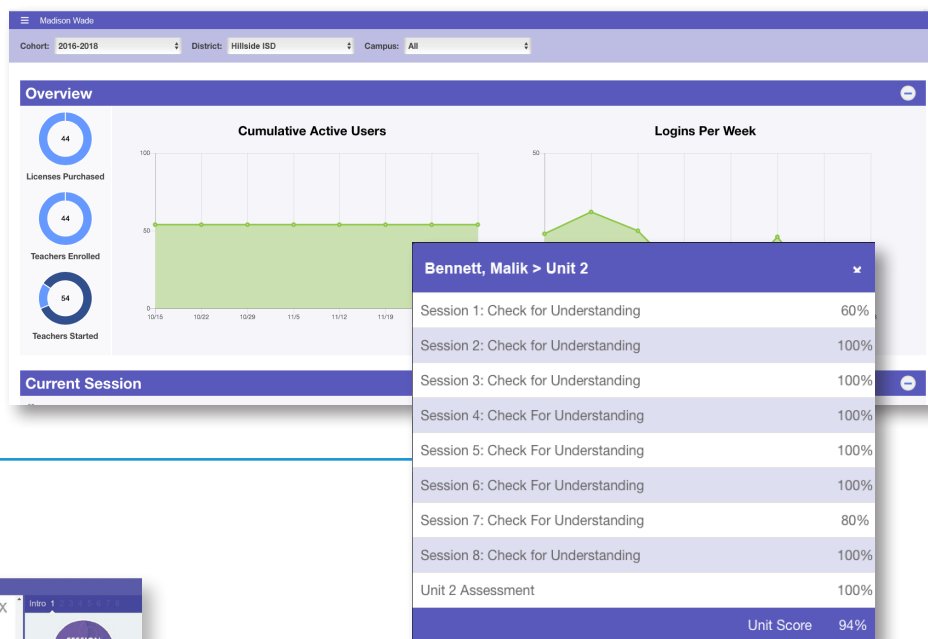
Scarborough, 2001

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.

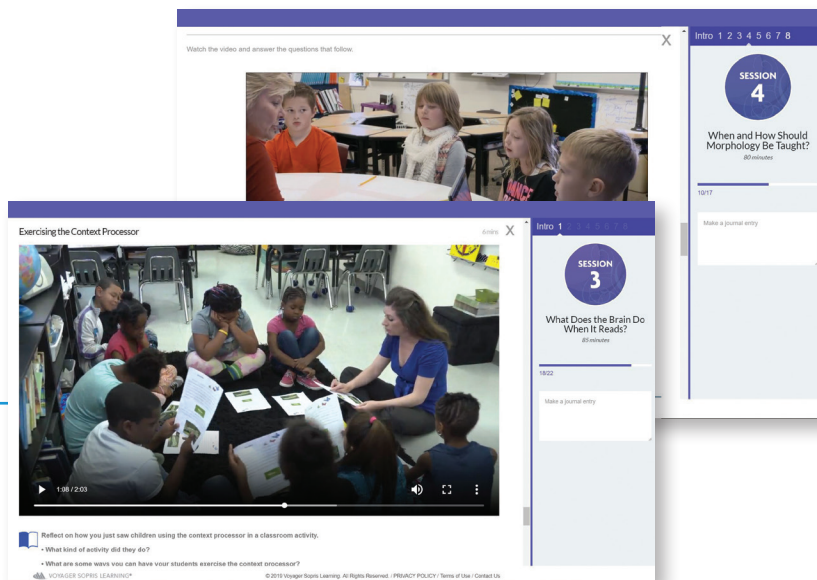


Integrated Bridge to Practice Exercises**

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

Embedded Video Modeling of Instruction**

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



**Only available through the online platform.

LETRS Fills 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 multiyear, 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 reading difficulties 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

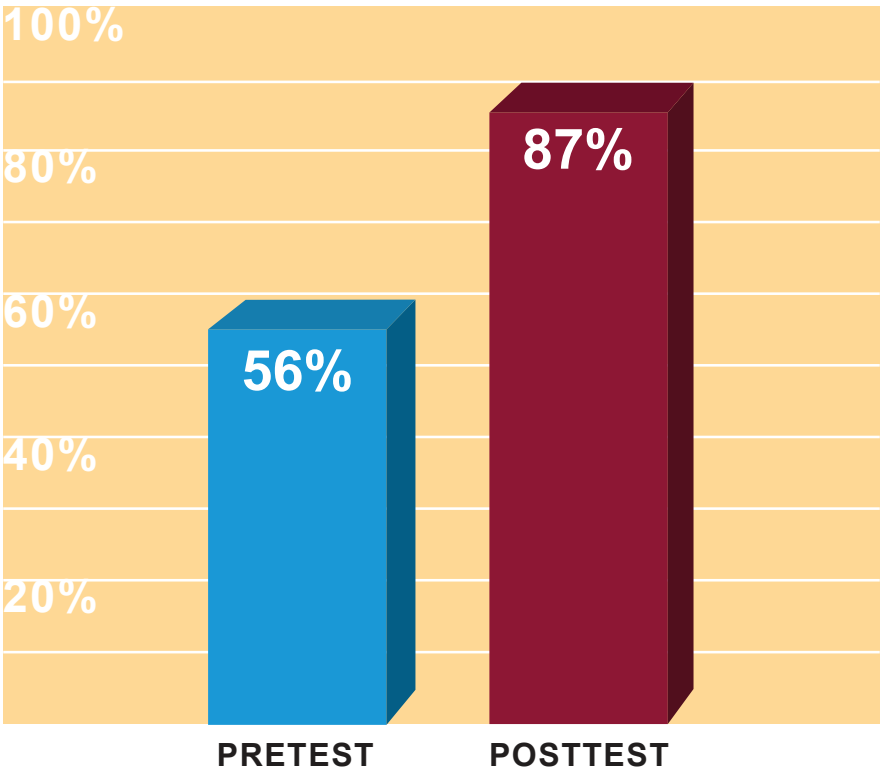
When general education and intervention teachers learn and apply the information contained in **LETRS**, such substantive professional development has been shown to have powerful beneficial effects on student learning, including:

- 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 burnout and low expectations

In Ohio

In Ohio, where Niles City Schools implemented **LETRS**, the district's K-3 students reading at or above average increased from 56 percent to 87 percent within one school year.

In just one year, student literacy success at NCS improved dramatically, according to the district's universal screening measure, **DIBELS® Next (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills Next)**, also a Voyager Sopris Learning® product.



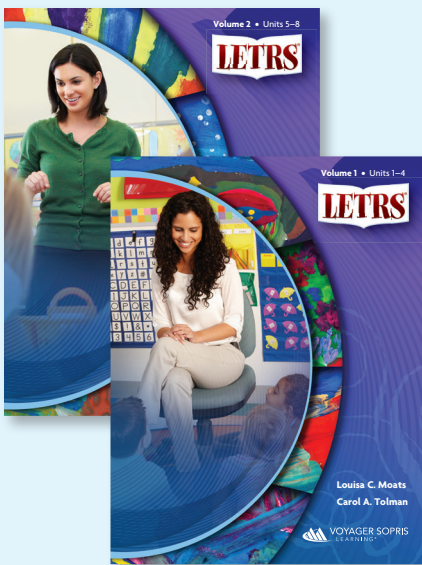
*“Going through **LETRS**, you sit there, moment-by-moment, thinking, ‘I should have known this.’ It’s the tool to change lives and change communities.”*

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

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 about 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, including dyslexia
- 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. Moats also received the Benita Blachman award from the Reading League.



Dr. Carol A. Tolman

Carol A. Tolman, Ed.D., has presented **LETRS** hundreds of times, in all states, and districts, as Voyager Sopris Learning's lead trainer of trainers. With unparalleled talent as a teacher of teachers and enabler of school change, 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.

"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



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

leterslink.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

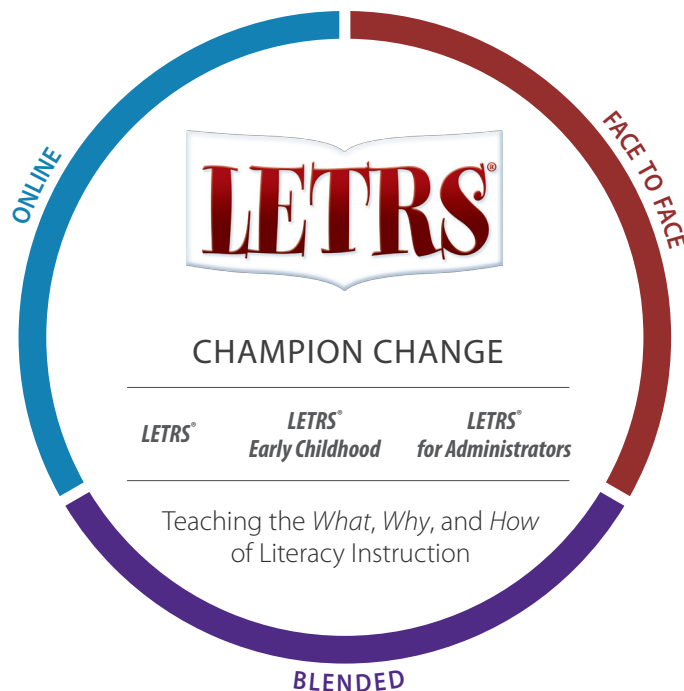


Face-to-Face Workshops

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
- Facilitate early identification and intervention with reading problems, including dyslexia



"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



for Administrators

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

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

What Educators Say About **LETRS**

According to Dr. Louisa C. Moats, research shows 95 percent of first-grade 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**.” District administrators 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 to 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 virtual Literacy Symposium

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

July 8–9, 2019

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.

A host of dynamic literacy experts present on timely topics. Past presenters have included Jack Fletcher, Mark Seidenberg, David Kilpatrick, Hugh Catts, David Share, Kate Cain, Julie Washington, Pat Vadasy, and Jan Hasbrouck.





Are you ready to Champion Change?

LETRS is the most comprehensive and effective 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.**

