

The elements of early reading

background knowledge	have broad background knowledge—facts, concepts, causal relationships, etc—of the sort authors will assume you share	how could heavy snowfall lead to a flood?
vocabulary	know a wide range of word meanings (<i>breadth</i>), each connected to a web of other word meanings (<i>depth</i>); additionally, know word-part meanings such as the 'pre' in 'preview' (<i>morphology</i>)	say as many words as you can that mean the same as big
language structure	extract ideas from sentences using syntax, vocabulary, figures of speech, and background knowledge	why is this funny: <i>I've had a wonderful evening but this wasn't it?</i> (Groucho Marx)
verbal reasoning	make connections between ideas across sentences (eg, inferencing), creating a web of ideas for a passage (<i>textbase</i>)	why is this funny: <i>Did you get a haircut? No, I got all of them cut</i>
literacy knowledge	build a big-picture model of the situation described in a text (<i>situation model</i>) and use it across texts	three turtles rested on a floating log; a fish swam beneath it; were the turtles above the fish?
phonological awareness	know that spoken words are made up of sounds or phonemes (<i>phonemic awareness</i>)	what are the sounds in 'ship'?
decoding	know this spelling stands for that sound (<i>the alphabetic principle</i>)	say the most common sound for: <i>s, d, ee, ch</i>
sight recognition	read words by blending sounds and, increasingly, automatically on sight (<i>sight recognition</i>)	say these words: <i>bat, late, though, eye</i>

