

TODAY'S NEWS

A Commitment to Excellence!

How We Learn to Read

The reading scores of American children have remained somewhat stagnant for over 40 years. Over the last three years in which we have received scores from the state assessments, 61% of Ohio's 3rd, 4th and 5th graders have scored proficient in reading. As a district, 70% of Northern Local students have scored proficient in reading over those same three years. Although we have preformed above the state average, we have a personal commitment to excellence that drives us to keep improving. Northern Local aims to deliver the best instructional practices and utilize evidence based curriculum. These early years of learning lay the foundation for successful readers.

Decades of research have determined that reading occurs in a specific way in the brain of all people. Reading does not occur naturally the way that speech does. The reading process must be taught. It is a process of building neural-pathways in the brain that link sounds of speech to written symbols or letters. The strings of letters are attached to meaning and those 'letter strings with meaning' are stored in the brain's "letterbox" for later retrieval that is instantaneous and effortless. This process is called orthographic mapping and it is our goal to help our students build a giant 'letterbox' of instantly retrievable words. That ability to retrieve information translates into fluent reading and subsequent comprehension.

The staff at Northern Local has been diligently reading, researching and learning about the science of reading and how we can improve daily literacy instruction. We are excited to put



The Science of Reading

"The body of work referred to as the "science of reading" is not an ideology, a philosophy, a political agenda, a one-size-fits-all approach, a program of instruction, nor a specific component of instruction. It is the emerging consensus from many related disciplines, based on literally thousands of studies, supported by hundreds of millions of research dollars, conducted across the world in many languages. These studies have revealed a great deal about how we learn to read, what goes wrong when students don't learn, and what kind of instruction is most likely to work the best for the most students."

-Dr Louisa Moats



all of that hard work into practice this school year! As a parent you will notice this shift as well. We will have less focus on specific reading levels and benchmarking assessments. There will be more attention on specific skills like building a strong understanding of phonemes, graphemes, and language comprehension. Our goal, district wide, is to maximize our instructional time.

What is not changing is our dedication to doing the very best for all of our students and helping them become great readers. As always, your child's teacher and principal are here to help. If you have any questions please reach out!

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The Simple View of Reading



(Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Hoover & Gough, 1990)



Key Terms:

These are some key terms that you may hear from your child or their teacher when talking about reading.

- **Decoding** - The ability to apply sound-symbol relationships to read words.
- **Language Comprehension** - The ability to understand spoken language.
- **Reading Comprehension** - The ability to understand written language.
- **Structured Literacy** - A systematic, explicit instructional approach to all parts of reading.
- **Phonemic Awareness** - The understanding that a word is made up of a series of discrete sounds.
- **Phoneme** - The individual sounds that make up words.
- **Grapheme** - A symbol that represents a phoneme.