

Glossary of Reading Terms

A

academic language the distinct type of English used in classrooms. Academic language functions that are characteristic of classrooms in general may include seeking information, informing, analyzing, comparing, classifying, predicting, hypothesizing, justifying, persuading, solving problems, synthesizing, and evaluating.

accountability the linking of student test outcomes directly to the actions of schools and teachers.

acronym a word formed from the first letter of words in a phrase.

activating prior knowledge calling on facts, experiences, and associations already familiar to students so they can more easily grasp new material.

active learning a term describing various teaching models in which students are directly engaged in the learning process and take responsibility for their own progress, becoming more likely to recall information and apply it in different contexts.

active reading a process that students utilize to understand text material by integrating the new information into the networks of students' experiences and prior knowledge.

advanced phonics instruction that focuses on understanding the meaning and pronunciation of multisyllable words through students' prior knowledge of word parts.

affix a prefix or a suffix that changes the meaning or function of a base word or root word.

alignment or **aligned materials** textbooks, activities, and other student materials that are based on a specific set of standards and skills in a curriculum with the assumption that official tests will be based on that instruction.

alliteration the repetition of the first sounds in two or more adjacent words or syllables.

alphabetic principle a system of letter-sound associations, with each phoneme corresponding to a distinct letter or letter combination.

analogy an activity for vocabulary development in which a pair of comparisons are linked to show how they are similar, and related, in some way: *Eggs are to omelet as lettuce is to salad.*

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analytic phonics a type of deductive phonics instruction that emphasizes phonic generalizations drawn from known words; students are taught to read particular words and then these words are used as analogies to help pronounce other words with the same phonic elements or patterns.

articulation the way sounds are made in the placement and position of the tongue, the shape of the mouth and lips, and the way air flows through the mouth as sounds are made.

assessment gathering data by means of one or more methods so as to measure and evaluate the learning and performance of students and teachers.

assessment, alternative assessment that recognizes and evaluates student abilities in ways other than standardized tests, such as performance assessment, constructed-response items, or portfolios.

assessment, authentic performance assessment that is not contrived or artificial and that may involve students' choice of projects to demonstrate their actual proficiency or knowledge.

assessment, diagnostic assessment that includes tools designed to, before instruction, determine and diagnose each student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Understanding the current performance of each student allows the teacher to differentiate curriculum and instruction to meet each student's unique needs.

assessment, formal assessment that uses standardized tests or other proven controlled methods in order to acquire data. The tests adhere to a precise framework for conducting and scoring. Data is usually presented as percentiles, standard scores, or stanines.

assessment, formative assessment that provides the teacher with information about student thinking. Formative assessments, or checking for understanding, are given during the course of the lesson and guide the teacher in making instructional decisions or adjustments as necessary, such as reteaching, trying different instructional approaches, or offering additional opportunities for practice.

assessment, informal assessment that evaluates and recognizes student abilities through observation, teacher-made tests, running records, portfolios, or any means other than standardized tests.

assessment, summative assessment that is comprehensive in nature. As such, summative assessments provide accountability and are used to check the level of learning at the end of a lesson or unit of study. Summative assessments are also used for grading and/or progress reports.

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assimilated/absorbed prefixes prefixes whose form is altered. When a prefix is connected to a root or base word, the last letter and sound of the prefix can change to make the word easier to pronounce. For example, in the word *correspond*, the letter *n* in the prefix *con-* (meaning *with*) becomes an *r* when joined with the base word *respond*.

auditory discrimination being able to differentiate phonemes and words, especially when comparing two similar words with only one sound changed.

automaticity reading with understanding and without conscious attention to decoding; fluency.

B

background knowledge that which has been learned or experienced previously by a student and can be called upon when reading new text.

base word a word to which prefixes and suffixes are added; for example, in the word *replace*, the prefix *re-* is joined with the base word *place*. *See also* **root words**.

benchmark a specific standard by which a performance can be measured and evaluated.

bilingual education instructional programs using two languages, generally a native language of the students and a second (or additional) language. The amount of time that each language is used depends on the type of bilingual program, its goals, and students' level of language proficiency.

blending saying a word aloud by combining all the sounds that the letters stand for.

Bloom's taxonomy a classification of educational objectives or learning domains that addresses the level of abstraction of test questions and thus frequently shapes the focus of teachers' instruction. Developed by Benjamin Bloom and other researchers at the University of Chicago, this taxonomy correlates competencies with demonstrated skills and may be the source of the term *higher-order thinking*.

book club an informal grouping of readers who discuss and write about the same book.

C

choral reading reciting or reading aloud in a group or in pairs, often used for a presentation or to increase oral fluency.

chunking the process of grouping or rearranging smaller units of text (words, phrases) into larger, more meaningful ones.

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classroom management the way in which a teacher organizes the classroom so that students may be working productively throughout the day. Classroom management involves the teacher setting up procedures and routines—for example, students know to rotate to another center when they hear a signal—and explaining them to students. This initial training encourages students to be responsible for their own actions and learning and allows them to work purposefully and independently at times, such as when the teacher meets with small groups.

cloze procedures methods of assessing and measuring whether a student is able to supply missing parts of an oral or written message from context, as seen in the DRP (Degrees of Reading Power) tests.

coaching a form of professional development that involves a teacher colleague working with peers, often in one-to-one situations, to help improve the academic and/or behavioral achievement of students. Coaching may involve demonstrating an instructional technique, watching a teacher deliver a lesson and then providing feedback, collaborative planning, or presenting information in a more traditional workshop format.

cognates similar words in different languages derived from the same root. For example, the words in English *responsibility* and *continue* share the same Latin root as the Spanish words *responsibilidad* and *continuar*, respectively. Teachers assist students by relating English words to their cognates in other Latin-based languages such as Spanish.

cognitive engagement a motivated state of being mentally and emotionally involved with an activity so that the student is not easily distracted or impeded from completing the task.

cognitive learning the mental acts involved in learning and reasoning, such as identifying, recalling, interpreting, and judging facts and ideas.

compound word a word composed of two or more other words; usually, both words receive equal stress; e.g., *cupcake*.

comprehensible input techniques teachers use to make language understandable for English learners so that they can comprehend new concepts and information. These techniques may include modifying the language used with the student, presenting language in a meaningful context, and using repetition and paraphrasing as necessary.

comprehension skill a tool that helps students interpret and explain the various levels of meaning found in what they are reading. Comprehension skills include identifying main idea and details, identifying the author's purpose, understanding cause and effect relationships, making inferences, and comparing and contrasting similar and different ideas, objects, events, and characters within a text.

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comprehension strategy a thorough and concrete approach to the reading process that leads to the understanding of text. Comprehension strategies can be focused on one at a time or in combination, and can be divided into three categories:

Before Reading: access prior knowledge, preview text and any text features, predict, set purposes for reading.

During Reading: monitor and clarify comprehension, ask questions, visualize, adjust purposes and/or predictions; and make connections within the text as well as between the text and personal experience/previous knowledge.

After Reading: summarize text, retell the story, confirm predictions, evaluate, connect and compare across texts.

concepts of print the idea that print must be ordered and arranged systematically to communicate meaning effectively.

conditional knowledge knowledge about “when and where” to do something. For example, in reading comprehension, conditional knowledge refers to where and when to use a particular strategy like finding the main idea, visualizing, or predicting. Conditional knowledge provides information about at what time and under what conditions knowledge should or can be used.

connected text words in print that are part of a larger structural and meaningful whole, such as in a sentence or a paragraph, as differentiated from a list.

consonant 1. a voiced sound made by partly or fully blocking the air as it passes through the vocal tract. **2.** the letter or letters that stand for a consonant sound (e.g., in the English alphabet, *b, c, d, f, g*, and so on).

consonant blend two or more consonants that when written together in a word do not lose their inherent sounds but rather blend or meld their sounds together in the spoken word (e.g., *spl* in *splash* and *gr* in *graph*).

consonant digraph two consonants that when written together stand for one consonant sound (e.g., *sh* in *splash* and *ph* in *graph*).

consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) the pattern of consonants and vowels that form the short vowel, closed syllable pattern—for example, *cat, mop, and sit*.

constructed response an answer given by a student, usually in the form of a written short essay, in response to an open-ended test question designed to measure comprehension or other skills.

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constructive feedback specific guidance to address strengths and weaknesses that a teacher provides to students while actively engaging students in their own learning process, through the means of discussion and exploration. This approach allows for the abilities and learning styles of each student.

context clues information provided by the surrounding text and illustrations that helps the reader to determine the definition of a word.

continuum of word types a sequence of types of words ordered by how difficult they are to decode. VC and CVC words beginning with continuous sounds would be placed at the beginning of the continuum indicating the relative simplicity in decoding them (e.g., *at* and *map*), whereas CCCVCC words would be placed toward the end (e.g., *splash*).

cooperative learning an instructional method by which students work in small groups of mixed abilities in order to complete a task. Each student is given a role that is essential to completing the assigned task. This method lets students learn and share information while gaining valuable skills of social interaction.

criterion-referenced tests the testing and assessment of performance, based on pre-determined criteria about what students should know and be able to do. Scores are not compared to those of other test-takers.

critical reading or **evaluative reading** a term referring to reading beyond the literal and inferential level to evaluate and make appropriate judgments about what one is reading. Critical reading includes the ability to evaluate the author's trustworthiness and credibility as well as sources and arguments the author uses.

critical thinking interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information to form a good understanding, judgment, or solution.

D

data-informed instruction whole or small group lessons planned using student data to align instruction with needs.

declarative knowledge knowledge about "what." For example, declarative knowledge about the Civil War includes knowledge about what the war was and who fought in it. In decoding, declarative knowledge is knowledge about what decoding is, the components involved, and what is necessary in order to decode a word.

decodable text fiction and nonfiction text specifically written to be 80 percent to 90 percent decodable based on the sound/symbol relationships taught prior to the reading of the text. The non-decodable words in the text are most often previously taught high-frequency words.

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decodable words words containing phonic elements that have been previously taught.

derivational morphology the study of the etymology of words and how affixes are added to base words and roots to affect meaning.

developmental spelling levels a system in which students progress through phases or stages showing greater sophistication of word knowledge with each stage. In English, students progress through five stages of word knowledge: emergent, letter name/alphabetic, within word pattern, syllables and affixes, and derivational relations.

diagnostic test a test used to evaluate a variety of reading or other content-related skills to analyze strengths and weaknesses so that appropriate student instruction can be planned and implemented.

dialogic reading an interactive shared reading in which students and teacher engage in a conversation or dialogue about the story. The teacher asks questions and encourages students to expand upon the story. Students are active participants during the reading.

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) a series of assessments from K–8 developed by Dr. Roland Good and Dr. Ruth Kaminski at the University of Oregon. DIBELS assessments are used primarily for making screening/benchmark decisions about student performance in reading at three points during a school year (fall, winter, and spring). DIBELS assessments are a form of curriculum-based assessments and involve timing a student’s performance on a task that has been shown to be predictive of future success in reading. Results from some DIBELS assessments can also be used to make diagnostic decisions about an individual student’s skills in phonemic awareness and phonics/decoding. There are also DIBELS assessments available for Pre-K and for Spanish-speaking students.

differentiated instruction a teaching method geared toward understanding and meeting the different instructional needs of any and all students in a classroom. Specific approaches include providing instructional materials of varied complexity or difficulty and matching activities to students’ interests and learning styles.

digraph two consecutive letters that represent one sound, e.g., /sh/sh, /f/ph, and /ē/ea.

diphthong a vowel produced by the tongue shifting position during articulation. When it is said aloud, the vowel sound of a diphthong seems to have two parts, especially the vowels spelled *ou* and *oi*.

direct instruction a teaching method by which the teacher tells the students exactly what they will be learning and what the purpose is for learning that particular skill or content. All information provided is organized and presented in a logical, clear, and

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consistent way. There is ample time given to practice and master the content provided.

directionality an emergent reading skill in which a child learns to track English print from left to right and top to bottom. Part of this skill is the ability to track print from the end of one line to the beginning of the next line with a return sweep. Directionality applies in the same way to emergent writing skills.

disaggregated data data that is analyzed to see whether patterns or trends are apparent. As an example, test scores might be analyzed and the data disaggregated to see whether gender or socioeconomic status has any effect on students' performance.

DRTA (Directed Reading and Thinking Activity) a comprehension instructional approach in which teachers encourage students to make predictions about upcoming text, read, think, verify predictions, make new predictions, read, think, verify, and so on through a text. The DRTA was developed by Russell Stauffer in 1969 and is commonly accepted as a useful instructional strategy for comprehension.

dyslexia a developmental learning condition that interferes with reading, writing, and spelling skills. Manifestations of dyslexia can involve difficulty in decoding text and in consistently recognizing sound/symbol relationships; the transposition of letters and numbers; confusion of sequence, time order, and left to right; hyperactivity; and challenges in physical coordination and balance.

E

early intervention a strategy in which a child considered to have special needs based on screening or referrals is provided services any time between birth through age five to promote his or her development. Research has shown that a child's rate of learning and development is highest in the preschool years, making this strategy particularly important.

echo reading a teaching strategy in which teacher and students read aloud from the same text. The teacher expressively reads a few words, a line, or a sentence, and then students immediately read that same passage for fluency and prosody practice. This method can also be practiced with two students working together and echo reading with each other.

Elkonin boxes an instructional tool used to practice phonemic awareness, comprised of connected boxes drawn in a row. Each box stands for one sound in a target word. (For example, the word *chain* has three boxes: one each for /ch/ /ā/ /n/; *storm* has four boxes: one each for /s/ /t/ /ôr/ /m/.) Students listen to the target word, and then place a marker in each box representing each sound. Students may also segment the target word and place the marker in the appropriate box as they say each distinct phoneme. (Elkonin boxes are also known as *sound boxes*.)

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emergent literacy the basic skills and knowledge necessary to prepare children for standard forms of reading and writing, including the awareness of print and the connection of print to meaning.

encode to convert spoken sound or phonemes into the graphemes (written letters/symbols) for which they stand; likewise, to convert spoken words and messages into their written counterparts.

English as a Second Language (ESL) a term that refers to programs and classes designed to teach students English as a second (or additional) language. The focus of such programs and classes is to develop English proficiency in students.

English Language Learners (ELL) students in English-speaking classrooms whose primary language is other than English. These students are sometimes referred to as ESL students, who are learning English as a second language.

etymology the history of a word from its beginning to its current form, including an analysis of changes in spelling or meaning and its origins from and commonalities with words in other languages. *See also cognates.*

evaluative reading *See critical reading.*

evidence-based practice the idea that instructional policies should have their basis in empirical research (such as research findings that show what works) and that student performance data should be used to guide individual instructional decisions.

explicit instruction systematic instruction that involves teacher modeling and explanation (*I Do*), guided practice and application (*We Do*), and independent practice (*You Do*).

expository text nonfiction text that contains information based on facts, also known as **informational text**.

expressive language **1.** vibrant language that is used to show feelings. **2.** language that is spoken aloud.

F

figurative language words and phrases that go beyond their literal everyday meanings to enhance writing. Metaphor, simile, and personification are examples of figurative language, also known as *figures of speech*.

flexible grouping permitting students to work in mixed levels in classrooms according to the specific task and then regrouping students as their needs and outcomes change.

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fluency one of the key skills necessary for proficient reading. Fluent reading requires accurate word recognition and decoding, performed at an adequate rate, with appropriate expression and phrasing, that leads to good comprehension. Fluent readers appear to read effortlessly; their oral reading sounds like normal speech. Fluency benchmarks from Grade 1 through Grade 8 have been established using the metric of words correct per minute.

frustrational reading level a grade level of text material that a student finds too difficult to read easily, even with teacher support. Accuracy is less than 90 percent. *See also readability level.*

G

genres a way of organizing literary works by kind, often determined by content, style, tone, and form. Common genres are novel, realistic fiction, fairy tale, science fiction, narrative, nonfiction, and myth.

grapheme the smallest written symbol that has meaning; in English, a letter is a single grapheme that represents a sound.

graphic organizers blank diagrams, such as webs, charts, and frames that, when filled in with information and ideas, help a student visualize and illustrate a concept of text and/or understand a comprehension skill.

guided practice a teaching method that follows directly after modeling. Once the teacher has modeled a skill or strategy, she or he then guides students through their own practice of the same, providing any necessary feedback or additional direction.

guided reading a method of reading instruction involving a small group of same-leveled students in which the teacher facilitates the reading of the same on-level story, aloud or silently. This includes prior knowledge activities and building related vocabulary before reading, constructive feedback during reading, and using graphic organizers or other tools for comprehension and response after reading.

H

hands-on materials manipulatives and other tangible materials used by students to assist them in learning and practicing previously taught ideas and concepts.

high-frequency words the words that appear most often in spoken language and in text, such as *always*, *beautiful*, *could*, *nothing*, and *said*. They may or may not follow common sound/symbol relationships and are often taught as sight words before students have mastered the phonics skills to decode them.

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hyperlink a word or phrase on any page on the Internet or other electronic media, usually blue in color and underscored, or a button or widget, that when selected (most often by clicking with a mouse) provides direct access to another place on the same page or to another page entirely.

I

implicit instruction teaching in which students are guided to construct their own learning of skills and concepts through discovery instead of being taught explicitly.

independent reading level a level at which students can read text fluently without help from a teacher. Accuracy will be 95 percent. *See also readability level.*

inference an assumption or decision about a story based on clues in the story, pictures, and what the student already knows.

inflected morphology the study of how suffixes change the verb tense and number of a word. For example, the suffix *-ed* is an inflected suffix that denotes past tense.

inflectional ending a suffix that changes nouns to the plural or possessive form, verbs to a different tense, or adjectives and adverbs to the comparative or superlative form.

informational text nonfiction books that contain information based on facts; also known as **expository text**.

instructional design a plan in which curriculum is arranged to help teachers effectively transfer knowledge through analysis of student understanding, defining the instructional goal, and creating instruction.

instructional reading level a level that is challenging yet stimulates effort from the student. The student is not frustrated; accuracy will be 90 percent. Reading instruction is very effective at this level, as students will be able to apply and practice new reading strategies. *See also readability level.*

integrated curriculum a way of teaching and learning in which the curriculum supports the close connection of separately taught subjects in terms of concepts, skills, and values.

integrated language arts an instructional approach that incorporates listening, speaking, reading, literature appreciation, writing, and spelling.

interactive reading a process in which students interact with a text before, during, and after reading as they actively construct meaning from the text. One example of this process might be that a reader makes a comment during the reading of a story: *This is*

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Liam's first day at this school so he's probably feeling a little nervous. I wonder if someone will try to help him feel welcome.

interactive writing a process in which the teacher and students “share the pen” as members of the classroom community of writers. Students contribute, for example, the initial letter of a word, a word, or an idea to the group’s shared product.

intervention a strategy in which those students who fall behind are given additional instruction or placed in a different course of instruction.

intonation the way syllables and phrases are pronounced with a specific accent, emphasis, change in pitch, loudness, rhythm, and phrasing.

invented spelling a method of spelling in which students venture to spell words they do not already know using their own knowledge of phonetic principles and of the spelling system.

K

K-W-L a strategy used to activate prior knowledge before reading a nonfiction text in which students complete a three-column chart labeled What We **K**now, What We **W**ant to Know, and What We **L**earned. The strategy allows students to set and monitor their reading goals.

L

language experience approach (LEA) a learning method in which a multisensorial experience shared by the teacher and students is facilitated through the use of students’ oral stories that are written down by the teacher. Skills include shared writing, listening and speaking, representing, reading, and retelling.

language proficiency stages of mastery of English for English Language Learners as follows: Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate, Early Advanced, and Advanced. There is much overlap between the stages, and these five stages are often distilled into three stages for instructional purposes:

Beginning Stage students are brand new to English and spend from one to three months as beginners. Teaching strategies include using gestures, facilitating vocabulary development, using visuals and realia, writing words for students to see, and allowing students to respond through actions and gestures with minimal speech production.

Intermediate Stage students are still considered beginners at first, and can spend several weeks or months at this level. Teaching strategies include asking “yes/no”

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and “either/or” questions, modeling correct responses, maintaining a supportive environment, and asking short “wh-” questions. As the student advances, teaching strategies become more complex and related to content and key concepts. Questions become more open-ended. Performance-based assessment and comprehension checks may be used.

Advanced Stage students range from “high-beginners” to students with native-like fluency. Teaching strategies include expanding literacy through content, interactive lessons, introducing thinking and study skills, and a continued alertness to differences and similarities in language and culture.

language registers word choice, tone of voice, and pitch as determined by social circumstances including audience, subject matter, and purpose of communication, as well as mode of communication (spoken or written). Registers can have non-spoken characteristics such as body language and the proximity of one speaker to another. There are five registers:

Frozen Register: for text that is predetermined in print form and fixed, for example the Pledge of Allegiance.

Formal/Academic Register: for school, business, interviews, and public speaking.

Consultative Register: for speaking with a supervisor, teacher, doctor, or lawyer.

Casual Register: for talking with friends; this includes slang.

Intimate Register: for private conversations, non-public.

Registers are easily modulated from one to the other in response to perceived changes in social situations. If more than one level is skipped between registers without appropriate context, this is often considered antisocial behavior. It is important for students to know how to choose the appropriate register according to the social situation and how to be flexible among registers as the situation necessitates.

learning community a community of educators determined to expand their learning in order to transform their school or district. *See also* **professional learning community (PLC)**.

learning styles the controversial claim that some people learn better through particular sensory modalities, often popularized as distinctions between visual vs. auditory learners, but perhaps most important for people with disabilities in one modality.

letter/sound correspondence the direct and predictable relationship between a phoneme (sound) and the letter or letters that represent that phoneme.

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leveled books texts matched to a student's ability to decode words and comprehend text meaning. Leveled books are comprised of sight words or high-frequency words, highly predictable text, words appropriate to a student's decoding skills, and illustrations that accurately portray story meaning. As the student becomes more advanced in his or her reading skills, the texts gradually increase in difficulty.

listening vocabulary words that are recognized when heard in order to understand spoken language and comprehend meaning.

literal comprehension the understanding of what is explicitly stated in a text.

long term memory (LTM) high-volume information stored in the brain that remains accessible over a great period of time. This information is generally retrievable in parts or blocks, such as the distilled recounting of an experience years after it happened.

M

mentoring a process in which a skilled veteran teacher works with colleagues who may be novice or beginning teachers, to help them develop knowledge, skills, and resources for assessing students, planning lessons, delivering effective instruction, and managing classrooms successfully. **Mentoring** is sometimes used as a synonym for **coaching**.

metacognition direct consciousness and understanding of one's thinking processes, or thinking about what one is thinking about. With this consciousness comes the opportunity for self-monitoring.

modeling an instructional technique in which the teacher explicitly demonstrates a strategy or skill in such a way that students can emulate the teacher's behavior and thought processes for solving problems and answering questions.

morpheme a meaningful unit of a word; a single-syllable word is a morpheme, as are prefixes and suffixes.

N

narrative text written story or other text that tells about a series of real or fictional events.

National Reading Panel the federally appointed group of scientists and educators that conducted a scientific review of instructional studies in reading. The National Reading Panel worked from 1998–2000 when it issued its report on studies of eight topics in reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, encouraging students to read, oral

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reading fluency, reading comprehension strategies, vocabulary, teacher education, and technology). The findings of this panel became the basis of Reading First.

native language an individual's first, primary, or home language; one's mother tongue. Also referred to as *LI*.

norm-referenced tests the testing and assessment of performance compared to that of the norming group's performance on a standardized test, or to any locally developed norms.

O

onset and rime An onset is the consonant sound or sounds preceding the vowel of a syllable, such as /f/ in *fan*, /b/ in *ball*, and /fr/ in *frame*. A rime is the vowel sound and any following consonant sound or sounds of a syllable, such as /an/ in *fan*, /ôl/ in *ball*, and /ām/ in *frame*.

oral reading accuracy the skill of reading aloud connected text with correct pronunciation and word recognition.

oral reading fluency norms statistically derived indicators of typical performance; they are created by assessing a large number of students using the same administration and scoring procedures and having the students each read passages at their current grade level. These readings are typically conducted without allowing the students to practice. The norms are then created by calculating the percentile ranks of each of the scores. Reading norms are typically presented in tables that show the 90th, 75th, 50th, 25th, and 10th percentiles for fall, winter, and spring by grade level. *For an example, see Hasbrouck, J., and G. A. Tindal. "Oral Reading Fluency Norms: A Valuable Assessment Tool for Reading Teachers." The Reading Teacher 59, No. 7 (2006): 636–644.*

orthographic knowledge what readers know about how words are spelled based on their sound, pattern, and meaning.

orthography 1. conventional spelling in agreement with the standardized usage of a given language. 2. a way of writing related to a given language.

outcome assessment a test given at the end of the year to help the principal and teachers in a school evaluate the overall effectiveness of their reading program for all students. They are required in Reading First schools to help districts evaluate their progress toward meeting the goal of "every child reading on grade level" by third grade. Schools must show regular progress toward this goal to continue receiving Reading First funds.

P

pacing the rate at which a teacher progresses through a curriculum as well as an individual lesson. Pacing may be modified to account for students' varying learning capabilities.

partner/peer reading students working in pairs and taking turns to read aloud. As one student reads, the other helps identify any unfamiliar words and gives feedback. Also called *buddy reading*.

peer-assisted learning practice activities in which two or more students work together and provide feedback to each other.

performance assessment a type of testing that requires the student to perform a task, using higher-order thinking skills. Examples of performance assessment tasks may include open-ended responses to questions or problem-solving activities that are to be done over an extended period of time. Portfolios, in which some of the student's best work samples are collected over a period of time, are a type of performance assessment.

Phases of Word Learning developed by Linnea Ehri, phases of word learning include five stages:

pre-alphabetic phase: alphabetic knowledge is not used to read words; rather, students guess words from context and memory; for example, names for popular movies.

partial-alphabetic phase: students begin to detect letters in words and can match some of the letters in words to sounds in their pronunciations.

full-alphabetic phase: students possess working knowledge of phonemic awareness and can match up phonemes to graphemes and decode unfamiliar words.

consolidated alphabetic phase: students are learning chunks of letters that recur in different words and how they are pronounced. These letter chunks include affixes, root words, onsets, rimes, and syllables.

automatic phase: the phase of proficient word reading in which children have highly developed automaticity and speed in identifying unfamiliar as well as familiar words.

phoneme the smallest unit of sound in spoken language, which when contrasted to other phonemes determines word meaning (e.g., /f/ in *fan* contrasted with /k/ in *can*). Phonemes combine with other phonemes to make words. The word *fan* has three phonemes, or sounds: /f/ /a/ /n/; the word *ball* also has three phonemes: /b/ /ô/ /l/; the

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word *frame* has four phonemes: /f/ /r/ /ā/ /m/. A phoneme can be represented by more than one symbol, or letter, such as /ch/ch in *chair* and /f/ph in *graph*.

phoneme addition a kind of phoneme manipulation in which a sound or sounds are added to a spoken word to make a new word (e.g., add /f/ to *an* to make *fan*; add /ch/ to *air* to make *chair*; add /t/ to *ten* to make *tent*).

phoneme deletion a kind of phoneme manipulation in which a sound or sounds are taken away from a spoken word to make a new word (e.g., delete /m/ in *mat* to make *at*; delete /l/ in *play* to make *pay*).

phoneme isolation recognizing and identifying individual sounds in a spoken word (e.g., /m/ is the first or initial sound in *made*, /ā/ is the second or middle sound, and /d/ is the last or final sound). *See also segmenting*.

phoneme manipulation the skill or action of phoneme addition, phoneme deletion, and phoneme substitution.

phoneme substitution a kind of phoneme manipulation in which a sound or sounds are deleted from a spoken word and replaced with a new sound or sounds (e.g., substitute /k/ in *can* with /f/ to make *fan*).

phonemic awareness the awareness of phonemes that make up spoken words and the ability to hear and identify the individual phonemes in spoken words. Phoneme manipulations used to increase phonemic awareness include phoneme addition, phoneme deletion, and phoneme substitution.

phonics 1. a system of teaching reading and spelling that focuses on sound/symbol relationships, or the direct and predictable relationship between a phoneme and the letter or letters that represent that phoneme. **2.** the knowledge that a relationship exists between phonemes (spoken language) and graphemes (written language).

phonograms the grapheme, or graphic symbol or symbols that represent a phoneme, a series of phonemes, or a word (e.g., *-an* in *pan* and *ran*; *-ote* in *note* and *wrote*; and *-ay* in *play* and *say*).

phonological awareness awareness of and the ability to manipulate the components of spoken language. The study of phonological awareness encompasses phonemes, phonemic awareness, onset and rime, syllables, rhymes, and individual words.

phrase-cued text text that has been chunked into appropriate pauses and phrase units to assist students' understanding of meaning and appropriate expression, or prosody. Phrase-cued text contains cueing pauses represented by slashes. A single slash represents a shorter pause, while a double slash represents a longer pause. (For example: I really like / having salad / with dinner.// I like to put / tomatoes, / carrots, / lettuce, / and cucumbers / in my salad.//)

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portfolio a collection of a student's work samples that may be used to determine progress.

primary language 1. an individual's first, native, or home language; one's mother tongue. Also referred to as *L1*.

print awareness the understanding of the conventional structure and arrangement of written language, including the awareness that English is read from left to right and from top to bottom, and that words are separated by spaces.

procedural knowledge knowledge and understanding used in performing an activity and the knowledge of the steps involved.

professional learning community (PLC) a group of educators working together to validate and extend their own learning. PLCs work collaboratively, often visiting each others' classrooms, reading professional materials together, developing and testing lesson plans, and examining student work. PLCs can be effective staff-development venues and agents for school change. *See also learning community.*

progress monitoring observing or testing a student's progress and evaluating the instructional techniques. Goals for the student are established and measured on a regular basis and the instruction is adjusted as needed.

prosody lively, expressive reading characterized by appropriate intonation, articulation, and phrasing; an element of fluent reading.

Q

Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) a system of categorizing how information is organized in a text, to help students identify kinds of questions about a text and the steps they can follow to find the answer.

The first broad category is "In the Book." It has two subcategories, "Right There" and "Putting It Together" ("Think and Search"). "Right There" indicates a question in which the answer is literal and easy to find in the text. The same sentence in the text will contain the words from the question as well as the answer. "Putting It Together" indicates that the answer is still in the text, but more than one part of the text needs to be incorporated to answer the question. Distinct sentences contain words from the question and words for the answer.

The second broad category is "In Your Head." It has two subcategories, "Author and You" ("Author and Me") and "On Your Own" ("On My Own"). "Author and You" indicates a question in which the answer is not strictly found in the text. Students need to combine what they already know as well as what the author

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writes in order to answer the question. “On Your Own” indicates that the answer is not in any way in the text. Students answer the question solely from their own personal experience.

Questioning the Author (QtA) an instructional approach to teaching reading comprehension developed by Drs. Isabel Beck and Margaret McKeown at the University of Pittsburgh. The instructional approach is built on the idea of whole group discussions between the teacher and students. In the discussion teachers ask questions about what students are reading to help students make sense of text. Questions include probing of the author’s meaning, such as, “What does the author mean by that?” and “What is the author trying to tell us here?”

R

readability level a measure of the ease with which a text can be read and understood. Many factors can affect readability, such as type size, format, content, vocabulary, and sentence complexity, as well as student motivation and prior knowledge. Readability scores, based on sentence length and amount of unfamiliar vocabulary, are often correlated with grade level. Readability level may also refer specifically to texts that can be read independently by the student (independent), that can be read with teacher guidance (instructional), or that cannot be easily read (frustrational).

reader’s theater an oral reading in which students read characters’ parts in a play, or in scripts they helped to write.

Reading First a federal initiative authorized through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. Its goal is to have all children nationwide read on grade level in English by the end of the third grade. In order to accomplish this, funds are available to train teachers to use scientifically based reading research programs that focus on five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Funds also support the early screening and identification of at-risk students to help promote their success in reading.

receptive language the ability to comprehend spoken language, including the vocabulary and concepts presented.

reciprocal teaching a dialogue between teachers and students that involves the four strategies of summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting as they work together, taking turns in assuming the role of the teacher, with the purpose of bringing meaning to a text.

repeated reading rereadings of a text to increase fluency and comprehension.

research, correlational nonexperimental research in which the strength of relationships among two or more variables or measures is estimated. The outcomes of correlational

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studies can be positive or negative. (Positive correlations indicate that as one variable increases in value, the other variable does, too. For example, children who read more usually get better test scores in reading. Negative correlations indicate that as one value increases the other decreases. For example, higher levels of poverty are usually associated with lower academic test performance.) Correlations cannot prove causation, as two variables might rise and fall together even if one does not cause the other.

research, descriptive research that provides descriptions of the characteristics or patterns of a phenomenon. These descriptions must be rigorously conducted and can be qualitative narratives or quantitative summaries of the characteristics or patterns. Research that provides summaries of state test data would usually be considered to be descriptive studies; so would ethnographic accounts of classroom instruction.

research, empirical research grounded in scientific methods and rigorous and objective observation or experiments in order to measure and analyze data. Both the initial research design and the data subsequently obtained are submitted to an exacting scientific review process.

research, experimental generally, all research in which the researcher intervenes to alter conditions in order to determine the effectiveness of that intervention; more specifically, research in which subjects are randomly assigned to experimental and control conditions in order to determine the impact of the intervention or change. Experimental studies are used to determine causation, such as whether a particular instructional approach causes improvement in reading achievement. (Randomization, control groups, and other experimental techniques are used to ensure that it is the instructional approach that led to the changes in reading achievement.)

research, qualitative **1.** a kind of social science research that takes place in everyday settings to explore human behaviors and the reasons different people behave the way they do. This takes into account the subjects' own understanding of why they act the way they do and any personal meanings or reasons they associate with those behaviors. The data gathered from these studies is exploratory rather than concrete and conclusive. **2.** a form of research that attempts to answer "why" and "how" questions.

research, quantitative **1.** a kind of social science research that results in numerical data that can be analyzed, charted, and graphed. The method is scientific and systematic and involves the development of a theory or hypothesis and then the measurement of concrete numerical data in a controlled setting to prove or disprove the hypothesis. **2.** a form of research that attempts to answer "who," "what," "where," and "when" questions.

research, quasi-experimental a kind of experimental research in which randomization of subjects is not used; instead pre-existing groups are assigned to conditions and pretest and posttest measures are used to determine whether the outcomes are

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different for the groups. This approach to research is not as rigorous as pure experimental research because pre-existing differences among the groups might influence the outcomes. *See also* **research, experimental**.

Response to Intervention (RTI) an instructional delivery model designed both to prevent academic difficulties and to provide appropriate and effective intervention as needed. RTI is often described as a multitiered service delivery model with Tier 1 representing instruction provided in the classroom using the core, standards-based curriculum for all students. Tier 2 is for strategic, targeted supplementary instruction provided in addition to Tier 1 instruction, while Tier 3 services are designed for more intensive intervention. Tier 3 may include special education services, although some RTI models allow for an additional tier of services exclusively for students with disabilities. If students are not responding to the high-quality instruction provided in Tier 1, they are placed in the next appropriate tier of services for a specified period of time. Their progress is carefully monitored. At the end of the instructional cycle (which may range from 8 to 15 weeks), a determination is made as to whether or not to have the student continue in that level of instruction or to move to another tier of services. Students who fail to “respond to intervention” may be qualified to receive special education services.

retelling restating, after reading, what happened in a story, or the main ideas in a nonfiction text. Retellings are often used to measure a student’s level of text comprehension and interpretation.

rime a vowel and any following consonants of a syllable, as /ow/ in *cow* and *now*, /ɪn/ in *fine* and *mine*, and /ā/ in *stay* and *day*. *See also* **onset and rime**.

robust vocabulary instruction a method of teaching vocabulary developed by Drs. Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan, that is primarily oral and involves clear interpretation of specific word meanings as well as a fun, thorough, and interactive approach to increasing verbal and comprehension skills. This three-step method (Define/Example/Ask) allows students to cumulatively increase their knowledge of words and to build a strong foundation of oral vocabulary. The teacher first explicitly defines a word with a student-friendly definition, then applies the word in an example sentence, and finally asks students to interact with the given example and use the word in their own examples. Students develop a more complex understanding of word meanings and expand their understanding of slight variations in word usage. In this method, vocabulary words are arranged into three tiers. Tier 2 words are most commonly taught during robust vocabulary instruction. *See also* **tier (1, 2, 3) words**.

root words often used as a synonym for **base words**; refers to Greek roots or word parts of Greek origin that are often combined with other roots, prefixes, and suffixes to form words such as *telephone* (from the Greek root *phon* meaning *sound*). Roots convey basic meaning which can be used to determine the meanings of the words that contain them.

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rubrics descriptions of students' performance of a specified task that reflect differing levels of quality. Rubrics may be used to evaluate students' work.

S

scaffolded instruction the process of modeling and encouraging strategic, successful reading by providing structure, organization, questioning, clarification, summarizing, or tying information to what is known or what will be found out. Students are given all the support they need to arrive at the correct answer.

schema the personal experience and information that students can apply to new text to help with comprehension. *See also* **activating prior knowledge**.

scientific inquiry a method by which scientific questions are answered with plausible explanations through the consistent use of investigation and observation. Students are asked to come up with a hypothesis and create an experiment to test that hypothesis. Skills developed include observing, communicating, measuring, predicting, making a hypothesis, inferring, and interpreting and analyzing data. Through this method, students learn how to pose questions about the world around them and then provide the evidence to answer those questions.

scientifically based reading research empirical research done in an objective, systematic manner, resulting in valid and trustworthy data or information.

screening assessment at the beginning of the school year to determine a student's reading level.

segmenting breaking up a spoken word into its separate sounds, or phonemes. *See also* **phoneme isolation**.

self-monitoring proactive student engagement in the learning process, by which students examine their own thinking and learning processes.

self-regulation the ability of readers to monitor their ongoing understanding of something they are reading. Self-regulation includes being aware of whether one is understanding or not and knowing what to do about a breakdown in comprehension, or being aware of whether one is learning the appropriate material and knowing how to make appropriate changes when one is not learning.

semantic map a graphic organizer with differing levels of complexity that can be used to collect, organize, and show connections between ideas about a topic. One example might have a concept in a bubble in the center with lines emanating outward to capture details about the concept. In a more complex map, each detail might also be in a bubble with lines for its own details. A semantic map may be used before reading

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to activate prior knowledge and then after reading to add information that has been learned.

shared reading a method of teaching reading skills and strategies to beginning readers, in which the teacher reads a big book aloud and guides children to understand basic reading elements such as print conventions, what words are, simple decoding, and previewing and predicting.

shared writing a method of teaching writing skills in which the teacher involves a group of young children in the writing of a collaborative, or shared, text. The teacher begins with a discussion about a shared experience or topic to elicit ideas, and then models writing for children. The teacher records children's ideas on chart paper in story or paragraph form, inviting children to participate by adding words, punctuation, or practicing other writing skills. Skills can include stretching out words to approximate correct spelling; using a word wall; following rules of capitalization, punctuation, and format; writing legibly; and writing from left to right.

sheltered instruction an approach to teaching English learners that integrates content and language development. Teachers scaffold instruction to make grade-level content comprehensible to students while they continue to improve their English language proficiency. *See also* **SIOP Model**.

short term memory (STM) limited volume memory that lasts a short amount of time.

sight word a word that is taught to be read as a whole unit and recognized on first sight, without the use of decoding skills. Sight words are often irregularly spelled or are inconsistent with established sound/symbol relationships.

signal devices words that signal to readers the structure and/or organization of a text, most often an expository text. Some signal devices include words like *in sum*, *therefore*, *first*, *second*, *third*, *however*, *next*, *then*, and *thereafter*. Authors use these words to provide structural support for readers.

SIOP Model (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) a scientifically validated model of sheltered instruction. The SIOP Model is a lesson planning and delivery system for effective instruction with English learners. The SIOP protocol provides concrete examples of the features of sheltered instruction that can enhance and expand teachers' instructional practice.

spiral curriculum a way of setting up curriculum such that important skills, subject matter, and ideas are revisited again and again, each time at an increased depth of complexity.

stop sound a phoneme that cannot be drawn out in length but only vocalized briefly to ensure purity of sound, such as /b/, /k/, /d/, /g/, /h/, /j/, /p/, /q/, /t/, and /x/.

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story grammar a way of generalizing the shape of a story and its arrangement of components or story elements, such as setting, plot, character, and theme.

story map a graphic organizer, containing boxes with text used by students to analyze or write a story by charting the story elements (typically the characters, setting, problem, events in solving the problem, and solution).

story structure the organizational pattern found in narrative text, in which there is a setting, or when and where a story takes place; characters, or the people/animals in a story; and a plot, or the events in the story that are organized into a beginning, middle, and end. Plot usually includes a problem that the main character has to solve, the steps a character takes to solve the problem, and a solution, or outcome, of the problem.

structural analysis the study of syllables, words, and affixes to determine pronunciation and meaning of words.

student contract a checklist used by each student to organize and monitor progress for completing work assignments.

summarizing a comprehension strategy in which a reader organizes the most important points and ideas of a text into a concise statement or two.

syllable a small unit of a spoken word composed of a vowel sound or vowel-consonant sounds. A syllable can begin with a vowel or a consonant sound, but must always contain a vowel sound.

synthesizing the cognitive process of connecting and merging ideas from different parts of the same texts or across different texts. Synthesizing is not the same as summarizing in that summarizing is a process of putting together the most important ideas in the text. Synthesizing information from text is putting together ideas from parts of texts or from different texts, regardless of whether they are the most important ideas or not.

synthetic phonics phonics instruction that emphasizes the blending of individual phonemes; students are taught the sounds for each letter or letter combination in isolation and then learn to combine these parts to arrive at the pronunciations of words.

systematic instruction a method of teaching in which the entire sequence of instruction is well thought out and designed in advance. Lessons are then planned according to the sequence in such a way that one lesson builds on the information learned in previous lessons. Interrelated skills include phonics and phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension skills, and fluent reading.

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T

tape-assisted reading a strategy that involves having students listen only or read along with an audio tape or CD recording of a skillful reader reading a passage aloud. Typically the student follows along on a copy of the passage that was recorded. Some tapes have passages recorded at rates that increase from reading to reading so that a student's practice is scaffolded to support reading at a faster rate while maintaining accuracy. Tape-assisted reading is one of the strategies used to help develop or improve students' reading fluency skills.

text features parts of text including titles, headings, graphs, charts, time lines, diagrams and labels, table of contents, and captions.

text structure the way in which texts or stories are inherently organized, including elements such as description, sequence of events, problem and solution, and cause and effect.

think alouds a teaching strategy used to illustrate the metacognitive process of reading comprehension by which the teacher orally shares his or her thought process in understanding a text. Skills include asking questions, using context clues, and making predictions and inferences.

tier model for intervention explicit instruction in small groups using multi-leveled curricula to specifically address student variance and skill needs.

tier (1, 2, 3) words the organization of spoken vocabulary into three levels, or tiers:

Tier 1: very basic words with one standard meaning, such as *play*, *desk*, *cat*, *happy*, *sing*, and *pencil*. Tier 1 words are usually learned at home and children most often have previous knowledge of the meanings of these words.

Tier 2: the level of words that should be focused on for developing a robust vocabulary. This tier consists of words that are used often and in multiple contexts by practiced or mature speakers, such as *ridiculous*, *captivating*, *environment*, and *tolerate*. Awareness of and proficiency with these types of words can exponentially increase a student's verbal skills.

Tier 3: infrequently used and highly specialized words, such as *oxidize*, *photosynthesis*, *solder*, and *estuary*, that are best introduced in their related context, such as *photosynthesis* during a science lesson.

timed reading a measure of how quickly a student reads an appropriate text with a specific number of words in an established time allotment.

Total Physical Response (TPR) a learning approach whereby the teacher gives a specific command or asks a question, and students answer with a purely physical movement. Unless they choose to, students are not expected to speak or make any kind of verbal reply.

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trade book a non-basal book. A book available commercially that, when chosen appropriately, may be used to teach print awareness, phonics, and reading comprehension skills.

Train-the-Trainer model a term used in professional development to indicate training sessions designed to have participants learn the skill or content being presented, while also learning how to effectively train others in that skill or content.

U

unvoiced a sound that is made without vibrating the vocal cords: /b/ is voiced, /p/ is unvoiced.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator) a Web site address used to locate a specific document, page, or other resource on the Internet.

V

visualizing a strategy that can help comprehension and memory by creating interactive visual images of people, places, and objects.

vocabulary development explicit, systematic attention to teaching vocabulary in a way that makes it meaningful and retainable for students.

voiced a sound that is made with vibration of the vocal cords, as contrasted with unvoiced sounds: /b/ is voiced, /p/ is unvoiced.

vowel 1. a voiced sound made without blocking or stopping the air as it passes through the vocal tract. **2.** the letter or letters that stand for that sound (e.g., in the English alphabet, *a, e, i, o, u*, and sometimes *y*).

vowel digraph or **vowel pair** two vowels that when written together stand for one vowel sound (e.g., *ea* in *eat* and *ai* in *rain*).

W

Webb's depth of knowledge four levels of knowledge developed by Norman Webb in order to examine the relationship between the cognitive expectations of standards and the cognitive expectations of assessments meant to test those standards. Levels of knowledge begin with Level 1 at the most superficial, and progress to Level 4, at the most deep.

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Level 1, **Recall**: requires students to remember text facts, information, or procedure; and utilize simple skills or abilities that include: identifying information needed to finish a task, following an order of events or text information, locating key ideas and information in a text.

Level 2, **Skills and Concepts**: requires text comprehension and processing. Skills at this level include summarizing, using context to interpret literal and implied meanings of words or phrases, making inferences, applying understanding of organizational patterns to comprehend a passage, comparing, drawing conclusions, and determining the difference between fact and opinion.

Level 3, **Strategic Thinking**: requires students to draw upon personal and prior experiential knowledge beyond the text. Skills at this level include reasoning, developing a plan or sequence of steps, identifying abstract themes, making inferences across an entire text, and explaining, generalizing, and connecting ideas. Students are expected to support their thought process in answering the question.

Level 4, **Extended Thinking**: requires students to utilize higher-order thinking processes. Activities at this level are extended and necessitate research and investigation, so students are given a greater time period to complete the activity. Skills at this level are frequently tested across more than one text or passage and include comparison and contrast of elements, ideas, points of view, and events; identifying interrelationships of themes, ideas, or concepts; and analyzing theme or concept development across multiple texts.

word awareness or **word consciousness** the ability to aurally discriminate between spoken words in context and the understanding that those individual words have meaning. This awareness predicates the ability to garner meaning from printed text and to comprehend text passages.

word calling proficiency in decoding with little or no attention to word meaning.

word families **1.** a set of words that contain the same phonogram or other phonic element (e.g., *ack* in *back*, *stack*, *acknowledge*, and *package*). **2.** a set of words that contain the same root (e.g., *aud* in *audience*, *auditorium*, *audio*, and *audible*).

word sorts a basic word-study routine in which students group words into categories.

word study a learner-centered approach to study phonics, vocabulary, and spelling; students examine words according to their sounds, patterns, and meanings.

word wall an ongoing list of words, often organized by initial letter, typically displayed on a classroom wall that is a reference during reading and writing. The words on the word wall are often reviewed and practiced so that they can be read quickly when

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encountered. Children are often expected to reflect the correct spelling of these words in their own writing.

Z

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in Lev Vygotsky's theory of learning, the notion that a person's learning occurs best in the "zone" in which he or she can perform well with social help but not cannot accomplish the same task independently. The ZPD includes the future skills that the person will soon master and control independently.