A Guide for **Secondary Educators**

SUPPORTING *Adolescent* READERS

Utah State Board of Education
250 East 500 South/P.O. Box 144200
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State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

USBE ADA Compliant August 2021

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Introduction

Supporting Adolescent Readers: A Guide for Secondary Educators supports educators in providing high-quality, effective instruction for adolescent readers. This guide focuses on four key areas:

1. **Assessment**
2. **Framework and Planning for Reading Intervention Classes**
3. **Evidence-based Instructional Practices**
4. **Adolescent Reading Motivation**

Within each area, general information and specific evidence-based recommendations, tools, and strategies are provided to support educators in structuring, designing, and facilitating instruction to best support adolescents who are experiencing reading difficulties. As such, incorporation of the components represented in this guide may provide invaluable support for organizing effective reading instruction.

This guide is designed for educators working with adolescent readers who are experiencing reading challenges: reading teachers, English language arts teachers, and content-area teachers with students who are struggling to access disciplinary text. Literacy skills are among the most important skills for students to develop, and it is incumbent on all educators who interact with adolescent readers to help build these vital skills in all students.

UNDERSTANDING THE ADOLESCENT READER

Adolescents who experience reading challenges represent a wide spectrum of experiences and difficulties, ranging from skill-based struggles with decoding, fluency, and comprehension to affect-based challenges with engagement, motivation, or reading identity (Kucan & Palinscar, 2010). These challenges may be due to skills they did not develop in early grades or may emerge as students move into the content-specific reading of adolescence. Their decoding may be slow and frustrating as they struggle with letter-sound relationships, causing fluency troubles and comprehension issues that lead them to avoid literacy experiences. They may be discouraged and lack motivation given that for years they have tried to read texts and accomplish tasks that are too challenging for them to successfully complete. They may also find that their own interests and knowledge are not represented or valued in academic settings (Rubenstein-Ávila, 2007; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999). As such, they may not enjoy reading and writing and avoid both altogether. Louisa Moates (2015) continues:

> As a result, they are not familiar with the vocabulary, sentence structure, text organization, and concepts of academic "book" language. Over time, they fall further and further behind. Consequently, factual and experiential knowledge of the world may be very limited. Spelling and writing are poor. What begins as a core phonological and word recognition deficit—often associated with other language weaknesses—becomes a diffuse, debilitating problem with language, both spoken and written.

> Consider as well the nature of adolescence. To a middle school or high school student, peer relationships, peer group status, identity as an individual, and concerns about the future are all important. A struggling reader is equally, if not more, in need of school experiences that promote self-respect, competence, self-reliance, social integration, and peer collaboration. (p. 2)

"Struggling reader" is a term we have elected *not* to use given that *all* readers struggle with reading, depending on the context and the text, at some point. Struggle is not something to avoid. As Kylene Beers (2003) points out "struggle isn't the issue; the issue is what the reader does when the text gets tough" (p. 15). Adolescents who face reading and writing challenges can be bolstered with targeted, intensive, and engaging instruction that fits their needs. Some adolescents may need more targeted and intensive instruction than others. The resources within this guide will support educators in providing this type of reading instruction and intervention to enable students to acquire the literacy skills they need to be successful in school and life.

Assessment

Secondary schools continue to have students who require intervention to support their reading development. A system for screening is necessary to identify adolescents who need reading intervention. **Assessment is integral to providing high-quality reading intervention** and can be used to determine which students need help, what kind of intervention they need, and whether that intervention is effective.

This section describes procedures for using assessment to inform instruction. A flow chart is presented to show the steps for using assessment in the process of providing reading services (see chart 1) and a list of possible assessments is also included. Although some assessments need to be purchased, many are free and available online.

Step 1: Conduct Universal Screening

Universal screening is testing designed to identify or predict students whose reading performance puts them at risk for impacting their academic performance. Universal screening assessments are given to all students to identify who should receive reading services. Students in the bottom 35% of the universal screener would typically be considered for reading services. Student needs should be validated with other data evidence such as RISE (Grades 3–8) and or Utah Aspire Plus (UA+, Grades 9 and 10) proficiency, grades, etc. Ideally, multiple data points should be used to identify students in need of reading intervention. The delivery of reading services should be decided at the local level based on resources, class size, personnel, and other school factors (see Table 1 for examples of universal screeners).

Step 2: Administer Diagnostic Assessment(s)

After validating student need, diagnostic assessment(s) should be used to identify specific skill deficits. Adolescent readers generally have one or more of the following instructional needs: phonics/advanced phonics, fluency, and/or vocabulary/comprehension. When diagnosing, it is recommended to begin with fluency testing. Students who pass the fluency test should be given a vocabulary/comprehension test. If students pass the vocabulary/comprehension test, their placement in reading services should be re-evaluated. If students do not pass the fluency measure, then a phonics diagnostic should be given. If students pass the phonics test, intervention will focus on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. If students do not pass the phonics test, intervention will focus on phonics (see Table 2 for examples of diagnostic assessments).

Step 3: Provide Intervention

All students receiving reading services should receive instruction in vocabulary and comprehension. In addition, students whose diagnostic testing shows a need for fluency and/or phonics instruction will also receive targeted intervention in those areas. For more information on appropriate

instructional approaches to intervention, see the Evidence-based Instructional Practices section of this guide.

Additionally, consideration of student motivation is critical. Student motivation is integral to successful intervention, and related resources can be found in the section on motivation.

Step 4: Administer Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is used to determine the effectiveness of interventions. Progress monitoring allows educators (as well as educator teams) to evaluate the validity of instructional interventions and determine appropriate adjustments. The frequency of progress monitoring will depend on the intensity of the student's need and area of concern. Table 3 includes a list of potential progress monitoring tools. General guidelines for progress monitoring are:

1. Phonics: every 1–2 weeks.
2. Fluency: every 3–4 weeks.
3. Comprehension: every 8–9 weeks.

Chart 1: Steps for Using Assessment

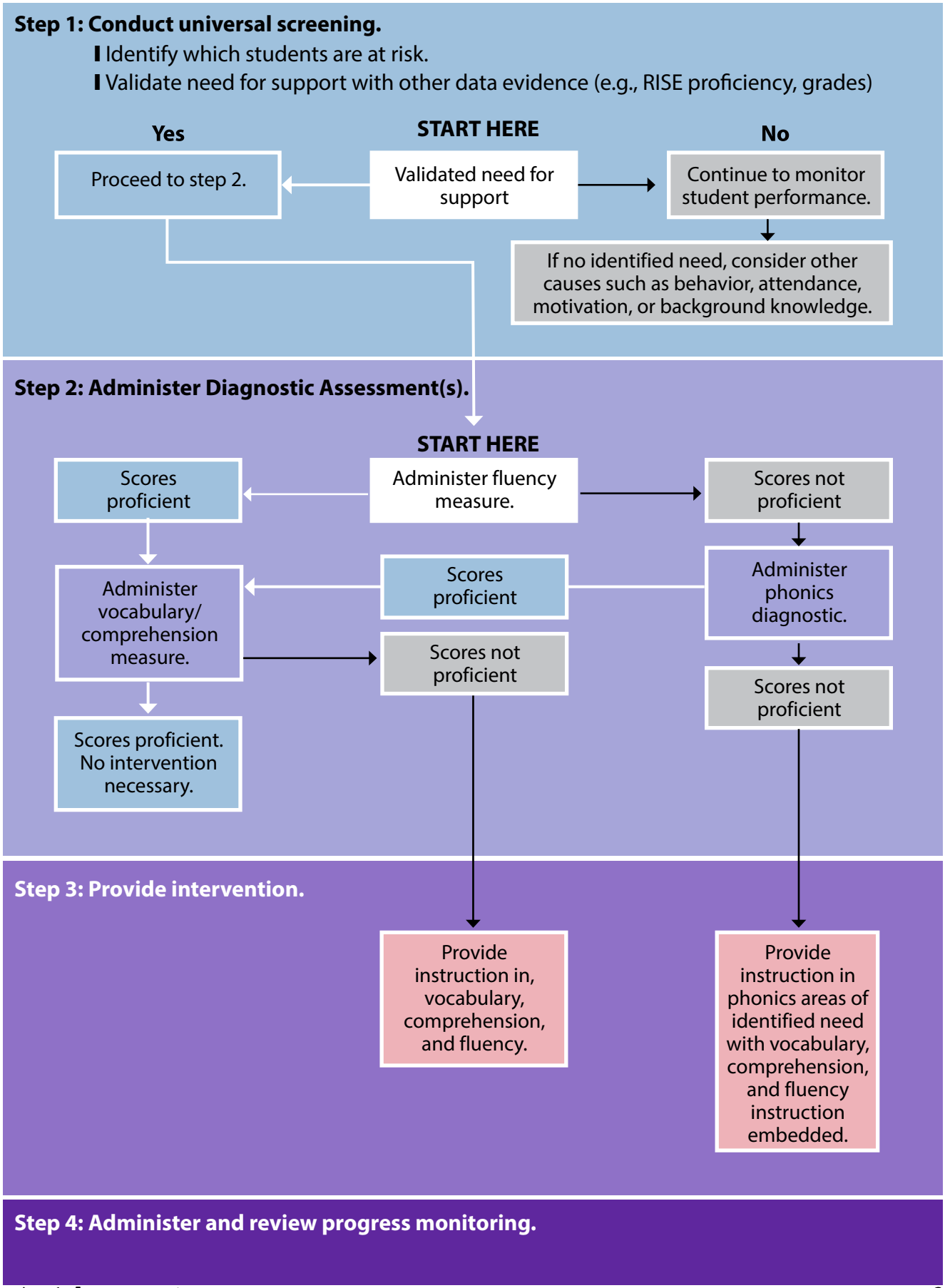


Table 1:
UNIVERSAL SCREENING ASSESSMENTS

Name	How Administered	Group or Individually	Cost	Time	Grade Level
Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test: Levels 4 through AR	Paper	Group	$107.55 for a package of 25	55 minutes	Grades 4–12
Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE)	Computer	Group	$5.25 per student	50-90 minutes	Grades PreK–12
The HMH Reading Inventory (formally Scholastic Reading Inventory or SRI)	Computer	Group	Package prices vary:	20-40 minutes	Grades K–12
MAZE test found in CARI: Acadience 7–8	Paper	Group	$1.50 per student, per assessment for each school year	MAZE triad takes approximately 15 minutes to complete	Grades 7–8

Table 2:
DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

Name	How Administered	Group/ Individually	Cost	Time	Grade Level
Assessing Reading Multiple Measures	Paper	Individual	Free books are available through elementary feeder schools provided by USBE	Times vary by assessment	Grades K–12
iReady	Computer	Individually	Varies based on number of licenses	About three 45-minute class sesssions	K–12 (diagnostic element only)
MAZE test found in CARI: Acadience 7–8	Paper	Group	$1.50 per student, per assessment for each school year	MAZE triad takes approximately 15 minutes to complete	Grades 7–8
Oral Reading (OR) test found in CARI: Acadience 7–8	Paper	Individually	$1.50 per student, per assessment for each school year	12 minutes	Grades 7–8
Six-Minute Solution	Paper	Individually	$149.95 for teacher resource book	6 minutes	Grades K–12

Table 3:
PROGRESS MONITORING ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	How Administered	Group/ Individually	Cost	Time	Grade Level
Silent Reading (SR) test found in CARI: Acadience 7–8	Paper	Group	$1.50 per student, per assessment for each school year	45 minutes	Grades 7–8
Easy CBM	Computer	Group	Free or up-grade at $39.99 per year/ 200 students	30–60 minutes	Grades 3–8

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Though every individual student may have differences in their reading profiles, adolescents with reading difficulties will, in general, fall into one of the following categories (see "Screening for Reading Problems in Grades 4–12" by the RTI Action Network for more information):

- **Late-Emergent Students with Reading Disabilities:** These are students who were able to keep up with early reading demands but for whom later demands became too great.
- **Instructional Casualties:** Not all schools have strong reading programs in place. Although there has been a strong emphasis on improving reading instruction in the early grades, students that are considered "instructional casualties" may not have received sufficient instruction.
- **Students Requiring Ongoing Intervention:** Students who received intervention at the early grades may make progress, but not at a rate sufficient to allow them to be successful in the general education program without ongoing assistance.
- **Multilingual Learners (ELLs):** English language screeners and annual proficiency/growth assessments need to be considered when developing literacy and language plans for these students.

Framework and Planning
for Reading Intervention Classes

CLASS STRUCTURE

Tier II and III reading instruction for developing adolescent readers may be provided through a course that is part of the school's master schedule. Ideally, this course should be in addition to the students' participation in an English Language Arts class. However, many adolescents with reading difficulties may remain in general education classes without additional support. The ideas in this section can be used for these students as well.

To teach a secondary reading intervention class, a Utah educator must obtain a Secondary (grades 6–12) Literacy Interventionist endorsement.

While a variety of factors affect class size (e.g., number of students needing services, master schedule, number of reading-endorsed teachers), every effort should be made to limit the number of students enrolled in a class for Tier II or Tier III reading instruction.. The following table (see Table 4) offers suggested class sizes based on the resources available at each individual school. For more information on ideal class sizes and class time length, see "The Relative Effects of Group Size on Reading Progress of Older Students with Reading Difficulties" by Vaughn, et. al.

Suggestions in this section can be adapted for large and small classes.

Table 4:
SUGGESTED READING CLASS SIZE

Optimal Size	Average Size	Large Size
10–1	1	20–25

Tiers of Reading Instruction

For more information about Utah MTSS and descriptions of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instruction, see Utah MTSS 3-Tier Critical Components Definitions.

Additionally, if reading intervention courses cannot be built into the master schedule, school leaders may need to find creative ways to find additional time for reading instruction. If students are placed in reading intervention classes, these assignments should remain fluid based on progress-monitoring data (see section 2), meaning students should be able to exit out of the intervention class when data supports this move. Adolescents with reading difficulties increase their odds for improvement in proportion to how much time they are immersed in reading activities. For that reason, a school leadership team or literacy team should consider the implementation of schoolwide literacy initiatives.

TIME ALLOCATION

Depending on the school, adolescents may be enrolled in classes that are 45-, 60-, or 90-minutes long. No matter the length of the reading intervention class, students should engage in whole-class instruction, small-group instruction, and independent practice each time they attend class. To prevent any confusion, we offer the following definitions:

- **Whole-class instruction** occurs when all students in the class receive teacher-led explicit instruction on the same strategy or skill with minimal differentiation. Whole-class instruction allows the teacher to efficiently teach or review skills that all students in the class need to master. However, whole-class instruction reduces the amount of time teachers can interact with individual students. Whole-class instruction should focus on those strategies that all students need assistance, particularly vocabulary and comprehension strategies.
- **Small-group instruction** refers to a teacher working with a group of 3–6 students who are clustered together based on their common need to learn a similar skill or participate in a common learning strategy or activity. Small-group instruction not only allows teachers time to interact with individual students, but also allows students to support each other. During small-group instruction, teachers help students with their skill deficiencies (i.e., vocabulary/comprehension, fluency, phonics) while ensuring that the remaining students are engaged in meaningful independent practice. Students rotate between small-group instruction and independent practice as time permits. More information on grouping is included later in this section.
- **Independent practice** specifies the part of the lesson when students are given the opportunity to work on and master concepts presented either in whole-class or small-group instruction. Independent practice can occur in a group, partners, or individually.

What is Explicit Instruction?

"Explicit instruction is systematic, direct, engaging, and success oriented—and has been shown to promote achievement for all students. The effectiveness of explicit instruction has been validated again and again in research involving both general education and special education students. While it has proven to be very helpful for normally progressing students, it is essential for students with learning challenges. Explicit instruction is absolutely necessary in teaching content that students could not otherwise discover. For example, without explicit input, how would an individual discover the sound associated with a letter, the quantity associated with a number, the steps in an efficient math algorithm, the order of operations in algebra, the process for sounding out words, the construction of a persuasive essay, the elements in scientific inquiry, or a spelling rule for dropping the final e? Explicit instruction is helpful not only when discovery is impossible, but when discovery may be inaccurate, inadequate, incomplete, or inefficient." *Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). Explicit Instruction: Effective & Efficient Teaching. New York. Guilford Press.*

TIME ALLOCATION & CONFIGURATIONS

Instructional time needs to be organized to include whole-class instruction, small-group instruction, and independent practice, but equal time does not need to be spent on each type of instruction. Table 5 illustrates approximate suggested time allocations for each instruction type.

Table 5: TIME ALLOCATION

Class size	45-minute class	60-minute class	90-minute class
Whole-class instruction	10 minutes	15 minutes	20–25 minutes
Small-group instruction & independent practice	35 minutes	50 minutes	60–70 minutes

Point to Consider:

Although these time allocations are meant specifically for designated reading classes, the same time allocations can be used by general ELA classroom teachers. While this may not be the structure of class every day, teachers may choose to designate one or two days a week for small group intervention.

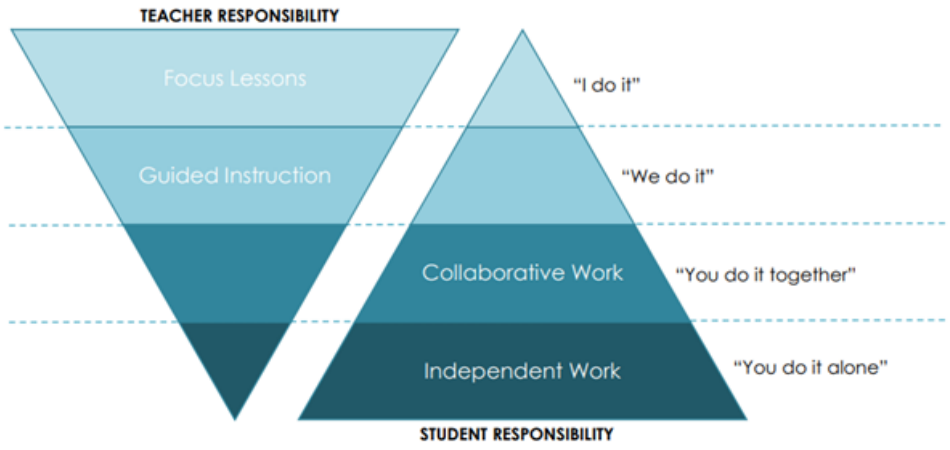
SMALL-GROUP INSTRUCTION CONFIGURATIONS

Three things must be done in advance to make small group instruction effective:

1. Clear and explicit expectations should be set and practiced to prepare students for routines during instruction so that students know their routines and accountability while in small groups or independent practice. For example, if a teacher is planning to work with a small group, they should spell out exactly what individuals need to accomplish during this time and what type of interaction they are allowed to have with the teacher (if any).
2. Small-group instruction may occur at the same time as independent practice. If so, independent practice should be rigorous, yet manageable so that students stay on task and are not distracted by the small group instruction.
3. Plan flexible grouping strategies to help all students engage in learning and to use time effectively. This grouping should be planned based on data that identified students' instructional needs (fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, etc.).

Once teachers have planned around these three considerations, teachers need to determine how to allocate instructional time within their small-group instruction. The gradual release model of responsibility is recommended for whole-class and small-group instruction (see Chart 1).

Chart 2:
THE GRADUAL RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY MODEL



For a more detailed explanation of how the Gradual Release of Responsibility can be used during small-group instruction, see: Achieve the Core: Planning the Small Group Reading Lesson

The following resources (including Table 6) provide additional information for planning small-group instruction:

- Resource for Setting Expectations from CORE 21-Day Small Group Planner
- Sample Small Group Intervention Planning Form from Intervention Central

Table 6:

FOUR OPTIONS FOR MANAGING TIER 2 SMALL-GROUP INSTRUCTION

Simple	Complex	More Complex	Most Complex
Small Group	Small Group	Small Group/ Literacy Center	Small Group/ Literacy Center
Students are pulled from independent/ partner work to meet for small group	Students are pulled from independent/ partner work to meet for small group	Students are pulled from independent/ partner work or interactive literacy	Students rotate between small group instruction
Remaining students working independently or with a partner to complete daily tasks.	Remaining students working independently or with a partner to complete weekly tasks.		SG LC LC LC

From Reutzel, D. R., & Clark, S. K. (2019). Differentiating Instruction to Meet Student Needs. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Authors), *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction* (6th ed., pp. 376–377). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Finally, teachers need to make sure that they help students set and monitor reading goals based on common data points within the school. This is most effectively done through student conferences.

Resources to Aid in Planning Student Conferences:

- General Resource: Goal Setting and Progress Monitoring to Address a Literacy Issue: The PRO-PeL Initiative (Iowa Reading Research Center)
- Student-Led Conference Resources

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE GROUP CONFIGURATIONS

Secondary teachers may have reservations about how small-group instruction and independent practice can occur simultaneously in their classrooms. Be assured; it can be done successfully. Students were taught this way throughout grades K–6, so they are familiar with the routine. Through careful planning and training, students can effectively complete independent practice.

Determine the number of independent practice activities needed based on the number of student groups. For example, a teacher completing small group instruction with five students may have the remaining students divided among three different independent practices activities—working either as a group or individually. The following are examples of independent practice activities that would be appropriate for developing adolescent readers.

- Listening to audio books paired with print version (please note that simply listening to an audiobook builds listening, and not reading, comprehension)
- Researching a chosen topic
- Writing in reading response journals
- Engaging in reciprocal reading
- Reading with a partner with related accountability tasks

Using Stations at the Secondary Level

A great strategy for secondary teachers, whether in a general ELA classroom or a reading intervention class, is the use of stations. This allows the teacher to provide intervention to multiple small groups, while keeping the other students in the classroom on-task. View an example of this strategy in action.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT AND BUILDING A SCHOOL LITERACY TEAM

Secondary reading classes should be set within a school-wide literacy plan developed by a school literacy team. This team could be made up of a variety of individuals, including the school or district literacy specialist, reading-endorsed teachers from across the content areas, and an administrator. This team determines what standards will be used to monitor student reading growth, assess reading proficiency, and track achievement. Oftentimes in secondary situations, the same standards that are used in core ELA classes are used to develop lessons, create assessments, and monitor progress in reading classes. However, the standards in the secondary grades do not focus on the needs of adolescent readers who experience literacy difficulties in fluency, decoding, phonics, and/or phonemic awareness.

Bringing a literacy team together to determine how to align and/or develop the standards for the reading course addresses this issue and also allows for differentiated instruction for the diverse needs of students. This task can be accomplished by looking at grade-level standards and the anchor standards from the Utah ELA Core standards. However, make sure to consider that these standards may not meet all the needs of students with reading challenges (as mentioned above). Once the literacy team has selected standards, they can then decide on how and when these standards will be taught by creating a curriculum map or pacing guide. For those using standard-based or proficiency-based learning/teaching and grading practices, proficiency scales can also be created to help teachers develop appropriate assessments to monitor progress for proficiency and growth.

***Note:** While it is not within the scope of this section to address assessment in reading, it is worthwhile to note that adolescents with reading difficulties should have multiple opportunities in different modalities to show and attain mastery in the areas of reading where they experience challenge and have opportunities to exit from the reading intervention class.*

EXAMPLES OF READING STANDARDS, MAP, & PROFICIENCY SCALES

- Example of Secondary Reading Standards for a Tier II Reading Intervention Class
- Example of a Secondary Reading Curriculum Map for a Tier II Intervention Class
- Example of Proficiency Scales for Secondary Reading Standards

LESSON PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

There are many factors to consider when developing lessons for reading intervention classes. The following is a list of ideas. This list is not exhaustive, and some students will need more support. Some of these items are expanded upon in section three.

PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Comprehensive Approach:** Make sure to consider both depth and breadth in the strategies used and use a variety of tactics. Don't focus on one reading development strategy and sacrifice another. Students need many tools.
- **Equity:** Consider issues of equity. For example, some students may have access to texts and materials that are not as easily accessible for other students. Issues of equity can also be addressed when teachers know their students and review data. In addition, teachers should select texts that act as mirrors to students' experiences and viewpoints, and as windows, which are texts that provide a glimpse into differing experiences and viewpoints (Bishop, 1990). Use best judgment when selecting texts for individuals and small groups. Consider community and cultural norms and priorities when selecting class-wide texts.
- **Text Variety & Complexity:** Include a variety of informational and literary texts when planning lessons and teach strategies for accessing both types. Be sure to consider text complexity when selecting texts for students to interact with as a whole class, with partners, or individually.
- **Differentiation:** Provide opportunities for differentiation both with text selection and reading tasks. Consider reading objectives as well. For example, if students are learning to identify theme, it might be appropriate to allow them to listen to the audio version of the book while following along with the text. For class reading, use multiple levels of the same text if possible. Remember that students should read independently on level and that the class should read texts at a slightly higher level (with support). Grouping can help with this structuring. Lower students can be paired with higher students in a jigsaw, for example. Students can read the same text and discuss. When creating differentiated reading tasks, consider providing different ways for students to respond to a text (depth of knowledge levels should be considered).
- **Follow Through:** Make sure to practice the idea of "teach and reteach." Use formative and summative assessment to follow up with what students are learning. Provide multiple opportunities for students to maintain their skills and to transfer them to other areas of reading and life.

What is Text Complexity?

Text complexity refers to the level of challenge a text provides based on three considerations:

- *Quantitative features: Levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands*
- *Qualitative features: Readability measures and other scores of text complexity*
- *Reader/text factors: Reader variables (such as motivation, knowledge, and experiences) and task variables (such as purpose and the complexity generated by the task assigned and the questions posed)*

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- **Data:** Use a variety of data as you plan lessons. Review the assessment section of this guide. Teachers generate much data about each student (grades, test scores, reading logs, anecdotal records, teacher observations, etc.). However, it is important to also consider data from standardized tests.
- **Confidence:** Provide opportunities for students to build confidence in their reading skills, including both social and emotional confidence. Set students up for success in reading by talking through the reading, chunking it, and discussing it with their peers.
- **Model:** Teachers need to model effective reading strategies. For example, show what it looks like to question, visualize, and connect with the text.
- **Reading Time:** Make sure there is sufficient time in the lesson for reading. Reading to students is not enough; they need opportunities to read on their own with self-selected and assigned texts.
- **Writing Time:** Support students to develop independence in reading and writing simultaneously. These are overlapping skills that build on one another. Spend time on both (even in a class designed only for reading).
- **Serving subgroups:** The ideas in this section can be used and adapted to help serve EL students, students with cognitive or physical disabilities, and students with economic challenges.

School Leader Walkthroughs During Literacy Instruction

"Guide and Checklists for a School Leader's Walkthrough During Literacy Instruction in Grades 4–12" from the Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast was developed to assist school leaders in observing specific evidence-based practices during literacy instruction and students' independent use or application of these practices. Use the tool to conduct brief and frequent walkthroughs throughout the year and as a self-reflection and planning tool for educators.

Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

This section contains a collection of suggested instructional strategies, resources, and curriculum that are evidence-based and aligned to the four building blocks of reading: **phonics, fluency, academic vocabulary, and comprehension**. These building blocks should also be the foundational skills taught in a class that addresses the needs of adolescent readers. In addition, this section contains suggestions for how to build schema, or relevant background knowledge, to improve comprehension. When planning for instruction, schools should focus on competencies that are most relevant to their students based on identified needs through diagnostic assessment (see Section 1: Assessment).

PHONICS & WORD STUDY

The primary focus of phonics instruction is to help readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (or phonemes) to: (1) form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns and (2) help them learn how to apply this knowledge to their reading. Phonics instruction is best provided systematically. In a systematic approach, the teacher follows a planned sequence of all the phonics elements. This type of instruction typically occurs in grades 1–3. For students who demonstrate a phonics need based on their diagnostic assessment, the next step is to align phonics instruction to their identified need. Many explicit, systemic sequences of phonics instruction exist, and there is not a single research-proven sequence. Most sequences identify the most important or largest skills first (see this post by Tim Shanahan for more info).

Once the targeted phonics skill area has been identified, instruction can begin. An effective phonics lesson involves explicit, systematic instruction and should include the following essential components: unknown sight words, sound and letter symbol(s) representative of the new phonics skill, and practice working with examples at the word, phrase, sentence, and connected text level. The sample phonics lesson plan template (Table 7) provides a model of all these essential components.

A common misunderstanding is the belief that secondary students who need phonics instruction likely qualify for Special Education services; this is not always true. Students must not only be familiar with sounds, but also with syllables and morphemes to become strong readers. Most adolescents, even those struggling with reading, can sound out basic phonics patterns. However, they may struggle with more complex, multisyllabic words and do not have the skills needed to decode these types of words. These readers also need support in identifying and reading the meaningful parts of words (or morphemes) such as roots, affixes, and Greek combining forms. This approach to phonics is often called "advanced phonics" or "word study" and is critical for students in intermediate grade levels. Students must understand syllable patterns and morphology to comprehend much

of the academic vocabulary that is common in secondary reading materials (Leko, 2016).

Table 7:
PHONICS LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE EXAMPLE

TARGETED PHONICS ELEMENT

Instructional Activity	Instructional Activity Details	Materials	Time
1. Review previous lesson.	Component to be reviewed: ☐ PA ☐ Component to be reviewed: PA ☐ Letter/alphabet skill Previous phonics skill Sight-word reading Word list:		2 minutes
New Lesson/Concept			
2. State learning intentions and success criteria.			30 seconds
3. Phonemic awareness	Activating phonemic awareness, including articulation:	☐ Elkonin Boxes ☐ Sound chips	2–3 minutes
4. Letter/sound correspondence		☐ Sound/spelling card	30 seconds
5. Practice word reading for accuracy.	☐ Blend and read words ☐ Sort Words Word list:	☐ Blending routine: ▪ Sound by sound ▪ Continuous ▪ Whole word ▪ Spelling focused	5 minutes
6. Practice sight word/ irregular phonics.	Word list:	☐ Sight word cards ☐ Sight word strips ☐ Sight word fluency	2–3 minutes
7. Practice reading for fluency.	Word list: Phrase list: Sentence list: ☐ Speed drill:	Word, phrase, and sentence handout ☐ Elkonin Boxes ☐ Sound chips ☐ Alphabet Tiles	5 minutes
8. Practice dictation. ☐ Words ☐ Phrases	Word dictation list: Phrase dictation list: ☐ Word chaining ☐ Word building ☐ Phoneme-grapheme mapping ☐ Other _____	☐ Sound/spelling card ☐ Paper/pencil ☐ White board marker	3–5 minutes

9. Practice reading text.	Repeated reading (at least 3 times): ☐ Cloze reading ☐ Choral reading ☐ Echo reading ☐ Whisper reading ☐ Duet ☐ Partner ☐ Retell/summarize ☐ Other _____	☐ Decodable or other text	10 minutes

***Note**: The following charts include curricular resources that would assist secondary educators in developing their students' phonics skills.*

Table 8:
BASIC PHONICS

Program/	Publisher	Grades	Cost	Time
HD Word Essentials	Really Great Reading	5–8	$19.00 per student workbook	1-year program
HD Word Linguistics	Really Great Reading	8–12	$19.00 per student workbook	1-year program
Phonics Boost	Really Great Reading	2–12	$399.00	80 lessons
SpellRead	Really Great Reading	2–12	Contact company for pricing	3 phases/

Table 9:
ADVANCED PHONICS

Program/Resources	Publisher	Grades	Cost	Time
Advanced Word Study	University of Utah Reading Clinic (UURC)	3-8	Free. Contact UURC for training	20 mins per lesson, 70+ lessons
Elevate	Reading Horizons	4-12	Contact company for free 14-day trial	Individualiz
Phonics Blitz	Really Great Reading	4-12	$259.00	15–20
Phonics Lesson Library: Multisyllable Edition Phonics Lesson Library: Multisyllable Edition (with decodable passages)	95% Group	4-8	$1,275.00	18 weeks
Rewards	Voyager Sopris Learning	4-12	$11.95 per book $99.95 per 10 books	20 lessons,

FLUENCY

Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and appropriate intonation and expression (Rasinski, 2006; Rasinski, Padak, McKeon, Wilfong, Friedauer, & Heim, 2005). Fluent readers automatically recognize words and can comprehend text when reading silently or aloud since they are not overburdened by decoding words. When reading aloud, they sound natural and expressive.

Students who struggle to read fluently often pause to sound out words making their reading sound choppy and awkward. Their focus and time are spent trying to decode words, leaving little mental energy and time for comprehension. Students may also fluently read some texts and not others. The difficulty of a text, the amount of practice a student has with a text, and their familiarity with the topic, text type, and vocabulary all influence fluency. Therefore, "a reader who is considered fluent at one point but does not continue to read regularly and widely could have difficulty with fluency later or in specific situations" (National Institute of Literacy, 2007, p. 12).

As students enter upper grades, fluency becomes increasingly important because the amount of reading required increases substantially. Students whose reading is slow or laborious will have trouble meeting the reading demands of their grade levels.

Terms to Know

- ***Automaticity**: Results when words are recognized immediately without having to decode sounds or syllables*
- ***Fluency**: The ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with expression*
- ***Prosody**: Interpreting cues such as punctuation, italics, and boldface words with appropriate pauses, stops, intonation, and pitch variation*
- ***Rate**: The speed of reading*

(Razinski, 2006).

EFFECTIVE FLUENCY INSTRUCTION & INTERVENTIONS

Students should have frequent and regular opportunities to practice reading. To improve fluency, reading aloud is preferable to reading silently. Many secondary teachers use the Round Robin or Popcorn Reading technique and may consider this to be an effective instructional strategy. Round Robin or Popcorn Reading refers to one student reading while everyone else listens. Then, another student takes a turn, and then, another. This practice is not sound as it allows for so little reading practice and is inefficient (Shanahan, 2015). Additionally, as students' vocabularies improve and expand, especially when it comes to their knowledge of content-area vocabulary, their fluency will also improve. The Active Reading Strategies (Chart 3) provides effective practices for students reading aloud.

Chart 3:

ACTIVE READING STRATEGIES DESCRIPTIONS

NAME:

FLUENCY RUBRIC				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Expression and Volume	Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.	Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.	Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation.	Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.
Smoothness	Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.	Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many rough spots.	Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.	Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/ or sentence structures.
Pace	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads fast and slow throughout reading.	Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading.

Score:

Scores of 10 or more indicate that the student is making good progress in fluency.

Scores below 10 indicate that the student needs additional instruction in fluency.

Rubric modified from Tim Rasinski—*Creating Fluent Readers*

Targeted fluency instruction may also be required based on assessment data. The following instructional practices are proven to improve fluency.

Repeated readings with corrective feedback is an effective intervention for adolescents who have not yet attained sufficient fluency (effect size = .67) (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016). The goal of repeated reading is to improve students' ability to decode text with automaticity to improve comprehension. The steps of Repeated Reading include:

1. Read aloud a short passage (no more than 200 words and that is engaging) to a student.
2. The student then reads the passage silently any number of times, and then practices reading it aloud. Students should have the opportunity to practice reading aloud by themselves since this helps avoid embarrassment as we all have difficulty reading unfamiliar texts aloud.
3. If the student misreads a word or hesitates for longer than 5 seconds, read the word aloud and have the student repeat the word correctly before continuing through the passage. If the student asks for help with any word, read the word aloud. If the student requests a word definition, give the definition.
4. When the student has completed the passage, have him or her read the passage again focusing on improvement based on your feedback.

Provide models of fluent reading to students. Students in need of improving their reading fluency benefit from experiencing and witnessing strong models of fluent reading. These models provide students a standard to attain and can be in the form of teacher read-alouds or audiobooks paired with written text. Some may think that adolescents are too old for read-alouds, but they not only benefit from the practice, they also enjoy it (Trelease, 2013). While reading aloud, demonstrate to students how to combine words into meaningful phrases. For example, explain that a question mark shows that readers should raise their voices a little at the end of the sentence. Also show students how to sweep their fingers under words and phrases instead of pointing to each individual word as they read.

Below are some available tools to improve students' reading fluency (see Table 10).

Table 10:
FLUENCY CURRICULAR RESOURCES

Program/Strategies	Publisher	Grades	Description	Cost	Time
E-Solution: Fluency, Vocabulary, & Comprehension	Voyager Sopris Learning	3-12	The program combines fluency practice with vocabulary and comprehension strategies using informational text	Contact company for pricing	6 minutes/ day
Fluency-Oriented Reading Instruction	Stahl, Kuhn, Schwanenflugel & their colleagues (2003, 2005, 2006, 2008)	2–12	Students accrue miles on the page' as teachers scaffold challenging text through purposeful planning and use of consistent, interactive routines	Free	Varies

Fluency Small Group Intervention Model	Achieve the Core	6-12	Protocols to be used by individuals who will be leading small groups of students on their journey toward improving reading fluency	free	~15 min per session
Fluency Timed Reading	Reading A-Z	Middle grades	Assess reading fluency with two types of assessments	Free	1–5 minutes
Quick and Easy High School Reading	Ohio Literacy Alliance	9–12	One-minute probes, developed by Tim Rasinski at Kent State University, were drawn from 9th, 10th,	free	one-minute
Strategic Adolescent Reading Intervention (STARI) Fluency Routine Chart	SERP Institute	6–12	Short fluency protocols for timed readings	free	Few minutes/ day

VOCABULARY

Research on vocabulary instruction reveals a strong connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (National Institute of Literacy, 2007). To comprehend texts, students require both fluent word recognition skills (i.e., decoding) and an average than greater vocabulary (Diamond & Gutlohn, 2006). In fact, understanding the meanings of words makes up as much as 90% of content comprehension (Hirsch, 2003). Thus, it is no surprise that the National Reading Panel (NICHHD, 2000) identified vocabulary as one of five essential areas for reading instruction. Vocabulary instruction becomes an even greater priority in upper grades as literary and informational texts grow increasingly more complex.

Syntheses of research (Graves, 2016; Honig, Diamond, Gutlohn, Cole, 2008) provide a framework for effective vocabulary instruction for students at all grade levels. Teachers cannot rely on simple word exposure and reading to increase students' vocabularies. This framework includes three parts: (a) teaching the meanings of individual words; (b) teaching word-learning strategies; (c) and fostering word consciousness.

Teaching the meanings of individual words

Students need frequent, repeated exposure to new words before they become part of their repertoire. When students know a word, they can flexibly use it in both oral and written forms (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan 2013). Intentional selection of words for explicit vocabulary instruction and distributed practice is critical. Words for explicit instruction should be those that are worth learning and worth the instructional time (Shanahan, 2020). Table 11 describes the classification of words in the three-tiered model of vocabulary development and corresponding instructional recommendations (Beck et al., 2013; Diamond & Gutlohn, 2006).

Table 11:

CLASSIFICATION OF WORDS

in the three-tiered model of vocabulary development and instructional recommendations

Tier	Definition	Examples	Instructional Recommendation
TIER 1	The most common words that typically appear in oral conversations and everyday speech. Students are likely to learn these words indirectly.	*between, chair, phone, food, night, some, walk*	These words rarely require instruction for most students, with the exception of English language learners and students who are word impoverished.
TIER 2	Often referred to as academic words, appearing in a wide range of texts across multiple disciplines. These words are used more in writing than in speaking and students are less likely to learn tier 2 words independently.	*compare, consequence, adjacent, splendid, precede, auspicious, retrospect*	These words are candidates for explicit instruction and distributed practice.
TIER 3	Words that are more common in informational text than in literature and are key to understanding new concepts. Tier 3 words are often defined within the text.	*mitosis, anthracite, mycelium, integer, thesis, filibuster, allegory*	These words are pre-taught, explained at point of contact, or as the need arises.

Teachers need to first expose students to new words in the context of the texts they are reading. Students should have access to "student-friendly" definitions of the words rather than those found in dictionaries because such definitions can be confusing and incomprehensible to them. Students and teachers can then work with these student-friendly definitions by associating them with pictures, rewriting them, studying familiar synonyms and antonyms, considering examples and non-examples, discussing the differences between the new words and related words, creating new sentences, putting them on word walls and so on (Beck, et. al., 2013; Graves, 2016). Below (see Table 15) are additional activities that teach students individual words.

What Does it Take to "Know" a Word?: The Four Levels of Vocabulary Knowledge

Understanding the extent of knowledge students have about vocabulary words can help teachers determine which words to teach and how to teach them. Dale's (1965) four levels of vocabulary knowledge can help teachers assess the depth of students' knowledge of individual words:

1. *Students have never seen or heard the word before,*
2. *Students have seen or heard the word, but they don't know what the word means,*
3. *Students have a vague understanding of the word and can connect it to a situation or a concept, and*
4. *Students know the word well enough to explain it and use it.*

Table 12:
TEACHING MEANINGS OF INDIVIDUAL WORDS

Activity	Description
Bumper Words	Categorizing activity that helps students to make connections and learn relationships between words under study.
Linear Rays	A word continuum that helps students make connections between words and see subtle distinctions between words.
Semantic Feature Analysis	Use a grid to illuminate connections between key vocabulary terms and important features related to a topic.
Semantic Gradient	A word continuum often beginning with antonyms at each end, building a bridge from one antonym to another. This strategy helps students distinguish between shades of meaning.
Story Impressions	Make a double-spaced list of vocabulary words in the center of a page and ask students to write a story or description of the content using the words provided.
Three-Dimensional Words (or Vocabulary 4 Square)	In a grid, students provide a definition, sentence, drawing, and antonym for a vocabulary word.
Word Questioning	Challenges students to define, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate target words in their reading.
Word Sorts for Narrative Texts	Place a list of important words from the story on index cards. Then ask students to sort the words into groups that supports the telling of the story.
Word Wall	A group of words and their meanings that are displayed on a wall in a large font so they are easily visible and accessible to students to use

TEACHING WORD-LEARNING STRATEGIES

In addition to knowing the meanings of words, students need to be equipped with the skills to independently infer the meanings of unknown words using words parts, context clues, and/or the dictionary. Below (see Table 13) are suggestions for teaching word-learning strategies to students.

Table 13:
TEACHING WORD-LEARNING STRATEGIES

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Context Clues	Hints within the text that may help a student guess at the meaning of a word. Context clues include definitions, restatements, examples, or descriptions.
Morphological Matrix	Build word families by providing a main root and then prefixes and suffixes that can be combined with the root to generate words.
Word Tree	A picture of a tree contains branches that have a prefix, root, or suffix written on them. Students add leaves with words that correspond to the branches.

FOSTERING WORD CONSCIOUSNESS

Word consciousness is awareness and interest in words and their meaning (Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2008). A word conscious classroom has a wide variety of reading materials available and a teacher who shares their love for words. Students are provided with opportunities to interact with words daily to ignite their word-learning passion (see Table 14). Any opportunity to play with language—such as palindromes, anagrams, idioms, figurative language, hink pinks, jokes and riddles—causes students to be active learners, which is key to the development of word consciousness.

Table 14:
FOSTERING WORD CONSCIOUSNESS

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Etymology	Share the origin of words and their historic development.
Neologism	Have students create their own words by combining parts of existing words (i.e. rescandal: a scandal that is the same as a previous scandal)
Onomastic	The study of the origin and form of names. Book suggestions: *Names and Games by R. Eckler* *What's in a Name? by P. Dickson* *Dictionary of Word Play by D. Morice*
Vocabulary Games for the Classroom by Robert Marzano (2010)	Provides teachers with thirteen games designed to build academic vocabulary.

Lastly, many resources exist to provide curricular support for vocabulary instruction (see Table 15).

Table 15:
CURRICULAR RESOURCES
that will assist with vocabulary instruction and planning

Program/Resources	Grades	Cost
Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction (2nd Ed.). Guilford Press.	K–12	$24.00
Graves, M. F. (2016). The Vocabulary Book: Learning & Instruction (2nd Ed). Teachers College Press.	K–12	$29.95
Graves, M. F., August, D., & J. Mancilla-Martinez. (2012). Teaching Vocabulary to English Language Learners. Teachers College Press.	K–12	$26.95
Lexipedia by Vantage Learning	n/a	free
Marzano, R. J., & Pickering, D. J. (2005). Building Academic Vocabulary: Teacher's Manual. ASCD.	K–12	List Price: $28.95
Merriam-Webster Visual Dictionary by QA International	n/a	Free
Rewards (Intermediate, Secondary, Plus: Science, Plus: Social Studies, Writing by Voyager Sopris	4-12	See publisher website for current pricing.
Sadlier	6–12	See publisher website for current pricing.

Sprenger, M. (2016). Everyday Vocabulary Strategies: Quick Reference Guide. ASCD.	K–12	List Price: $12.95
Sprenger, M. (2013). Teaching the Critical Vocabulary of the Common Core: 55 Words that Make or Break Student Understanding. ACSD.	n/a	List Price: $27.95
Vocabulary Handbook by CORE	n/a	$34.00
Vocabulary Surge by 95% Group	4–8	$99.00
Voyager Sopris Learning	4–12	See publisher website for current pricing.
Word Generation by SERP	4–8	Free Downloads

COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension can be defined as the level of understanding a reader has of a specific text (Snow, 2002). When a passage is read, readers activate what they currently understand about a topic and use this knowledge before, during and after reading to clarify misconceptions and construct meaning. The International Literacy Association (ILA) points out that comprehension goes beyond a surface-level understanding of a text, noting that it includes "understanding what is expressed outright or implied as well as interpreting what is viewed, read, or heard by drawing on one's knowledge and experience" (ILA Glossary).

Comprehension difficulties are particularly impactful as students move up in grades, as the content they read becomes more specialized and complex. Regardless of the continual need for focused instruction on comprehension, some secondary teachers teach under a "vaccination model" of reading comprehension instruction—operating under the assumption that students get instruction in comprehension in elementary school and are thus "vaccinated" against future comprehension struggles (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). However, as the demands of reading increase, so does the need for explicit and systematic instruction in reading comprehension. This need is complicated by the fact that comprehension is context dependent—a student who may excel at understanding their favorite fantasy series might have difficulties reading an assigned passage of a biology textbook, for example. Thus, general measures of reading comprehension may not capture a student's skill in reading from the wide variety of genres, context, and multimodalities required in a secondary classroom.

The good news is that comprehension instruction has been linked to increased reading achievement across disciplines (Duke et al, 2011). A variety of studies, however, have found minimal comprehension instruction occurring in secondary classrooms (Pressley, 2002; Magnusson, Roe, & Blikstad-Balas, 2018). Some teachers also eschew the use of texts altogether, using the "pedagogy of telling," or teaching around the text, rather than teaching students to access rigorous content-area texts (Moje, 2008).

Instead of teaching around the text, teachers should use explicit and systemic comprehension instruction in all classrooms, in which teachers make the keys for unlocking complex text visible and attainable for students. Explicitly and systemically teaching comprehension strategies means breaking down for students what good readers think and do. This focus creates readers who are purposeful, active, and in control of monitoring their own comprehension. Additionally, use a gradual release of responsibility by following these simple steps, as outlined by Duke, Pearson, Strachan, & Billman (2011):

1. ***Introduce the comprehension strategy:*** This introduction should include details about what they strategy is, how and when it is used, and why it can be helpful.

   Example: "Today we're going to learn about creating visual images in our minds as we read. Doing so helps us better comprehend what we are reading and helps the story come alive for us."

2. ***Model for students how to complete the comprehension strategy:*** Think-alouds are a fantastic way to model your reading process and show how readers use the strategy to make sense of a selected text.

   Example: This is a think-aloud for the poem "Dream Variation" by Langston Hughes.

   To fling my arms wide

   In some place of the sun,

   To whirl and to dance

   Till the white day is done.

   [*I'm picturing a young girl with bare feet and a summer dress twirling in her front yard with her arms outstretched.*]

   Then rest at cool evening

   Beneath a tall tree

   [*I'm picturing a large willow tree and sitting underneath it. Fireflies are blinking among the branches.*]

3. ***Let students help you complete the comprehension strategy:*** Collaborating together as a class is the first step in gradually releasing responsibility to the learners.

   Example: Read the next few lines of the poem and have students share what they are visualizing.

4. ***Put students into small groups to practice the comprehension strategy while you provide feedback:*** Guided practice with teacher feedback is an essential step in this process. As students collaborate on a selected text, teachers can give feedback by moving about the room and meeting with students and collecting valuable formative data on students' understanding.

   Example: Put students in small groups to continue reading the poem together. Have them share their visualizations with each other.

5. ***Let students practice the comprehension strategy independently while you provide feedback:*** Note that this process is not necessarily linear, and students may need further direct instruction or guided practice, based on their comfort when working independently.

   Example: You could have students write down their visualizations for the final stanza of the poem. Or you could give them another poem to practice using the visualization strategy.

6. ***Provide time for student reflection.*** Students need an opportunity to reflect on how their strategy use helped them and what instructional support or changes in strategy use they may need to understand the text better.

The following comprehension strategies (see Table 16) have strong, research-based evidence for improving text comprehension across disciplines (Duke, et. al, 2011):

Table 16:
COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES FOR TEXTS ACROSS DISCIPLINES

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
Activating Prior Knowledge	Activating prior knowledge is important, because it helps students make connections to the new information they will be learning. By tapping into what students already know, teachers can assist students with the learning process. When students learn to connect their experiences to the text they are currently reading they have a foundation upon which they can place new facts, ideas, and concepts.
Identifying Text Structures	Refers to how the information in a written text is organized. This strategy helps students to understand that a text might present information in a variety of ways
Making Inferences	Helping students understand when information is implied or not directly stated will improve their skills in drawing conclusions. Observations occur when we see something happening, whereas, inferences are what we figure out based on an experience.
Monitoring and Fixing	Good readers constantly try to make sense out of what they read by seeing how it fits with what they already know. This strategy teaches students to recognize when they don't understand parts of a text and to take necessary steps to restore meaning. It is best employed when students have insufficient background knowledge, weak decoding skills, unfamiliar vocabulary, or general problems with gaining meaning from print.
Predicting and Previewing	Before and while reading a text, students discuss or generate ideas about what will happen or might happen in the future based on prior knowledge, what has happened in the text so far, and their personal experiences.
Summarizing	Determining important themes and concepts. Then, condensing the ideas into their own words.
Questioning	Effective readers are always asking themselves questions. Students must be taught how to ask questions about the text and they must also be given practice in asking questions. Readers ask questions for clarification, to predict, and to integrate information from different segments of the text.
Visualizing and Creating Visual Representations	Mental images or pictures help readers to under- stand and remember what they have read. Readers can create visual and graphic displays that shows the relationships between facts, terms, and ideas within a learning task.

Table 17 provides curriculum suggestions for teaching comprehension strategies. Below are key things to consider when implementing comprehension instruction with adolescent readers:

- ***Avoid strategy instruction for strategy instruction's sake.*** All comprehension instruction should be couched in meaningful conceptual learning from text, using strategies as a tool to access that learning. Occasionally, strategy instruction gets a bad reputation, as "strategy of the week" approaches are incorrectly implemented or when strategies "become an end unto itself, rather than a set of tools for achieving and repairing comprehension" (Pearson & Cervetti, 2013, p. 531). It is vital that all strategy instruction remain focused on the gaining meaning from text and not on the use of the strategy itself (Kamil et al, 2008).
- ***Students need to learn to use combinations of strategies, rather than a single strategy approach.*** Effective readers have a repertoire of strategies that they know and can flexibly apply and adapt according to the demands of different texts and reading activities (Afflerbach, 2002). Rather than teaching students to use one strategy at a time, teachers should help students to use multiple strategies simultaneously and to make decisions about which strategies will be most helpful to them in each reading task (Liang & Dole, 2006).
- ***Effective strategy use requires metacognition—recognizing what is happening while reading, recognizing that reading is an active and meaning-making process, and using the right strategy based on that recognition.*** The overarching goal is to foster strategic reading, which Trabassco & Bouchard (2002) describe as "coordinating individual strategies, altering, adjusting, modifying, testing, and shifting tactics as is fitting until a reading comprehension problem has been solved" (p. 186).
- ***Remember the role of knowledge in comprehension.*** Background knowledge has long been connected to comprehension and has been found to be one of the most impactful components of the amount and depth of understanding students have with a text (Hirsch, 2003; Fisher & Frey, 2006). A literacy program needs to attend carefully and systematically add to the development of background knowledge because students learn only if they already have the schema to make connections between new and old information. For instance, a student will have more difficulty comprehending Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars* if they do not have information already about the threat of Nazi Germany during World War II. To develop background knowledge, students need access to a wide volume of reading opportunities, whether teacher-directed or self-selected. In addition, students need to see that reading is a way to build knowledge about topics being studied elsewhere in the curriculum.

Table 17:
COMPREHENSION STRATEGY INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Program/Strategies	Description	Grades	Cost	Time
Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) Klingner & Vaughn	CSR consists of four reading comprehension strategies that are applied before, during, and after reading.	6-12	free	varies
Project CRISS (CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies)	Focuses on three primary concepts: students (1) monitoring their learning to assess when they have understood content, (2) integrating new information with prior knowledge, and (3) being actively involved in the learning process through discussing, writing, organizing information, and analyzing the structure of text to help improve comprehension.	3	Training Cost: $50–$200 Materials: $250–$700	Semester-long curriculum
Reading Apprenticeship WestEd	Teachers using the Reading Apprenticeship framework regularly model disciplinary-specific literacy skills, help students build high-level comprehension strategies, engage students in building knowledge by making connections to background knowledge they already have, and provide ample guided, collaborative, and individual practice as an integral part of teaching their subject area curriculum.	6–12	Training Cost: $900 Manual: $30	Varies
Read Works	High-quality library of curated nonfiction and literary articles in the country, along with reading comprehension and vocabulary supports,	K–12		
Reciprocal Teaching Palinscar & Brown, 1984	Involves four strategies that guide the discussion: predicting, question generating, summarizing, and clarifying	4-12	free	varies
Strategic Adolescent Reading Intervention (STARI)	A literature-focused, Tier II intervention for students in grades 6–9 who read two or more years below grade level	6-9	Check with publisher	9 units

Online Sources for Content Knowledge-Building Texts

- *Newsela*
- *Scholastic Action Magazine*
- *Utah's Online Library*
- *Common Lit*

Adolescent Reading Motivation

Motivation matters. In study after study, research shows that reading and reading achievement among secondary students is connected closely to motivation (Guthrie, 2008). However, many students' motivation to read often begins to decline in their elementary school years—particularly those who struggled learning to read (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). To participate as engaged readers, it is essential that students not only learn how to read, but that they are also motivated intrinsically to read and to participate in reading practices.

Although teachers may value principles of motivation, it is important to recognize that motivation does not just organically result from meaningful instruction. Rather, teachers need to intentionally embed principles of motivation into their pedagogical approaches and daily lesson plans. This section highlights recommendations for teachers to help cultivate intrinsic motivation in secondary readers, specifically:

- Developing teacher beliefs that foster intrinsic motivation and student growth
- Helping students cultivate a positive reader identity
- Fostering a sense of self-efficacy
- Helping students set goals for reading
- Supporting student autonomy
- Increasing opportunities for positive collaboration between students
- Using interesting texts

CONSIDERATION #1: DEVELOP TEACHER BELIEFS THAT FOSTER INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND STUDENT GROWTH

Teachers' beliefs about reading significantly influence the beliefs their students develop about reading. Teachers who enjoy reading and incorporate opportunities for students to engage with texts in their classrooms model positive reading attitudes and practices for their students (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). The way teachers view reading is also often reflected in their curricular choices and in the types of reading and texts they value or sanction in the classroom (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999). As a result, it is important for teachers to consider the following questions:

- Do I personally enjoy reading? What kinds of reading do I value and prioritize in my life? What keeps me from reading? What are my own past and current experiences that shape my attitudes and beliefs towards reading?
- Which genres and types of text do I value and privilege in my curriculum? If I do not enjoy reading a particular genre or type of text, do I see its appeal to students? Does my distaste for the genre or text cause me to devalue these types of reading experiences?
- Do I allow students to choose to read books that interest them without restricting their choices solely by prescribed formulas for determining level and ability? What do I do to expand access to texts for students?

Teacher beliefs about students also play an integral role in student success. Research shows that when teachers believe students are high achievers, students achieve more (Rosenthal, 1994). However, research also suggests that factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, race, or minority status can affect teachers' beliefs about students' potential to achieve and impact student success in negative ways (as cited in Garcia & Cohen, 2012). For this reason, it is imperative that teachers internalize and communicate to students the message that all students can succeed. When giving feedback about what students do well, specific compliments that point out achievements reinforces students' successes. Even when feedback about required revisions or improvements is given, statements that express the teacher's beliefs in the student's ability to improve reinforces the belief that all students can achieve.

CONSIDERATION #2: HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP A POSITIVE READER IDENTITY

In addition to reading ability, reader identity influences how successful students are at completing reading tasks. How students identify as readers and how they want to be identified by others heavily influences decisions they make about how they perform their identities, which may help or hinder their learning (Moje & Dillon, 2006).

What is Reader Identity?

It includes "how capable individuals believe they are in comprehending texts, the value they place on reading, and their understandings of what it means to be a particular type of reader within a given context" (Hall, Johnson, Juzwik, Wortham & Moseley, 2010).

However, these beliefs about themselves do not develop in a vacuum; schools, peers, and teachers also shape readers' identities. Students' beliefs about learning contexts--including schools, classes, and curriculum--influence how students see themselves as learners (Dillon & Moje, 1998; Lenters, 2006). In addition, their relationships with their peers and peer perceptions play a significant role in the literacy practices and reader identities students adopt (Donaldson & Halsey, 2007; Finders, 1997). Teachers have a crucial influence on readers' identities as teacher beliefs reinforce or negate the beliefs students have about themselves as readers (Rex, 2001; Triplett, 2007; Williams, 2004). The following approaches can help teachers assist students to cultivate positive reader identities:

- *Make reader identity explicit:* Give students opportunities to define what they think it means to be a good reader, to discuss their own reader identities, and to consider social norms that shape reader identities.
- *Develop new reading identities:* Help students reflect on how they see themselves as readers now and the kind of readers they want to be in the future. Then help students set goals that will help them work towards the development of these new identities.
- *Connect students' goals to instructional choices:* After reviewing students' goals, consider how the instruction in the reading course can be designed to support students as they work towards these goals (Hall, 2016).

CONSIDERATION #3: FOSTER A SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY

Self-efficacy refers to our beliefs about our ability to complete tasks successfully (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Students who believe they can be successful at a task are more intrinsically motivated to read (MacIver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991). They are likely to read more often, choose more challenging texts, use strategies more effectively, and persist amidst difficulty (Durik et al., 2006; Guthrie &

Wigfield, 2000; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997). However, at about age seven or eight, students often experience a decline in their confidence about their abilities to succeed in school and in reading (Wigfield, 2004). Perceptions of self-efficacy are affected by personal experiences with failure and success, as well as by verbal evaluations from others (Durik, Vida, & Eccles, 2006). Students who struggle with reading are particularly apt to doubt their ability to succeed, and as a result their motivation to read decreases (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007).

Motivated students also tend to have a growth mindset as opposed to a fixed mindset. They believe they can improve in literacy. To these students, literacy is attainable with effort and persistence. Research has shown that achievement improves when both students and teachers operate with a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Students who believe they can grow in literacy make good progress (Xiaodong, Dweck, & Cohen, 2016). Teachers should always keep in mind that their students can grow, improve, and work to develop a growth mindset.

Recommendations:

- Scaffold students towards independence through explicit instruction (i.e., explanations, modeling, guided practice, reflection, and eventual independence).
- Provide instruction and design tasks and activities that offer the right amount of challenge, not too easy, not too hard.
- Use appropriate pacing (about daily and whole unit).
- Be explicit about expectations and instructions.
- Teach students to use rubrics and checklists so that they know what success looks like. Teach students to use the rubrics and checklists prior to the evaluation.
- Focus on growth by helping students track and reflect upon their progress.
- Use feedback that is specific, sincere, and that moves students forward.
- Attribute success to effort, persistence, and strategy use and failure to lack of effort, persistence, and misapplied strategy use.
- Provide opportunities for reteaching and reassessing.
- Minimize competition and comparing students.

CONSIDERATION #4: DEVELOP GOALS FOR READING

When teachers emphasize student growth and goals, students become internally motivated. These students perceive that their teachers are devoted to their learning, and, therefore, they are more likely to become motivated and invested in reading (Wentzel, 2009). However, the converse is also true. If students perceive that their teachers are not interested in their growth and development as a reader and person, they can become less engaged and motivated to read. It is imperative that students see the teacher as someone who does not simply administer tests and assignments, but rather someone who is invested in student reading achievement and literacy growth. By providing students with daily intrinsic learning goals and by helping students develop their own learning goals for reading, teachers demonstrate to students that they care about them, want them to succeed, and believe that they can succeed. When students have intrinsic goals for reading, they are more likely to learn and use strategies, experience deeper learning, persist when reading tasks become difficult, and tend to seek out challenges (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990).

Use Assessment Data to Chart Progress and Growth, and Share This Information With Students

Students are intrinsically motivated when they can see that they are making progress towards their goals (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007). Teachers can foster motivation by transparently sharing data gathered from reading assessments and progress monitoring and helping them make realistic goals based on the data.

Base Goals on Student Needs and Interests

For goals to be meaningful, they need to be driven by the student's own goals and interests (Reynolds & Symons, 2001). The following list includes practices for helping students set and achieve reading goals:

- Incorporate mini-lessons that teach students to set SMART Goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound).
- Provide autonomy so students can set their own goals, which may go beyond information reflected by formal assessments. For example, students may set goals for how many books they will read or reflect on changing their perceptions of themselves as readers.
- Have weekly and/or monthly goal check-ins. Teach students to monitor their progress towards accomplishing their goals and change actions when the goal trajectory is not as it should be. Self-regulation not only helps students with their goals but also helps build their sense of autonomy (Oats, 2019).
- Offer support for students based on information through classroom surveys, questionnaires, interest inventories, conferences, and other formal and informal ways that provide insights into students' knowledge and interests.

CONSIDERATION #5: SUPPORT STUDENT AUTONOMY

Students feel more motivated when they have control and choice in reading tasks that are connected to their personal goals. Teachers who provide students with academically significant choices allow students to take an active role in their own learning and help them learn to become self-directed learners (Guthrie, 2008).

Connect Interests to Reading Tasks

Aligning reading tasks in the classroom with topics relevant to students' lives and interests help them engage in reading (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). As teachers gather information from students throughout the year about their interests, hobbies, goals, and other aspects of their lives, they find and suggest readings that connect to them. They make learning and tasks interesting and relevant (Assor, Kapplan, & Roth, 2002). They also focus on the utility and value of learning and tasks to students' lives (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Provide Meaningful Choices to Students

Providing a level of choice and autonomy increases student motivation and achievement (Flowerday & Schraw, 2000). The following are ways to embed meaningful choices into the classroom:

- Reading materials, especially for independent reading
- Topics of study—inquiry units structured around genuine authentic questions and student interests, where students are supported as they find texts that explore the questions that interest them
- Assessment methods

- Order of class activities
- Social arrangements—choice of partners, small groups, or seating arrangements
- Classroom procedures
- Rubrics and checklists

Teachers should find ways to increase student choice, keeping in mind the need to scaffold choices throughout the year (Antonio & Guthrie, 2008), beginning the year with more limited choices, working toward the ultimate goal of students making as many choices as possible. This kind of scaffolding might include offering simple choices first, helping students practice making good choices, providing feedback to students about their choices, offering information that clarifies good choices, and affording choices within a task.

Foster Autonomy Through Teacher Actions That Increase Students' Sense of Autonomy Over Their Learning

The following are teacher actions identified by Reeve & Jang (2006) that increase or decrease students' motivation. These actions can help develop students' sense of autonomy over their learning.

- Teacher actions that increase motivation:
    - Listening to students
    - Engaging in dialogue with students about their interests and goals
    - Providing a rationale for the work
    - Inviting student questions
    - Providing encouragement in feedback
    - Recognizing challenges
- Teacher actions that decrease motivation:
    - Talking constantly
    - Providing too much detail in directions
    - Assigning work that has no clear and/or meaningful purpose
    - Asking controlling questions
    - Setting deadlines
    - Criticizing students
    - Providing answers before students participate

Increase Opportunities For Positive Collaboration With Fellow Educators And Peer To Peer In Your Classroom

Collaboration is of profound importance in the world of education. Oftentimes, there is little collaboration between the certified teacher librarian/library staff and the classroom teacher or reading teacher. Extra effort must be made to collaborate with the teacher librarian and library staff (Sturge, 2019).

Recommendation A: **Collaborate on a consistent basis with the teacher librarian and school library staff**

The library is the center of literacy within a school. Collaboration with teacher librarians and

library staff is essential in helping students feel comfortable and confident in the library space. School library impact studies have demonstrated that when librarians take on roles in leadership and instruction, such as working as co-teachers, curriculum designers, and instructional and technology coaches, students are even more likely to excel (Cohen, Poitras, Mickens, & Shirali, 2019; Loertscher, 2014).

Collaboration with teacher librarians and library staff should include:

- Set up a weekly or biweekly visit to the library.
- Create a library space that is welcoming and serves to motivate students.
- Create activities designed to increase students' reading motivation and engagement:
  - Book clubs
  - Guest speakers
  - Reading challenges
  - Book talks
  - Literature circles
  - Author visits
  - Reading time
  - Book battles
  - Book trailers
- Meet regularly to discuss unique needs of each student.
- Allow students to explore the library and check out books that interest them.
- Avoid labeling books with Lexiles or other level markers.
- Avoid labeling students as "struggling readers."

Recommendation B: **Create a Safe Classroom Environment**

Effective collaboration requires that students feel safe and comfortable. Teachers should first be sure to:

- Create a classroom environment that encourages risk.
- Set high expectations to lead to success.
- Help students learn one another's names (and absolutely make sure you know theirs).
- Celebrate the diversities within the class.
- Maintain a zero-tolerance policy for put-downs.
- Encourage different responses and interpretations of texts.

Recommendation C: **Use Multiple Instructional Strategies to Foster Collaboration Within the Classroom**

A class that invites social interactions will lead to more frequent conversations about texts, helping increase student motivation, achievement, and decrease behavioral issues. The following collaborative approaches can help engage students:

- Discussions (whole group, small group, turn and talks, and one-on-one)
- Literature circles
- Socratic seminars
- Fishbowl discussions
- One-on-one book conferences with students using a set of questions as well as informal conversations

- Question Mark Bookmarks: nonfiction, notice & note
- Think-pair-share
- Written or silent conversations
- Blogs or vlogs
- Save the Last Word for Me

As students read, providing a variety of ways to respond to that reading can appeal to multiple intelligences and learning styles. Consider alternating between:

- Oral response to reading, such as:
    - Discussion
    - Think-pair-share
    - Hot seat
    - Readers' theater
    - Fishbowl discussions
    - Socratic seminars
- Visual responses to reading, such as:
    - Creating/drawing pictures
    - Sketch to stretch
    - Induced imagery
    - Creating comics to depict main ideas

Recommendation D: **Involve Community and Family Members Who Model the Value of Literacy**

Students can be motivated by the reading and literacy experiences of those they look up to at home and in their community. Invite inspiring community and family members to share how important reading is to them in their personal lives and in their professional lives. This list of people to invite may include:

- Parents/Guardians
- Siblings
- Grandparents
- Extended Family
- Peers
- Teachers
- Mentors
- Authors
- Higher Education Faculty
- Politicians
- Athletes
- Entertainers

Activity ideas that can include family and community members for motivation could include:

- Book Clubs (including these special guests)
- Author Visits
- Read Alouds
- Guest Speakers

A Note About Parents, Guardians, and Volunteers

Make sure to communicate and include parents and guardians in your work, so they can support their students at home. See below for "How Parents Can Motivate Adolescent Readers," which gives suggestions for how they can support their student-readers at home. Additionally, always look for opportunities to involve volunteers, whether they are parents, retirees, or college students who could provide extra classroom support. One-on-one support is crucial for student success.

HOW PARENTS CAN MOTIVATE ADOLESCENT READERS

1. Set an example. Let your kids see you reading for pleasure.
2. Furnish your home with a variety of reading materials. Leave books, magazines, and newspapers around. Check to see what disappears for a clue to what interests your teenager.
3. Give teens an opportunity to choose their own books. When you and your teen are out together, browse in a bookstore or library. Go your separate ways and make your own selections. A bookstore gift certificate is a nice way of saying, "You choose."
4. Build on your teen's interests. Look for books and articles that feature their favorite sports teams, rock stars, hobbies, or TV shows. Give a gift subscription to a special interest magazine.
5. View pleasure reading as a value in itself. Almost anything your youngsters read—including the Sunday comics—helps build reading skills.
6. Read some books written for teens. Young adult novels can give you valuable insights into the concerns and pressures felt by teenagers. You may find that these books provide a neutral ground on which to talk about sensitive subjects.
7. Make reading aloud a natural part of family life. Share an article you clipped from the paper, a poem, a letter, or a random page from an encyclopedia—without turning it into a lesson.
8. Acknowledge your teen's mature interests. Look for ways to acknowledge the emerging adult in your teens by suggesting some adult reading you think they can handle.
9. Keep the big picture in mind. For all sorts of reasons, some teenagers go through periods without showing much interest in reading. Don't panic! Time, and a few tips from this brochure, may help rekindle their interest.

USE INTERESTING TEXTS

Finding the right text for a student is integral, particularly with a reluctant reader. Teacher-selected texts, without knowing student interests and the backgrounds, often deter students from reading (Dempsey, 2015). Students who do not like to read get frustrated with texts they feel do not apply to them. A great way to avoid this student frustration is to encourage them to read YA and middle-level literature of which there is an abundance of quality texts.

Text selection for reluctant readers:

- reflects and mirrors student life experience
- connects with student interests and backgrounds
- encompasses graphic novels, short stories, short non-fiction articles, and novels in verse
- have age and grade connections
- includes real-life situations with compelling stories and characters
- contains large print formats and print books paired with audiobooks

Recommendation A: **Help Students Connect with Interesting Texts**

Teachers viewing students as individuals is key to helping them engage in reading (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014). Further, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) assert that a teacher should try to get to know the students personally, care about them, attend to students' interests, and be passionate about the subject taught. All of these factors can help students to become motivated readers in the classroom.

As you build relationships with your students throughout the year, always look for opportunities to learn more about them, then use those insights to suggest texts. This can be done through:

- **Student interest surveys**. Use surveys at the start of the year to gauge student interests. Avoid questions about their personal reading habits such as if they like to read or how much they read. Instead, focus on their interests, hobbies, life experiences, and backgrounds. An exploration of their preferred genres is fine. Suggest books that connect to what they mention. Please be cognizant of copyright for online materials you choose to use.
- **Check-in at the door.** Greeting each student builds a positive class atmosphere and provides a chance to start conversations with them about sports, TV, school activities, or compliment them (keeping in mind appropriate professional boundaries). Listen for clues that will allow you to suggest books for them.
- **Student Share-out.** Take a few minutes each period for students to informally share news from their own lives.
- **Explore a variety of reading lists for reluctant readers.**
  - American Library Association Reading Lists
  - YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers
  - Unleashing Readers
  - Materials for Banned Books Week
  - Amazon Reluctant Readers
  - GoodReads Reluctant Readers

Recommendation B: **Seek Out High-Interest, Low-Level Books**

The best materials for adolescent readers are carefully written, edited, and designed to provide supports that include (Rog & Kropp, 2020):

- A compelling storyline and credible characters.
- Topics and issues to which readers can make personal or emotional connections.
- Supportive formatting that includes illustrations and appropriate text placement on the page. (Hyphenation is a problem for reluctant readers. Line spacing is more important than type size. Some type faces are more easily readable than others.)
- Careful introduction and reinforcement of difficult vocabulary and concepts. (No difficult word should be used only once, and every difficult word should be presented in such a way as to be sure its meaning is clear.)
- Straightforward plot development. (Avoid using flashbacks, time shifts, and confusing changes in point of view.)
- Simple sentence structures. (The subject and predicate must be physically close to each other; subordinate clauses should follow the main clause or be clearly set off by commas.)

Hi-Lo book lists include:

- Reading Rockets High Interest/Low Level Book List
- Scholastic Struggling Readers
- School Library Journal

Recommendation C: **Build a Classroom Book Collection**

In addition to collaborating with the teacher librarian, library staff and visiting the library frequently, consider creating a classroom book collection.

Through building a classroom collection, students will be surrounded by books, giving them easy and accessible options. The classroom collection should invite browsing, both for in-class reading and to take home. A classroom book collection must have a variety of genres and levels and culturally response and diverse. Consult with the teacher librarian or library staff for guidance in creating the collection. Consult this Classroom Library Questionnaire to analyze your classroom library book collection and determine where there are strengths and where there is room to grow.

Ways to affordably build a classroom collection include:

- Book Fairs
- School Library Surplus
- PTA/PTO funds for books
- Parent Donations
- Library sales
- Yearly book drives
- Amazon Wishlist or DonorsChoose.org
- Legacy books

Recommendation D: **Sell Students on Books**

As teachers develop positive relationships with students, they need to not underestimate their ability to sell interesting texts to students.

Create a feature shelf, a dedicated space in the classroom to display books students may like. Display them with the cover facing out. Have students suggest their own books, magazines, or articles to feature.

The following in-class activities can provide chances for students to share book suggestions with each other:

- Book commercials
- Book talks
- Book pass

Students will often gravitate toward books that seem controversial. Use this to your advantage by suggesting and providing frequently banned books (remaining aware of age appropriateness and the maturity of your students). The teacher librarian and library staff can be extremely helpful with ideas on how to promote books.

ADDITIONAL READING ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS:

Engaging Adolescents in Reading by John T. Guthrie

Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties by David Kilpatrick

Reader, Come Home by Maryanne Wolf

Book Love: Developing Depth, Stamina, and Passion in Adolescent Readers by Penny Kittle

180 Days: Two Teachers & the Quest to Engage and Empower Adolescents by Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle

Book Whisperer and Reading in the Wild by Donalyn Miller

Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men by Michael Smith & Jeffrey Wilhelm

Reading Ladders and *Naked Reading* by Teri Lesesne

Choice Words by Peter Johnston

Reading Unbound by Jeffrey D. Wilhelm and Michael W. Smith

Why Do I Have to Read This?: Literacy Strategies to Engage our Most Reluctant Students by Cris Tovani

- Utah's High Quality Instructional Cycle
- Utah's Personalized, Competency Based Learning: PCBL Framework

Conclusion

Supporting adolescent readers through targeted and effective instruction is a collaborative and sustained effort on the part of all educators. Using highly-effective instructional practices within multi-tiered systems of support aids in personalized, competency-based learning and proven student success.

Other USBE resources related to literacy and high-quality instruction:

- Utah's K–12 Literacy Framework
- USBE Dyslexia Handbook

Case Studies

The following case studies provide student scenarios that secondary educators may encounter and illustrate application of the information from this guidebook.

ASSESSMENT

WHAT IT IS

Members of the ELA department at Mountain Junior High collaborate on a testing schedule to test all students using the Reading Inventory within one week of school starting. At their first PLC meeting, they share their results, including additional data such as Reading Inventory history, RISE and SAGE scores, and grades, for the students with the largest learning gaps. As a group, the department members determine which students will benefit most from a reading intervention class and share their recommendations with the school's local case management team.

The team agrees with the ELA department recommendations and the students are placed in a 7th grade reading intervention class, where their teacher Ms. Navarro uses the drill down assessment flow chart (see Chart 1) to determine the best intervention for each student. Ms. Navarro uses a rotation model for her class, allowing her to work with small groups of students to meet their specific needs while other students work independently to meet reading goals.

One of Ms. Navarro's flexible groups is focused on building phonics skills. She uses progress monitoring assessments found in her school's copy of *Assessing Reading: Multiple Measures* (refer to Table 3) regularly and changes the interventions each student receives depending on the results of the progress monitoring. In addition, students are assessed quarterly with the Reading Inventory, and as soon as their comprehension reaches grade level, they are moved out of the intervention class. The hard work of both the students and Ms. Navarro pays off, and by the end of the first semester, all students make significant gains and four more students test out of the class.

Although Ms. Navarro is considered the reading specialist at the school because she works with students with the greatest needs, all ELA teachers understand their vital role in building reading skills. Students who are on the border of proficiency and students exiting Ms. Navarro's intervention class are monitored using multiple measures--results of Common Formative Assessments, Reading Inventory, student writing--to ensure they are making progress. The school has a strong PLC process to identify students who need additional instruction in specific standards and teachers work collaboratively to create new learning opportunities for students who need additional help.

At Mountain View Junior High, all teachers help students build reading skills in the different content areas. To increase faculty awareness of potential reading difficulties students may have, Mr. Johansen, the ELA department head, ensures that the Reading Inventory scores of every student are accessible by the entire faculty. He also provides regular professional development to content-area teachers about what steps they can take to help developing readers in their classes.

WHAT IT ISN'T

CASE 1

Teachers use a screening test but never look at the results. Once a student begins to struggle with behavior or completing schoolwork, then the teachers look at the data and realize the student is lacking reading comprehension skills. Precious intervention time is lost, and the student feels further alienated from school success.

CASE 2

No screening tests are administered until the next school requests them, such as when junior high students leave for high school. At that point, teachers realize that students who struggled academically and behaviorally were in desperate need of reading interventions.

CASE 3

Screening assessments are used, and progress monitoring assessments are given regularly. However, interventions are missing. Because progress monitoring is NOT an intervention, students are not given the extra instruction they need, and they fail to make progress.

FLUENCY/PHONICS

Finn is an 7th grader who you overhear saying to a friend, "I'm such a slow reader. It takes me forever to get through a page!" Later, you pull Finn aside and ask him about it. He shrugs off your questions and concerns, but he agrees to read aloud a short passage from the book he is reading. You notice that he reads slowly (he reads about 110 words/minute), stumbles a lot over multi-syllabic words, loses his place, and grows increasingly frustrated. What do you do to help Finn?

Suggestions

- Suggest he follow along with his finger or use a bookmark to track his reading.
- Model reading a passage aloud to Finn first. Have him read either along with you or after you read.
- Utilize Repeated Readings to give Finn practice and to build his confidence.
- Administer a diagnostic assessment to see if Finn has challenges with any phonics or word study skills. Based on assessment results, you focus instruction on decoding multi-syllabic words.

COMPREHENSION/MOTIVATION

Sophia is a talkative ninth grader who loves socializing with her friends between classes and at lunch. She also has many stories to share during class; however, when it comes to discussing the readings in class, Sophia is quiet and avoids eye contact. You ask her if she likes the readings, and she shrugs off the question, so you decide to gather more information.

Knowing that she has an interest in fashion, you select a few short magazine articles for her to read, and you invite her to discuss with you what she read. A few days later, Sophia tells you that she read the articles and enjoyed them. You ask her, "What did you learn about fashion from the articles?" Sophia points to an image in one of the articles and tells you that she really loves that color of the outfit and shares a story about a similar outfit she saw on a TV show, but when you ask her specific questions related to the articles' textual content, she grows increasingly frustrated and bursts out, "I don't know! It's hard for me to pay attention to all of the words."

Based on this information, you decide to focus instruction on the comprehension strategy of monitoring—or metacognition (paying attention to one's thinking). You explain the strategy to her and when and how she would use it and model using the strategy. You also suggest to Sophia that she chunk text as she reads, focusing on just a small section at a time—and re-reading when she notices that her mind has wandered or when she has not understood.

If this direct, explicit instruction and guided practice does not work, you may consider conducting further diagnostic assessments to see if other needs are present.

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