

Structured Literacy Defined

STRUCTURED LITERACY'S ORIGIN STORY

In 2014, The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) coined the term *Structured Literacy* to differentiate the evidence-based reading instruction outlined in IDA's [Knowledge and Practice Standards \(KPS\)](#) from instruction lacking scientific support (e.g., whole language and balanced literacy).

The term was quickly embraced, resonating with educators, parents, and reading scientists. For the next decade, IDA conducted webinars and presentations and published fact sheets, infographics, briefs, and articles to advance and deepen knowledge about Structured Literacy's instructional content and practices. Nevertheless, concerns emerged that the term might become another educational buzzword—a Rorschach ink blot into which anyone could project any interpretation, idea, or practice. This has led IDA to **(a)** refine its [Structured Literacy Wheel](#), **(b)** create the [Structured Literacy InfoMap](#), and **(c)** develop a **definition of Structured Literacy**. We are pleased to unveil this definition here!

IDA'S STRUCTURED LITERACY WORKING DEFINITION

Structured Literacy is a comprehensive, integrated approach to reading and writing instruction that directly and systematically builds on and develops oral language while explicitly teaching the structure of written language. Using this evidence-based approach, educators integrate the teaching of the foundational and higher-order skills and knowledge needed to develop proficient reading comprehension and written expression.

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Going Deeper - Structured Literacy is an instructional approach, not a program. However, to deliver this comprehensive instruction, educators often systematically integrate one or more programs. Using this approach, educators teach and develop the domains of oral language (i.e., phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics) and their representation in written language (i.e., orthography). With explicit, diagnostic, and data-driven teaching and practice, students develop the knowledge, skills, and fluency needed for proficient reading and writing.

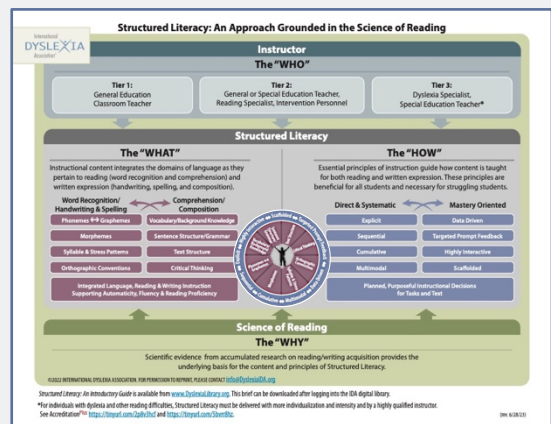
The dynamic interplay between Structured Literacy's integrated content (WHAT is taught) and its powerful teaching principles (HOW content is taught) benefits all students, including advanced and linguistically diverse learners. Structured Literacy instruction is, however, essential for those who need extra support as they learn to read and write.

✕ Learn more, visit: dyslexiaIDA.org & dyslexialibrary.org ✕

IDA'S STRUCTURED LITERACY WHEEL



IDA'S STRUCTURED LITERACY INFOMAP



For free downloads of IDA's Structured Literacy Wheel and InfoMap, visit → shopida.org

WHY "WORKING?"

Upon completing a final polish of the **Structured Literacy Wheel & InfoMap** (currently being beta tested), IDA will revisit the **Structured Literacy Working Definition** to ensure alignment across these materials. We anticipate completing this work in 2025. Given this and because IDA responds to ongoing advances in reading science, we suggest that entities establishing policies based on IDA's Structured Literacy Definition adopt language stating such policies are founded on this definition "as updated by the International Dyslexia Association from time to time."