

ENTRENCHED MYTHS AND THE SCIENCE OF READING¹

Instructions: Read each myth. Then match the letter of the “scientific truth statement” (on page 2) to the myth about reading. If you need a nudge, check out the linked resources.

Myths about Learning to Read ²	Scientific Truths about Learning to Read ³
Myth: Children will eventually learn to read if given enough time [i.e., “late bloomer theory”] and if students are provided with rich, authentic texts. <i>If you need a nudge:</i>  Podcast Clip 2	E Many who claim that reading is natural also claim that children should be given time to develop reading skills at their own pace. This is a double-edged sword because, while it is true that children should be taught to read in developmentally appropriate ways, we should not simply wait for children to develop reading skills in their own time. When a child is not developing reading skills along with his or her peers, that situation should be of great concern.... Research has shown that if a child is not reading grade-appropriate materials by the time he or she is in the fourth grade, the odds of that child ever developing good reading skills are slim.
Myth: Good beginning readers use meaning, visual and semantic cues to figure out words, and good readers make many mistakes as they read authentic texts. <i>If you need a nudge:</i>  Podcast Clip 3 &  Podcast Clip 4	D The “Three Cueing Systems” model of word recognition, is extremely influential in reading instruction, but has never been supported by research evidence. In fact, repeated studies have shown that only poor readers depend upon context to try to “guess” words in text—good readers depend heavily upon the visual information contained in the words themselves (that is, the letter and word cues) to quickly and automatically identify the word. [Note: Use of context clues and pictures is an acceptable comprehension strategy.]
Myth: Science of reading-aligned practice emphasizes phonics only. <i>If you need a nudge:</i>  CO Dept of Education - Myth #3, paragraph 2	F Students need efficient word recognition or decoding skills where they are accurately and automatically reading the words on the page without the aid of context clues or pictures. They also need fully developed language comprehension skills, which references the ability to understand language. In order for a student to understand text, they need to decode the words on the page and then make meaning of the words, sentences, and overall text. [Thus, students need time during the literacy block for developing foundational skills, engaging with complex text, and writing.]
Myth: Science of reading research and aligned instructional practice does not include English language learners or multi-lingual students.	A

¹ Source: Myths and scientific truth statements adapted from [Science of Reading Myths & Misconceptions](#), Colorado Department of Education

² Source: Excerpts from podcast, “[Hard Words: Why Aren’t Students Being Taught to Read?](#)” Hanford, Emily. American Public Media, September 10, 2018.

³ Source: Direct quotes excerpted from “[10 Myths of Reading Instruction](#),” Wren, Sebastian. SEDL Letter Volume XIV, Number 3, Putting Reading First, December 2002.



<i>If you need a nudge:</i> → CO Dept of Education - Myth #6, paragraph paragraph 1	The body of research commonly referred to as the science of reading is based on thousands of studies conducted around the world in many languages, including research on English language learners, multilingual students, and speakers of non-mainstream dialects. This research tells us that linguistically diverse students benefit from the same core reading instruction that benefits all students - instruction that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension.
Myth: Science of reading-aligned practice kills the love and joy of reading. <i>If you need a nudge:</i> → CO Dept of Education - Myth #8, paragraph paragraph 2	C A body of research shows a unidirectional influence of literacy skills on enjoyment. Better readers are more motivated to read, including finding reading enjoyable and engaging and reading more often. Literacy skills impact enjoyment, but not the other way around...there is no joy or love of reading without being able to read.
Myth: Science of reading is a program. <i>If you need a nudge:</i> → CO Dept of Education - Myth #9, paragraph paragraph 1	B The term “science of reading” does not point to any one specific program, but rather to practices that are aligned with research and backed by evidence.