

## CSU Launches Project READINNG: Mentoring Program Targets Early Literacy Crisis with Comprehensive Reading Strategies

Caraga State University (CSU) initiated the extension project **READINNG** with a three-day **Online-Workshop on Mentoring Home, Pre-Service, and In-Service Teachers Reading Strategies**, held across three Saturdays: May 4, 11, and 18, 2024. The primary goal of the workshop was to address and prevent early literacy difficulties by developing reading skills, including phonemic awareness, word recognition, and comprehension, among struggling readers in elementary grades. The launch focused on preparing home, pre-service, and in-service teachers to deliver targeted interventions, including instructional material development workshops, pedagogical training, and both online and face-to-face reading tutorials. The first day featured speakers who presented the project's scope and successfully demonstrated the impact of school-based reading interventions, using the **PHIL-IRI assessment tool** to show notable performance improvements among previously non-readers after intervention.

The subsequent sessions delved into the theoretical framework and practical strategies for effective beginning reading instruction, acknowledging persistent challenges in the Philippines such as the non-mastery of reading elements, limited resources, and inadequate parental involvement. Day 2 highlighted the **critical components of reading**, which include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension instruction. Speakers outlined the stages of reading development, from emergent to advanced readers, and emphasized actionable teaching strategies like **phoneme blending, segmenting, and rhyming exercises** to build robust reading skills. The final day reinforced the importance of integrating these core strategies—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—into a cohesive approach, underscoring that strong literacy is not only a foundation for academic success but a vital tool for personal growth, critical thinking, and informed decision-making throughout life. The READINNG project aims to foster a sustained culture of reading, equipping educators and families with the skills needed to unlock the "magic" of books for every struggling learner.