What EXACTLY Is the Difference between Balanced Literacy and Structured Literacy for Early Reading Instruction? Why Does It Matter?

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Objectives
For participants to have a better understanding of:
1. The difference between balanced literacy and structured literacy for early foundational skills reading instruction
2. Characteristics of Balanced Literacy
3. Characteristics of Structured Literacy
4. Components of Balanced Literacy Intervention
5. Components of Structured Literacy Intervention
6. The research behind Balanced Literacy
7. The research behind Structured Literacy

Balanced Literacy Is Everywhere
- Most teachers we encounter say that they teach balanced literacy
- Most teacher preparation early reading courses teach balanced literacy
- Most early reading course textbooks are based on balanced literacy
- Teachers who state they teach explicit, systematic early reading instruction include balanced literacy strategies
Why Are We Talking About Structured Literacy?

Structured Literacy Is Explicit, Systematic Early Reading Instruction

Structured Literacy Is Strongly Supported by Science

- Many peer-reviewed studies over the past 40+ years demonstrate that explicit, systematic early reading instruction is more effective than other methods
  - This is especially true for struggling readers and students from low SES areas.

“Balanced Reading Instruction”

“The term ‘balanced reading instruction’ is not new. It has been used to describe literacy programs that balance reading to children, reading with children, and reading by children.” (Holdaway, 1980)
There Is No One Definition for Balanced Literacy

“There is much disagreement as to the exact definition of balanced reading instruction. It has come to mean a lot of different things to different people (Reutzel, 1999).”

Balanced Literacy Can Include Everything

“In general, a balanced reading program is one that includes reading, writing, spelling, phonics, and other skill-based instruction.” (Cassidy, & Cassidy, 1999/2000)

“Basal readers, direct instruction, workbooks, quality children’s literature, independent reading and writing can all be part of a balanced reading program” (Cassidy, Brozo, & Cassidy, 2000).

Common Elements of Balanced Literacy Definitions

- A combination of whole-group and small-group instruction is included in daily lessons
- Guided reading is the basis of small-group instruction. Students are taught to use a combination of strategies to “figure out” words.
- All skill and strategy instruction is based on “authentic” literature.
- Phonics, comprehension, and other strategies taught are based on the teacher’s perception of the students’ needs, based on observation and/or informal assessment.
- “Running Records” is the primary assessment tool.
- Phonics is taught with mini-lessons and/or with a “word study” approach.

The Basis of Balanced Literacy: The 3 Cueing System

A philosophy adapted from science about how children learn to speak.
Basis for 3 Cueing System

- Goodman (1976) described skilled reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game" (p.259).
  - He sees reading as a sophisticated guessing game driven largely by the reader's linguistic knowledge, and as little as possible by the print.
- Smith (1975) expressed this view succinctly. "The art of becoming a fluent reader lies in learning to rely less and less on information from the eyes" (p. 50).

Quotes taken from "The Three Cueing System: Will It Ever Go Away?"

An Example of Ubiquitous Strategy Posters

Source: Pinterest

Ken Goodman’s View

From Emily Hanford’s podcast:

At a Loss for Words: What’s wrong with how schools teach reading.

47:19 – 50:49

My Personal Favorite

Instead of simply telling him to "sound it out," try these tricks:

- Say nothing. Give him a chance to figure it out.
- Say, "Look at the picture."
- Say, "Let's get the first sound and see if you can figure out the word."

Say: "Close your eyes. Now look again.”
Have him close his eyes, open them, and see if his brain can just “get” the word as a sight word, without trying to sound it out.

Source: scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/reading-comprehension-and- decoding-strategies
**Guided Reading Is at the Heart of Balanced Literacy**

- Ask 10 teachers to define guided reading and you will get 10 different answers
- Most definitions will have these components
  - Small, homogeneous groups, (“homogeneous’ based on guided reading levels)
  - Leveled readers
  - Repeated reading of the same text throughout the week so that by the end of the week all or most students can read the text “independently”
  - Use of the guessing strategies (from the ubiquitous posters) to “figure out” the words
- Students are to “make connections” to the text

**Guided Reading Uses Leveled Books**

Leveled books are leveled with criteria such as:
- Length of words
- Number of different words
- Number of high frequency words
- Size and font and layout
- Difficulty of vocabulary and concepts
- Predictability of words
- Complexity of language and syntax

Leveled books DO NOT have specified phonics patterns based on a scope and sequence from easiest to hardest.

**Premise of Early Leveled Readers**

- Students learn to read by being exposed to repeated words.
- When students don’t know a word, they can look at the picture to “read” the word or use context to guess a word that would fit.
- All reading needs to be “content” driven (sometimes referred to as “authentic” reading).

**Characteristics of Early Leveled Books**

- In lower leveled books for emergent, beginning, or struggling readers:
  - words are familiar to students
  - pictures support the words
  - words are repeated
  - a significant portion of the words are high frequency words
Guided Reading: “Decoding” Strategies

- In guided reading, the teacher uses prompts based on the cueing system to help students figure out unfamiliar words.

- These prompts include “Look at the picture” and “What word with the same first sound makes sense?”

- These strategies encourage students to guess at words, and then apply context to determine whether the word that is guessed makes sense.

Only Errors (Miscues) That Change the Meaning Are Corrected/Counted

- Guided reading employs another practice that develops the habit of relying on content before decoding:
  - When a student makes a reading error that does not change the text’s meaning, the teacher does not correct the student.
Examples of Mistakes that Are Not Corrected

- **Sally rode her horse every day.**
  - The student reads “pony” instead of “horse”

- **Jamaya got the book for her mother.**
  - The student reads “a book” instead of “the book”
  - The student reads “mom” instead of mother

- **The explorer had been almost every place on the earth.**
  - The student reads “in the world” instead of “on the earth”

Summary of Balanced Literacy

- Based on 3 cueing system
- Uses guided reading, leveled books, and running records – “authentic literature”
- Small groups are homogeneous based on reading level
- Teaches phonics in ‘mini-lessons’, or through ‘word study’
- Teaches multiple word attack strategies based on guessing or looking at the picture or looking at the first letter

Main Elements of Explicit, Systematic Phonics Instruction

- **A well-defined scope and sequence** of phonics skills is taught, starting with the easiest skills and building to more complex skills
- **Each skill is directly taught** without any assumption that the student will learn the skill on his/her own
- **Students practice skills to mastery** before learning the next skill
  - Assessments provide the evidence that students have mastered skills
- **Cumulative skill practice** is included as the lessons progress
- **Foundational skills and comprehension** are taught separately until students master foundational skills
Well-Defined Scope & Sequence

1.  Pre Reading Skills

**Phonological** (identify, blend, segment, manipulate)
1.  Syllables
2.  Onset-rime
3.  Phonemes

**Orthographic**
1.  Letter Names
2.  Letter Sounds
3.  A few high frequency words

2.  Basic Phonics  (short vowels)
1.  Short vowels (CVC & VC)
2.  Digraphs
3.  Blends
4.  Two syllable words

3.  Advanced Phonics
1.  R-Controlled vowels
2.  3 + Syllables
3.  Open syllables
4.  Silent E
5.  Vowel Teams

More High Frequency Words

Terms Used to Describe Structured Literacy

1.  Explicit
2.  Systematic, Cumulative, Sequential
3.  Structured

Example: Explicit Instruction for reading words with short a

Note: all students will know the short a sound before reading these words.

I DO
• "Watch me.
• I'll touch and say, then read the word.
• /s/ /Ã/ /d/ (touching each letter), sad”

WE DO
• "Now let's touch and say this word together" (mat)
• All students and teacher touch and say together

YOU DO
• "Now I'll call on individual students to read words” (tap, can, lad, ax)
• Individual students read words and the teacher immediately corrects any errors

Carolyn Denton
(retrieved from RTI Action Network website)
2. Systematic, Cumulative, Sequential Instruction

- Intentionally builds from the simple to the complex.
  - Students are first taught how to do the simplest task.
  - They gradually learn and achieve mastery with more difficult and complex tasks, combining the skills taught previously.

*The hallmark of a systematic phonics approach or program is that a sequential set of phonics elements is delineated and these elements are taught along a dimension of explicitness...*  
*Report of the National Reading Panel (2000)*

3. Structured Instruction

*(includes elements of explicit instruction)*

- Detailed guidance is provided on exactly what to teach and how to teach (in the teacher’s guide)
- Instruction includes
  - Quick teacher modeling and group practice (I do, we do)
  - guided and independent practice for the student (you do)
  - assessment of mastery
- Students move to the next skill only after mastery is demonstrated
- Lessons include cumulative practice of skills already mastered
- The major emphasis is on individual practice, not on choral practice

#1 & 2 – Summary of Structured Literacy

1. Scripted lessons that have all materials necessary for instruction
   - Background knowledge about concept being taught
   - Exactly how to teach the concept
   - All words, sentences, and phrases for teacher demonstration, guided practice, and independent practice

2. Standard routines
   - Allow teacher and students to focus on skill being practiced, not how to perform the task

#3, 4, 5- Summary of Structured Literacy

3. I Do, We Do, You Do
   - Teacher demonstrates
   - All students practice
   - Individual students practice with direct guidance from the teacher
   - Individual students practice with monitoring (teacher observes as students read)

4. Practice to mastery
   - Allow teacher and students to focus on skill being practiced, not how to perform the task

5. Assessment of skills before moving on
   - Insures that students are ready to learn the next skill and for cumulative practice
Balanced Literacy – Sample Intervention Lesson

All information is from the web site for an intervention program widely used in schools.

**Designed for Success**
- 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week for optimal results and intensity
- 3 students per group
- 16-22+ weeks of explicit, intensive instruction

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**Balanced Literacy Lesson Goals**

Is 15 minutes phonics instruction every two days enough to fix a decoding problem?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Devoted to Phonics</th>
<th>Even Lessons</th>
<th>Odd Lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonics/Word Work</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>5 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Balanced Literacy Lesson Framework**

**Goals**

**Reading**
- Search for and use meaning, language, and print to solve words.
- Recognize characters from a series.
- Recognize the contrast between the message in the print and the message in the pictures.
- Read without finger pointing and with phrasing.
- Locate words in a text with multiple lines of print.
- Recognize high-frequency words quickly and automatically.
- Understand the conclusion of the story and what it means.
- Read dialog with expression.

**Phonics/Word Work**
- Recognize words that have a long vowel sound and end in silent e.
- Learn new high-frequency words (good, put).

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Rereading a story from the previous lesson

**NEW BOOK: The Good Dog**

**Fiction**

5 minutes
Phonics Instruction / Word Work

5 minutes

**Say and Sort**

- Display the following words in a column, saying each word and using it in a sentence: bone, cone, tone, lone. What do you notice about these words? [Children respond.] They may notice that the words rhyme. Help them to see that all the words have the same -one pattern and the sound represented by the vowel is usually the name of the first vowel.

- Make two more columns using the following words: rope, hope, mop, rope; nose, rose, nose, rose. Test the pattern in each set of words. [Children respond.]
- Now, take the words away, leaving bone, rope, and nose across the top. Deal out the other words to the children. Read each word and use your pointer finger to underline the pattern. [Children respond.]
- Now, take turns placing the words in the correct column. [Children respond.]
- Read the entire board out loud together.
- Summarize the lesson by restating the principle.

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**High Frequency Words?** (8 good, 1 put)

- Jack said, “Sit, Orson.” Orson was a good dog. He sat.
- Jack said, “It’s time for a walk, Orson.” Orson was a good dog. He went for a walk with Jack.
- “Come, Orson!” Jack said. Orson was a very good dog. He ran to Jack.
- “Roll over, Orson,” Jack said. Orson rolled over and over.
- “Sit up and beg.” Orson liked to be good. He sat up and put his paws up.
- “Get the paper, Orson,” Jack said. Orson wanted to be good. He ran and got the paper.
- “Get the ball, Orson!” Orson was very good. He got the ball for Jack.
- “It’s time for a nap,” Jack said. And Orson was a good dog—a very good dog.

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**Reading a New Book**

15 minutes

**Introducing the Text**

- Introduce the story by talking to children about their experiences trying to teach a pet to do something. What do you remember about Orson and Tazo? [Children respond.]
- The big dog, Orson, likes to be good. In this story, Jack tells Orson to do something, and Orson does it. Notice what happened each time.
- “Get the paper, Orson.” Then Jack said, “Get the ball, Orson!” Orson was very good. He got the ball for Jack.
- “It’s time for a nap,” Jack said. And Orson was a good dog—a very good dog.

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**Can you find any words with the phonics pattern taught? (o-e)**

- Jack said, “Sit, Orson.” Orson was a good dog. He sat.
- “It’s time for a walk, Orson.” Orson was a good dog. He went for a walk with Jack.
- “Come, Orson!” Jack said. Orson was a very good dog. He ran to Jack.
- “Roll over, Orson,” Jack said. Orson rolled over and over.
- “Sit up and beg.” Orson liked to be good. He sat up and put his paws up.
- “Get the paper, Orson,” Jack said. Orson wanted to be good. He ran and got the paper.
- “Get the ball, Orson!” Orson was very good. He got the ball for Jack.
- “It’s time for a nap,” Jack said. And Orson was a good dog—a very good dog.
Reading a New Book – Continued

Will these help children with decoding problems?

Reading the Text
As children read, confirm their use of information from the pictures to help them solve words on the page. For example: That makes sense and looks right.

Discussing and Revisiting the Text
- Invite the children to share their thinking about what they learned from the text.
- How did the pictures help you know all the trouble Orson got into? [Children respond.]
- How did the pictures help you know all the trouble Orson got into? [Children respond.]
- Was the end of the story a surprise for you or did you expect it? [Children respond.]
- This story was made up by the writer so it is fiction. But could these things really happen to a dog? [Children respond.]

Reading a New Book – Continued

Letter/Word Work
5 minutes

Lesson 48 – 5 minutes
Rereading and Assessment

• Listen to one child read The Good Dog as you code the reading behaviors, have a brief comprehension conversation, and make a teaching point that you think will be most helpful to the reader.
• Have the other children reread A Rainy Day and then The Good Dog.
• As children reread, prompt for pausing as needed. For example: Listen to me read or Can you take a little breath at the comma?
Lesson 48: Assessment: Running Record

**Assessment**

- Have we seen this text before?
  - Yes, it is the text "The Good Dog" from the even day lesson.

- Do you see miscue analysis?
  - Yes, each error is coded M, S, or V.

- Do you see any assessment of reading silent e words from Phonics/Word Study?
  - No

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Lesson 48 – 5 minutes
Phonics / Word Work

**Phonics / Word Work**

- This is a game with words introduced in the last 5 lessons.
- Do the students read the words?

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Balanced Literacy Intervention Lesson and the Simple View

- 60 min instruction in 2 days
  - 15 min phonics/word work
  - 45 min about text
    - 5 min: students re-read a text
    - 5-10 min: students read a new text using pictures and context to “solve” unknown words
    - 30-35 min: teacher and students discuss the text

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Informal Reading Inventories Are Often Used in Balanced Literacy Instruction
From the Introduction

Our view of learning is drawn from transactional theory (see Rosenblatt, 1978) . . . Emphasizing that the "reader, the text, and the social situational context are inextricably linked and are transformed as a result of the reading event." Similarly, we adopt a view of teaching compatible with that espoused by balanced reading instruction educators (see Fountas & Pinnell, 1996 . . .

From the Introduction (cont.)

We feel that reading assessment should offer the teacher insights into students’ literacy development, background knowledge, and the types of texts that students may have difficulty reading. **This perspective contrasts sharply with the more traditional views of reading assessments that tend to focus exclusively on the testing of discrete subskills with little or no attention to affective or social-situational contexts.**

Problem #1 Identified in Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory for the Classroom (RIC)

**Miscue Type:** Mispronunciations (or possibly a substitution) of Ending Sounds

**Example from Flynt-Cooter RIC**

Text: **familiar** — Student reads as: family or famson

**Problem Description:** Student is decoding the first and middle part of the word, but not the ending.

**Possible Interventions from Flynt-Cooter**

If the student calls the word another word that doesn’t make sense, then he is not using context clues. We suggest using story frames, discussion webs, or cloze/maze passage to emphasize the role of context in word identification (see Reutzel & Cooter, 1996.)

**Explicit, Systematic Instruction Recommendation**

Further assessment to determine if the student’s difficulty is:

- Decoding single-syllable words
- Decoding multi-syllable words
- Guessing while reading in text
Problem #2 Identified in Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory for the Classroom (RIC)

**Miscue Type:** Substitutions: Wrong Sounds

**Example from Flynt-Cooter RIC**

Text: *shoes — Student reads as: feet*

**Problem Description:** Student reads as another word that fits the context, but not the correct word/letter sounds.

**Possible Interventions from Flynt-Cooter**

In this case, the student is ready to learn the basic word identification strategy (Reutzel & Cooter, 1996): Context Clues + beginning sounds + medial sound(s). Using enlarged text with stick-on notes revealing only the word parts you wish to emphasize (e.g., beginning sound) is a great way to model and practice.

**Explicit, Systematic Instruction Recommendation**

Further assessment to determine if the student:
- can read single-syllable words with short vowels (CVC)
- can read single syllable words with vowel teams
- guesses while reading connected text instead of using decoding strategies

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Structured Literacy – Silent E

1. **Review touch & say with short vowels**

1. Today you are going to learn a new spelling pattern for long vowel sounds. It is called the **silent-e** pattern.

2. **Review Touch & Say with Short Vowel Words**

   1. Everyone, turn to page 66 in your Student Pages.
   2. Everyone, pencil on one.
   3. Everyone, Touch & Say these words.
   4. **Name** – What kind of vowel sound do these words have?
   5. **Pattern of name** – How do you know to read a short vowel sound in these words?
   6. Everyone, what vowel sound do you read when there is one vowel not at the end?

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**Structured Literacy – Sample Intervention Lesson**

1. **Introduce Silent-e Spelling Pattern**

   1. **I Do** – *made*
      - T writes *made* on the board.
      - T adds an *e* at the end of *made*.
      - T says *made*.
   2. I will show you how to Touch & Say words with the silent-e spelling.
      - a) T. Touches under *a* with index finger and says *a*.
      - b) T. Touches under *e* with index finger and under *a* with middle finger at the same time and says *a*.
      - c) T Touches under *a* with index finger and says *a*.
      - d) T. Touches finger left to right under the word and says *made*.
   3. T. Touches *a* and *e* at the same time because they work together to spell the long e sound.
   4. I can mark the silent-e pattern to show that *a* and *e* together to spell the sound /e/.
      - T. Draws a line under *a* and under *e* and then a scoop to connect them.

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• **WE DO**

**We Do – made**

1. Everyone, pencil on one.

  SS. put pencil on #1.

2. Everyone, write an 'e' at the end of 'made'.

  SS. write an 'e' after 'made'.

3. Everyone, Touch & Say with me.

   a) T. and SS. touch under 'm' with index finger and say /m/.

   b) T. and SS. touch under 'd' with index finger and under 'e' with middle finger at the same time and say /d/.

   c) T. and SS. touch under 'd' with index finger and say /d/.

   d) T. and SS. trace finger left to right under the word and say 'made'.

4. Name, why did we touch 'a' and 'e' at the same time?

   SS. says, because together they spell the sound /æ/.

5. Everyone, underline the 'a' and the 'e' and draw a scoops to connect them.

   SS. underline 'a' and 'e' and draw a scoops to connect them.

6. Different names, what sound do the 'a' and 'e' together spell?

   SS. say /æ/.

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**YOU DO**

**You Do – pete, kite, role, cube**

'pete' -

1. Everyone, pencil on one.

  SS. put pencil on #1.

2. Everyone, write an 'e' at the end of 'pete'.

  SS. write an 'e' after 'pete'.

3. Name, Touch & Say the word.

   a) T. touches under 'p' with index finger and says /p/.

   b) T. touches under 't' with index finger and under 'e' with middle finger at the same time and says /t/.

   c) T. touches under 't' with index finger and says /t/.

4. Name, why did we touch 'e' and 'e' at the same time?

   SS. says, because together they spell the sound /æ/.

5. Everyone, underline the 'e' and the 'e' and draw a scoops to connect them.

   SS. underline 'e' and 'e' and draw a scoops to connect them.

6. Different names, what sound do the 'e' and 'e' together spell?

   SS. say /æ/.

CONTINUE WITH OTHER WORDS: kit, not, cub

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**Structured Literacy – Silent E**

3. Read and sort words with short vowel & silent e patterns

Lesson 31 - Phonics Concept

- **Student Page**

  1. mad

   pet

   kit

   not

   cub

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5. Read words with silent e & short vowels

Student Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Vowel</th>
<th>Long Vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wine, cot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tap, robe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cute, rob</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maze, tape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grave, tape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine, plane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plane, gun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**More Challenging**

- week, mat, mate
- mail, price, pale
- drive, vine, van
- grape, speech, grip
- face, fat, file
- cos, share, cone
- shame, shuh, shine
- snuff, blame, mute
Structured Literacy – Silent E

6. Read sentences with all phonics taught

Challenging
1. What a shame that Grace lost her purse and all its contents. (2)
2. Buy a big pineapple before we have birthday cake for Jake. (2)
3. Cut a large slice of cake and place it in the white plate. (3)
4. It was nice to taste it. I told them secretly just for spice. (3)
5. June said that next Coke or the theme park for their first date. (3)
6. Gabe will sprint up his house and close the gate to the garden. (3)
7. Jake do you like to eat a sandwich or drink in the rain? (3)
8. The between and strong aftershocks from the quake were felt far across the river. (3)

More Challenging
9. Late in life, Eric and Grace reported the spirit of spirits that split them apart. (3)
10. The import trade is just and other genes gave James and Dale a nice profit. (3)
11. With a rare smile, Jake joked about what it would be like to dance in the game. (3)
12. Miles left me to the side of the house to spike the ball and catch the point. (3)
13. At the center of the ocean in the corn patch was a throne for the pumpkin king. (3)
14. Dale, did you note that the home Dolly of Those was on the plane to Cap City? (3)
15. Take care because it is not safe to skate on the lake where the ice is not solid. (4)
16. When you wrote that secret note to Joe, did you refer to the five jobs you had with them? (5)

7. Read Decodable Book(s)

The Case of Jake’s Escape

Is this lesson explicit, systematic, structured?

1. Scripted lessons with all materials necessary for instruction
2. Standard routines
3. I Do, We Do, You Do
   - Teacher demonstrates
   - All students practice
   - Individual students practice with teacher guidance
4. Practice to mastery
5. Assessment of skills taught before moving on
**Structured Literacy Intervention Lesson and the Simple View**

- 1 lesson taught to mastery
  - 7 parts on silent e words and sentences
  - Read a text with silent e
  - Assessment: reading silent e words and sentences

**Balanced Literacy: The 3 Cueing System**

**The Brain’s 3 Cueing Systems**

1. **Semantics** – meaning
   - *We use the context of the sentence to recognize the word.*
     - Use context to predict word

2. **Syntax** – grammar, word order, sentence structure, tense, plurality
   - *We create meaning with print*
     - Use syntax to refine prediction

3. **Phonological or graphophonological** – letters and sounds
   - *least efficient in terms of cognitive processing time and space*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMj7qs6F1VE
**Explixit Decoding Instruction:**
The Simple View of Reading

- A formula introduced by Gough and Tunmer in 1986

\[
\text{Decoding (D)} \times \text{Language Comprehension (LC)} = \text{Reading Comprehension (RC)}
\]

- Decoding and Language Comprehension are separate skills
- Each is necessary but not sufficient to achieve reading comprehension
- A student with strong decoding, and poor language will not achieve reading comprehension
- A student with strong language and poor decoding will not achieve reading comprehension

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**Brain Systems for Reading**
(Shaywitz, 2003 p. 78)

**Phonological**

**Orthographic**

**Phonics Analysis**

**Meaning & Context**

*Figure 21. Brain Systems for Reading*

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**Four Part Processing Model Based on Seidenberg & McClelland’s Research**

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**Fluency Results When All Units of the Model Work Well Individually and Together**
Summary of Differences

- Three cueing system assumes that a weakness in one area can be overcome by a strength in another area to achieve reading comprehension.

- Explicit, systematic phonics instruction follows the research that all areas involved in reading must be strong to achieve reading comprehension.

Studies

- Hundreds of evidence based studies support explicit, systematic phonics instruction as yielding the strongest results among reading instruction.

- No evidence-based studies support balanced literacy as being stronger than systematic, explicit instruction.

Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement (Hattie, 2009)

Direct instruction* has a high correlation with reading achievement.

*Direct instruction for early reading is generally considered to be scripted, explicit, systematic, and cumulative.
Excellent Reading Instruction Includes Three Basic Elements

Not all students need explicit instruction in all areas.

Assessment can show which students need instruction and the level for instruction.

- **Phonics / Word Attack Skills**
  - Short vowels, digraphs, blends
  - Advanced vowel patterns
  - Multi-syllable words

- **Fluency**
  - Accuracy
  - Rate
  - Prosody

- **Comprehension**
  - Literal
  - Higher order thinking skills

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**NO, PHONICS IS NOT ENOUGH**

- Phonics instruction is necessary, but not sufficient
- The importance of a rich language environment, especially through read-alouds, and a variety of experiences during early reading instruction cannot be overemphasized