

## EARLY LITERACY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Literacy begins at birth.

Families and communities strengthen school-based learning.

Every child is full of literary promise.

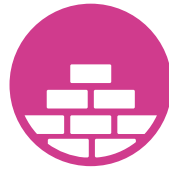
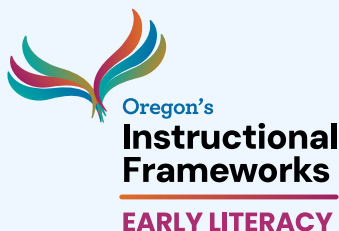
Foundational skills matter.

Every child must be taught to read and write.

Multilingualism benefits everyone.

Educator knowledge and classroom practices are essential.

The Oregon Early Literacy Framework provides a research-based vision to guide teaching of reading and writing and is designed to build statewide coherence, clarity, and common ground about literacy instruction.



OREGON'S EARLY LITERACY FRAMEWORK

# Foundational Skills

“ Foundational skills instruction must be part of the core curriculum and materials and be integrated into protected daily literacy instruction, with opportunities to practice and apply these skills up to and beyond grade 5 as necessary. ”

— Oregon Department of Education <sup>1</sup>

## Why are foundational skills important?

### Foundational skills are more than phonics.

Foundational skills are language-specific skills that form the basis for literacy. They include: phonics (the knowledge that sounds correspond to each letter or group of letters within a language), print concepts (the understanding that print is speech written down), phonological awareness (the ability to hear and manipulate the individual sounds and sound patterns in spoken words), word recognition, alphabetic principle (the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds), and fluency (accuracy, automaticity, and expression when reading).

### All children must be taught to read and write.

No child is born reading or writing, but all students hold literary promise. Unlike oral language, which develops by listening and interacting with other people, reading and writing must be taught using high-quality instructional materials and explicit systematic instruction. In addition to being taught foundational literacy skills, children need multiple opportunities to practice them.

### Foundational skills set the stage for literacy.

A strong base of foundational skills helps students read and write fluently and make meaning of words on the page. Being able to decode words and read fluently provide a solid foundation for reading and writing more complex texts so that students can focus more on reading to learn as opposed to learning to read.

<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Education. (2023). *Oregon's early literacy framework: A strong foundation for readers and writers (K-5)*. [https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/ELA/Documents/Literacy%20Framework\\_2023.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/ELA/Documents/Literacy%20Framework_2023.pdf)

## What does this look like in practice?

Educators spend **dedicated time** each day explicitly and systematically teaching foundational skills.

A kindergarten teacher sets aside 20 minutes each morning during the literacy block for a brief lesson and practice with key foundational skills (e.g., phonemic awareness) for students.

Educators regularly provide opportunities throughout the school day for learners to **practice** foundational skills.

A first grade teacher takes advantage of downtime (e.g., standing in line) by asking learners to jump when they hear a word that starts with a /p/ sound.

Educators make connections between English and a student's **home language**.

A third grade teacher identifies word parts in English that are similar for Spanish (e.g., "profound" in English and "profundo" in Spanish come from the root word for "deep").

Students have adequate time and exposure to **decodable texts**.

Second graders have time every day to interact with high-quality, decodable and connected texts in small groups with their teachers, with partners, and on their own.

### Discussion Starters

How can **educators** differentiate foundational skills instruction to meet the diverse needs of the learners in their classrooms?

How can **leaders** design schoolwide systems and identify resources to provide learners with ample opportunities to learn and practice foundational skills?

How can **parents and caregivers** support the development of foundational skills (e.g., phonological awareness, print concepts) at home?

[Learn More](#) [Oregon Early Literacy Framework](#)