

SPIRE UP

Instructional Framework
and Research Foundation



 **What Is SPIRE Up?**

SPIRE Up is a blended reading intervention solution (print and digital) designed to accelerate literacy growth for students needing intensive intervention in grades 2–8. It combines teacher-led instruction, print materials, and digital practice and assessment tools to make every session purposeful, helping students build lasting reading skills within limited intervention time. While *SPIRE Up* is often used for intensive support, it can also serve as a highly effective targeted intervention for any student struggling with foundational literacy skills, especially in schools with the resources to implement the program more broadly.

SPIRE Up is grounded in the Orton-Gillingham approach, a research-validated methodology emphasizing explicit, systematic, and multisensory instruction. These principles are foundational to Structured Literacy, in which students learn how sounds (phonemes), letters (graphemes), and word parts (morphemes) work together to form words. Instruction follows a logical sequence—from simple to complex—and includes frequent review to ensure mastery.

SPIRE Up focuses on 64 essential foundational literacy skills taught through a three-phase instructional sequence—Lessons A, B, and C—that move systematically from sound and word instruction to reading connected texts. Table 1 (see page 3) details the function of each lesson phase and the print and digital activities that support them.

SPIRE Up aligns with the science of reading, translating decades of research into effective classroom practice. Instruction explicitly addresses the five pillars of reading. *SPIRE Up*'s primary focus is decoding and foundational literacy skills (phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency), but the other pillars—vocabulary and comprehension—are not ignored. They are integrated throughout the lesson sequence in a scaffolded way.

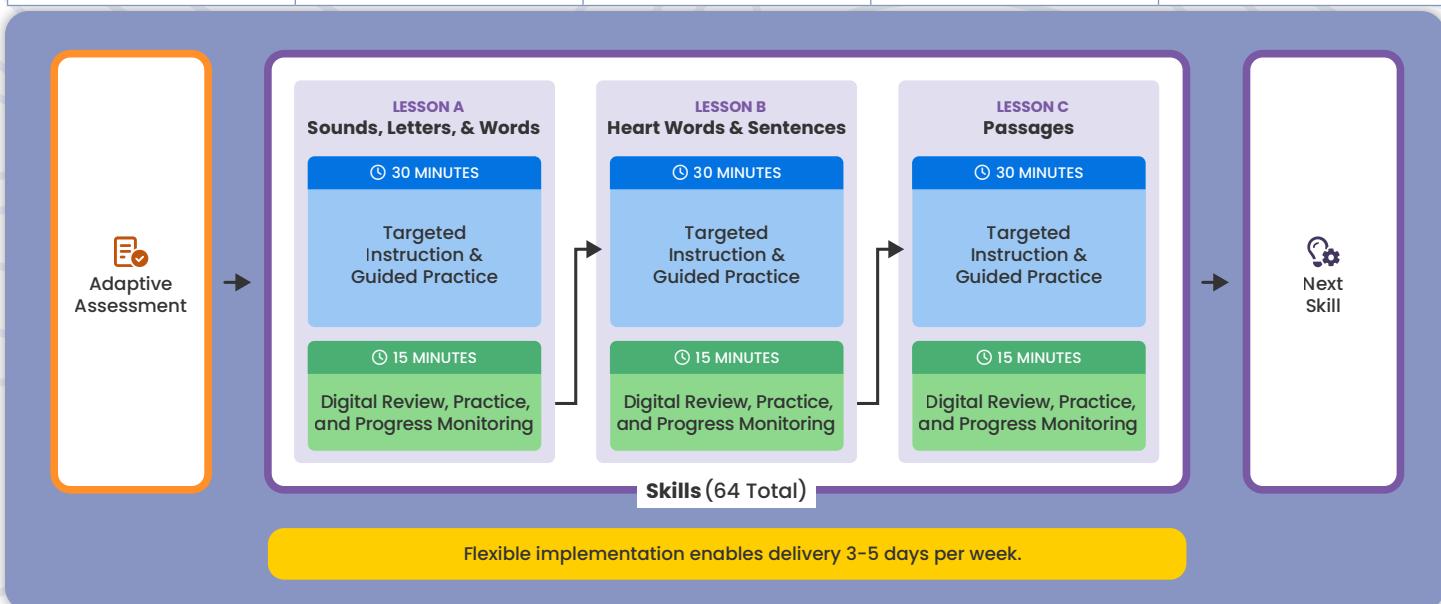
This guide illustrates how these evidence-based principles are operationalized in *SPIRE Up*'s lesson design, digital tools, and implementation models, helping educators and district leaders make informed decisions that lead to measurable student growth.

What You Need to know About *SPIRE Up*

- ✓ **Grades:** 2–8
- ✓ **Instructional Model:** Blended (Teacher-Led Instruction + Online Reinforcement, Practice, and Assessment)
- ✓ **Format:** Print + Digital
- ✓ **Group Size:** 1:1 / Small Group
- ✓ **Focus Area:** Decoding & Foundational Literacy
- ✓ **Recommended Sessions per Week:** 30–45 minutes, 3–5 days per week

Table 1. Lesson Functions and Supporting Activities

Lesson	Lesson Function	Print Activities	Digital Activities	Research Basis Sampling
 Sounds, Letters, and Words	Develops phonemic awareness, decoding, and encoding skills; reinforces articulation and automaticity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Word Analysis ■ Skill Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Sort by Sound ▶ Sort by Word Type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Image Naming ▶ Word Building ▶ Compound Word Building ▶ Picture-Word Match ▶ Add to Base Word ■ Automaticity Drill ■ Sound Dictation ■ Word Dictation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concept Reinforcement ■ Card Matching (sounds and keyword images) ■ Word Sorting ■ Picture Naming ■ Word Reading ■ Word Building 	Alqahtani (2024) Blachman (2004) Cheung & Slavin (2013) Kilpatrick (2015) Moats (2005) NRP (2000) Ray (2020)
 Heart Words and Sentences	Applies phonics and heart word instruction to sentence-level reading and writing; integrates grammar for fluency and comprehension Heart Words are sourced from the first 200 words of the Fry Sight Words list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sentence Analysis ■ Skill Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cloze Sentences with Word Bank ▶ Phrase Sorting ▶ Sentence Completion with Word or Phrase Bank ▶ Sentence Building with Supplied Phrase ▶ Sentence Scramble ▶ Picture-Word Match with sentences ▶ Fill-in-blank with Word Choices Below ■ Word Dictation ■ Sentence Dictation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Syntax Reinforcement of Heart Word Instruction ■ Heart Word Review ■ Scene Identification ■ Sentence Sequencing ■ Sentence Completion ■ Sentence Building 	Blevins (2016) Castro (2010) Kincade et al. (2020) Marks et al. (2019) Moats (2005) NRP (2000) Ray (2020)
 Connected Text: Let's Read!	Builds fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension through reading of decodable passages and background knowledge activities The vocabulary in Lesson C consists of decodable words from the passage that may be unfamiliar to students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Decodable Passage Choral Reading ■ Decodable Passage Partner Reading ■ Decodable Passage Text Annotation ■ Decodable Passage Text Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Background Builder ■ Oral Reading Practice ■ Sentence Completion 	Alqahtani (2024) Fuchs et al. (2017) Marks et al. (2019) NRP (2000) Wang et al. (2019) Willingham (2006) Wolf (2008)





Program Components at a Glance



Teacher's Guide

The *SPIRE Up* Teacher's Guide is available in print and digitally on Connect, EPS Learning's digital platform, allowing teachers to choose what works best for their classroom. Each of the 64 skills in *SPIRE Up* includes a fully scripted lesson plan with engaging, hands-on routines that support student learning and motivation.

Each *SPIRE Up* scripted lesson plan includes sidebars with helpful teaching tips and strategies.

Lesson 9A Consonant Digraph *th*

Sounds, Letters, and Words

OPTIONAL: MORE WORDS

Set 1: /p/ath (path); /th/ ick (thick); /k/ ash (cash); /b/ ath (bath); /th/ an (than);
Set 2: /ch/ eck (check); /sh/ ell (shell); /f/ amp (lamp); /th/ umb (thumb); /fl/ eat (leaf)

OPTIONAL: MORE WORDS

Set 1: with (/th/); laugh (/f/); chat (/t/); breathe (/th/); shop (/p/);
Set 2: thick (/k/); hatch (/ch/); nice (/s/); goat (/t/); grill (/l/)

ARTICULATION SUPPORT

- th as /th/: lips stretched wide, tip of the tongue between front teeth, air escaping (unvoiced; continuous sound)
- th as /th/: lips stretched wide, tip of tongue between front teeth, vocal cords vibrating (voiced; continuous sound)

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Some students may benefit from additional instruction and practice with sound-spelling patterns that are not shared between English and other languages. Support students in spelling and distinguishing between the following sounds: /th/ as in *thick*, /th/ as in *that*, /d/, /t/, and /f/.

TEACHING TIP

Some language variations result in the pronunciation of initial /th/ as /d/ and final /th/ as /t/. If students' oral language differs from the language system they use to read and write, try providing a short definition or context sentence to help them connect the pronunciation, spelling, and meaning of the words.

Do not duplicate. ©EPS Operations, LLC

66 | LESSON 9A

WARM-UP

Blend Onset and Rime

2 minutes

/f/ ish (fish); /b/ ack (back); /r/ ich (rich); /m/ ath (math); /w/ ith (with)

Let's blend word parts. Say the first onset and rime and have students say the word parts. Then ask: *Blend the word parts. What is the word?* Repeat with the next word.

Isolate Final Sound

both (/th/); mesh (/sh/); bath (/th/); sock (/k/); pole (/l/)

Let's focus on sounds. Say the first word and have students say the word. Then ask: *What is the last sound?* Repeat with the next word.

CONCEPT INTRODUCTION

4 minutes

Letter Card 1-5 (t), Letter Card 2-5 (h), Letter Card 9-1 (th), Letter Card 9-2 (th)

Today we're going to focus on the letters that spell the sounds /th/ and /th/.
Show Letter Card 1-5 (t) and Letter Card 2-5 (h). *This is the letter t, and this is the letter h. You already know that t spells the sound /t/, as in the word turtle, and h spells the sound /h/, as in the word heart.*

Show Letter Card 9-1 (th). *When you see the letters t-h together, they can spell the sound /th/, as in the word thumb. This is called a consonant digraph. In a consonant digraph, two consonant letters come together to spell one sound: /th/. Hold up two fingers and move them together until they are touching as you say /th/. Have students repeat the gesture and the sound. Listen and repeat: /th/... thumb.* Have students tap the th letter tile with two fingers as they repeat the sound and the keyword. *When I hear a word that begins with /th/, I know that the first letters in the word are t-h. Thick, thud, thin. Listen and repeat: /th/... thick; /th/... thud; /th/... thin.* Have students tap the th letter tile with two fingers again as they repeat the sound and the word. *The /th/ sound can also be in the middle or at the end of a word. Author, with, fourth. Listen and repeat: author... /th/... with... /th/... fourth... /th/.* Have students tap the th letter tile with two fingers again as they repeat the sound and the word.

Show Letter Card 9-2 (th). *The letters t-h can also spell the sound /th/, as in the word them. This is also a consonant digraph. The two consonant letters come together to make one new sound: /th/... them.* Hold up two fingers and move them together until they are touching as you say /th/. Have students repeat the gesture and the sound. *Listen and repeat: /th/...*

WARM-UP

(2 minutes)

Warm-Up activities promote student engagement and support phonological and phonemic awareness. The tasks increase in difficulty as students move through the program. Students advance from identifying rhyming patterns and blending and segmenting syllables, to isolating beginning and ending phonemes and distinguishing between vowel sounds, to adding, deleting, and substituting phonemes. Additional word sets are provided in the sidebar if more practice or reteaching is needed.

CONCEPT INTRODUCTION

(4 minutes)

Lesson concepts are introduced with detailed teacher scripting and step-by-step instructional guidance. This lesson component provides examples needed to model the target phonics pattern.

Articulation Support

This information provides explicit guidance on how phonemes look and feel in the mouth when produced accurately. Students are encouraged to use a mirror to practice articulation.

Teaching Tip

Teaching Tips provide educators with additional scaffolds and support they can embed in the instruction and practice.

Multilingual Learners

Support for multilingual learners includes scaffolds and strategies to promote the positive transfer of sounds, letters, and words from their home language and explicit instruction in concepts specific to English.

4



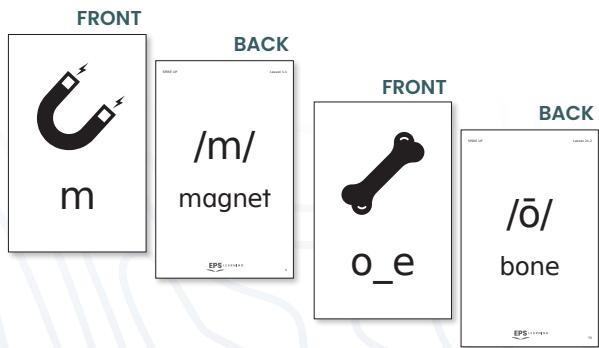
Student Books

The *SPIRE Up* Student Book, available in two print volumes, provides guided practice aligned to each lesson phase. Pages follow a consistent structure that emphasizes skill development and application. Most pages include additional practice for deeper learning and review exercises.



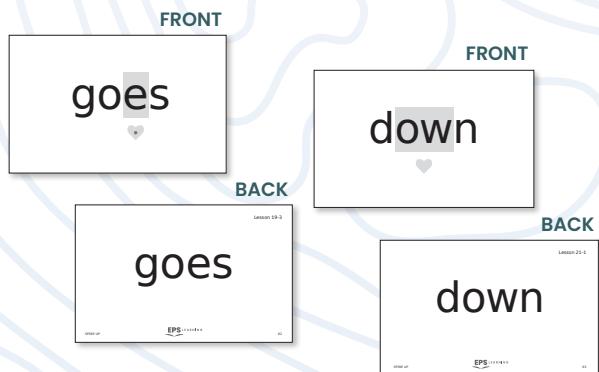
Because grade 2+ texts contain many multisyllabic words, *SPIRE Up* introduces syllabication early to help students cross the **decoding threshold**—the point at which reading becomes fluent and automatic. Initially, multisyllabic words feature only closed syllables, with open syllables and other types introduced later.

Word markup activities guide students to analyze syllable types, decode unfamiliar words, and track progress toward mastery. As fluency increases, these scaffolds are gradually faded.



Letter Cards (Sound-Spelling Introductions)

Letter Cards (print and digital) introduce each new skill in the A lessons. The front features a keyword image and the grapheme for the target sound-spelling; the back provides the target phoneme and keyword for modeling. Teachers use these cards for instruction, formative assessment, or reteaching.



Word Cards (Heart Words)

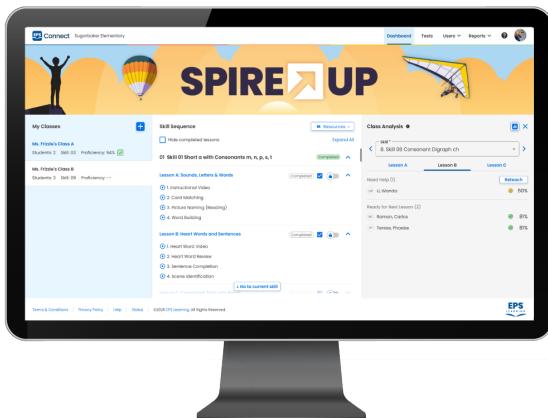
Word Cards (print and digital) teach and review “heart words”—high-frequency words with irregular or not-yet-taught sound-spelling patterns. Derived primarily from the first 200 Fry Words, each card visually highlights the unexpected spelling with a heart symbol. These cards reinforce orthographic mapping and support both instruction and formative assessment.



Letter Tiles and Boards

Magnetic letter tiles and boards enable tactile blending, segmenting, and word-building practice. Each set includes graphemes, affixes, and blank tiles for customization.

“ The decoding threshold is the point at which reading becomes fluent and automatic. **”**



Digital Integration: Connect Platform

SPIRE Up on the Connect digital platform serves as the program's instructional and data hub for teachers and students. Teachers access instructional resources, assign assessments, monitor student progress, and provide targeted practice, while students complete refresher instruction, practice activities, and formative assessments. *SPIRE Up* ensures instruction is data driven and responsive, while also offering tools that streamline teacher workflow.

Table 2. Connect Features and Components

Connect Component	Description	Key Features/Benefits	How this Helps Teachers
Independent Practice	Reinforces concepts taught during direct instruction.	Skill Review: Students review the concepts taught during direct instruction by watching engaging videos. Practice: Students engage in activities for each lesson phase, working at the word, sentence, and passage level.	Supports skill growth; provides clear lesson structure and activities for engagement.
Initial Placement Assessment	Establishes a data-informed entry point for each student.	Quick and Easy Assessments: Placement tests are short and simple. Flexible Adjustments: Change placements as needed to support every student.	Placement test allows students to be placed where they'll succeed, based on skill gaps; organize students by skill level for focused teaching.
Oral Reading Fluency Assessments	Monitors fluency growth over time.	Quick and Easy Assessments: Voice-recognition technology saves time. Progress Tracking: Monitors student's progress with three benchmark assessments.	Helps track students' progress toward crossing the decoding threshold.
Reports	Translates performance data into actionable insights.	Easy-to-Read Visuals: Charts and graphs highlight what matters most. Progress Tracking: Monitor progress across all 64 lessons. Drill Down for Details: View overall trends or zoom in on individual student performance, including time spent and number of attempts per activity. Oral Reading Fluency Over Time: Track changes in reading fluency to measure growth and adjust teaching. School-Home Connection: Teachers can use report data for communication with families.	Provides administrators and teachers with actionable insights.
Text to Speech	Enhances accessibility and comprehension.	AI-Powered Audio: Most audio is generated by AI, so students hear natural-sounding pronunciations. Great User Experience: Most audio is generated by sophisticated AI, and validated by EPS, so students hear natural-sounding pronunciations.	Makes lessons accessible for all learners; reduces teacher workload for pronunciation and modeling.

Connect is intentionally simple to navigate. Teachers can move from lesson plans to reports in just a few clicks, assign or adjust practice activities based on data, and use placement and fluency assessments to track students' progress toward crossing the decoding threshold.

The platform ensures fidelity to *SPIRE Up*'s structured literacy design while giving educators the flexibility to adapt pacing and grouping to student needs.



Instructional Design Rationale

SPIRE Up translates decades of reading research into practical, classroom-ready instruction for diverse learners—including multilingual students and those with learning differences (Moats, 2005; IDA, 2018). The program provides a clear, step-by-step roadmap to help every student develop fluency, confidence, and comprehension. Lessons move from work with individual sounds to words, sentences, and connected text, following a consistent and supportive sequence.

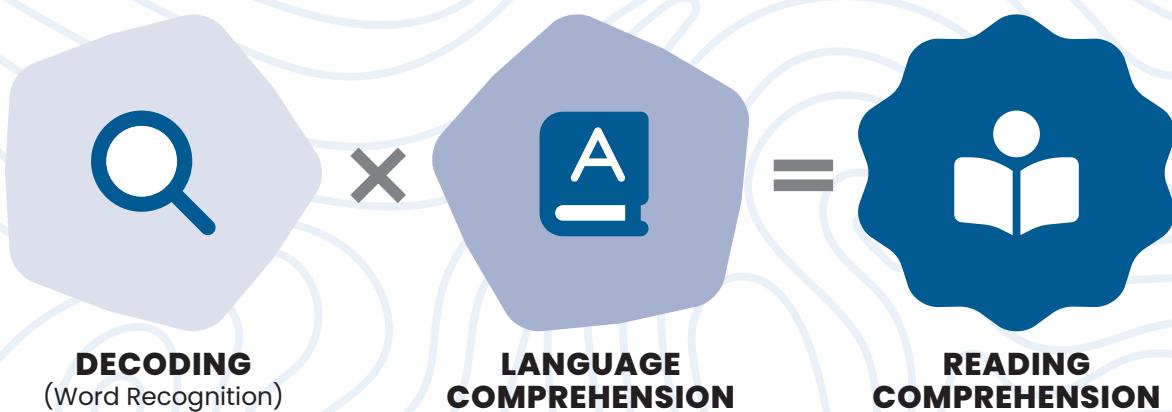
The Decoding Threshold

One of *SPIRE Up*'s main goals is to help students cross the decoding threshold—the point at which they can quickly and accurately read most words (Wang, 2019). Before reaching this milestone, reading is slow and takes a lot of effort, which limits comprehension even when vocabulary support is provided. After crossing the decoding threshold, students read more automatically and can focus on understanding what they read. Research shows that students who reach this point make rapid progress in comprehension, while those who do not often struggle to improve (Wang, 2019).

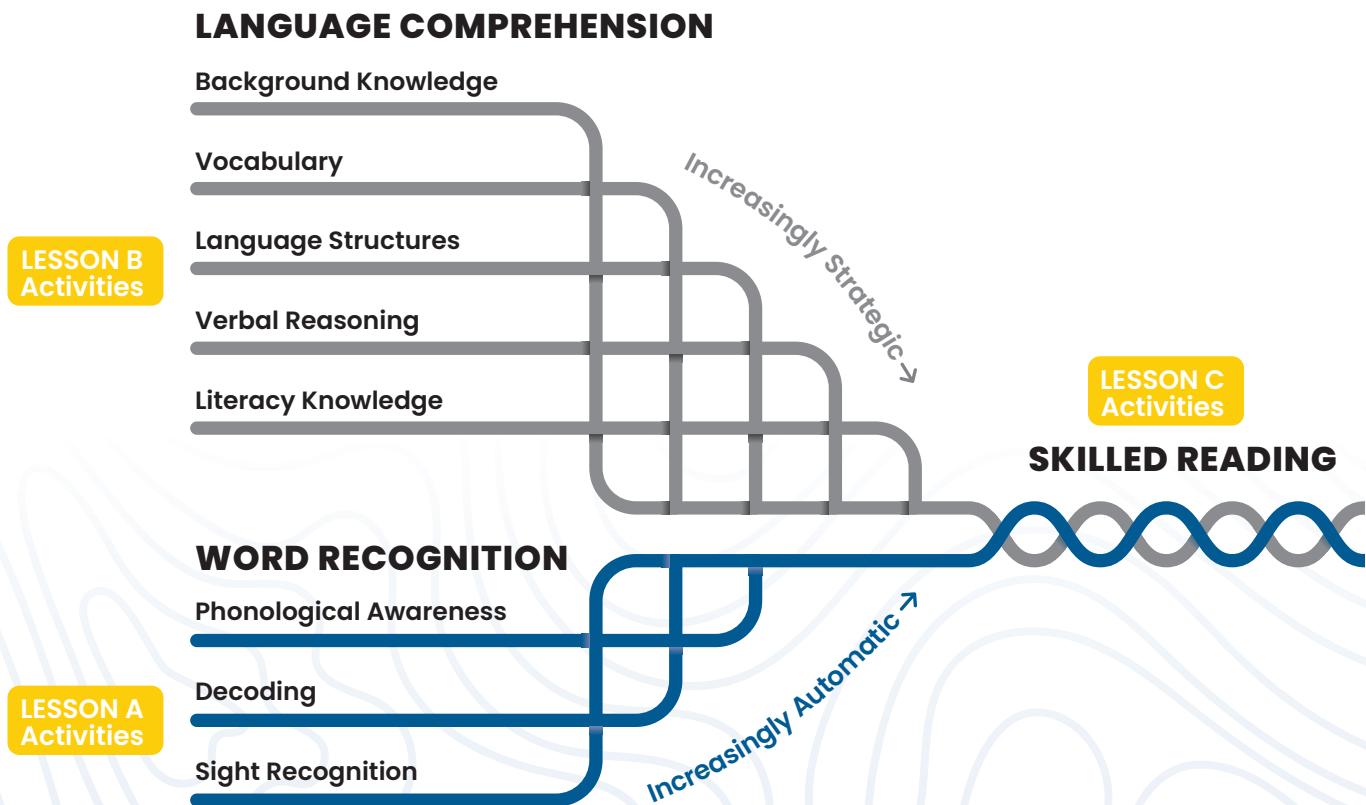
SPIRE Up is designed to guide students to this turning point. Through explicit, multisensory instruction and small-group or one-on-one practice, the program helps students move from slow, effortful decoding to fluent reading—supported by data from *SPIRE Up* on Connect.

Foundational Models of Reading

The Simple View of Reading explains that comprehension depends on both decoding and language understanding. Strong decoding cannot replace weak language skills, and vice versa (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). This model shows why helping students cross the decoding threshold is so important.



Scarborough's Reading Rope builds on the Simple View of Reading by breaking reading into key subskills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and verbal reasoning, and showing how these skills work together to create fluent readers (Scarborough, 2001). *SPIRE Up*'s lessons, materials, and assessments are designed to address every strand of the Reading Rope and both sides of the Simple View of Reading equation. This helps students become skilled readers and gives teachers a clear, research-based roadmap for intervention.



Orton-Gillingham Approach

The Orton-Gillingham approach is a structured, evidence-based way to teach reading, especially for students who struggle with decoding and spelling. It is explicit, systematic, and multisensory: skills are taught directly, in a clear sequence, and reinforced through visual, auditory, and hands-on activities. Students learn to connect sounds to letters, recognize language patterns, and apply these skills to reading and writing. Mastery is emphasized at every step, building a strong foundation in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

For more than 20 years, *SPIRE* programs have used Orton-Gillingham methods as their foundation, making them trusted resources for teachers working to close reading gaps and help all students succeed. Every *SPIRE Up* lesson includes multisensory routines such as tactile letter formation and oral blending.



Connecting Research to Practice: The SPIRE Up Framework

Research Principles



SPIRE Up is built on decades of literacy research, including the Science of Reading (NRP, 2000; Moats, 2005; Wang, 2019), Structured Literacy (IDA, 2018), and Orton-Gillingham methods proven effective for students with dyslexia. Foundational models like the Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) and Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001) guide the integration of decoding and language comprehension—ensuring instruction targets every strand of skilled reading.

Research drives instructional design choices. Choices are implemented in lessons. Lessons deliver outcomes for students.



Instructional Strategies



Instruction is explicit, systematic, and multisensory—delivered through scaffolded routines that gradually release responsibility (Salehomoum et al., 2022). Lessons emphasize phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, supported by continuous progress monitoring and corrective feedback (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Moats, 2005). These strategies ensure students receive targeted, responsive instruction tailored to their needs.

Instructional strategies translate research into classroom practice. Explicit, systematic, and multisensory routines ensure every student receives targeted support and opportunities for mastery.



Lesson Design



SPIRE Up's 64 skills with 3 lessons per skill—A (Sounds, Letters, Words), B (Heart Words & Sentences), and C (Connected Text)—translates research into daily practice. Each lesson includes teacher scripts, sidebars, and hands-on routines, with digital tools on Connect that support independent practice, assessment, and progress tracking. Materials like Letter Cards, Word Cards, and magnetic tiles reinforce multisensory engagement and skill mastery (Wolf, 2008; Blachman, 2004; Alquahtani, 2024; Cheung and Slavin, 2012).

Lesson design organizes instruction into clear, manageable phases. Each phase builds foundational skills, applies learning in context, and connects reading to real-world comprehension.



Student Outcomes



Students move from effortful decoding to fluent, prosodic reading by crossing the decoding threshold—a key milestone for comprehension and confidence (Wang, 2019). *SPIRE Up* fosters vocabulary growth, oral language development, and reading independence. Motivation and engagement are cultivated through consistent routines, goal-setting tools, and school-home connections that celebrate progress (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Blevins, 2016).

Student outcomes reflect the impact of effective instruction. As students cross the decoding threshold, they gain fluency, vocabulary, and confidence—becoming independent, motivated readers.

Seven Research-Based Principles of Reading Instruction

These seven principles, grounded in decades of reading research, guide instruction that helps all students, especially those who need extra support, develop the skills to become fluent, confident, independent readers.

Table 3. *SPIRE Up's Alignment with Research-Based Reading Principles*

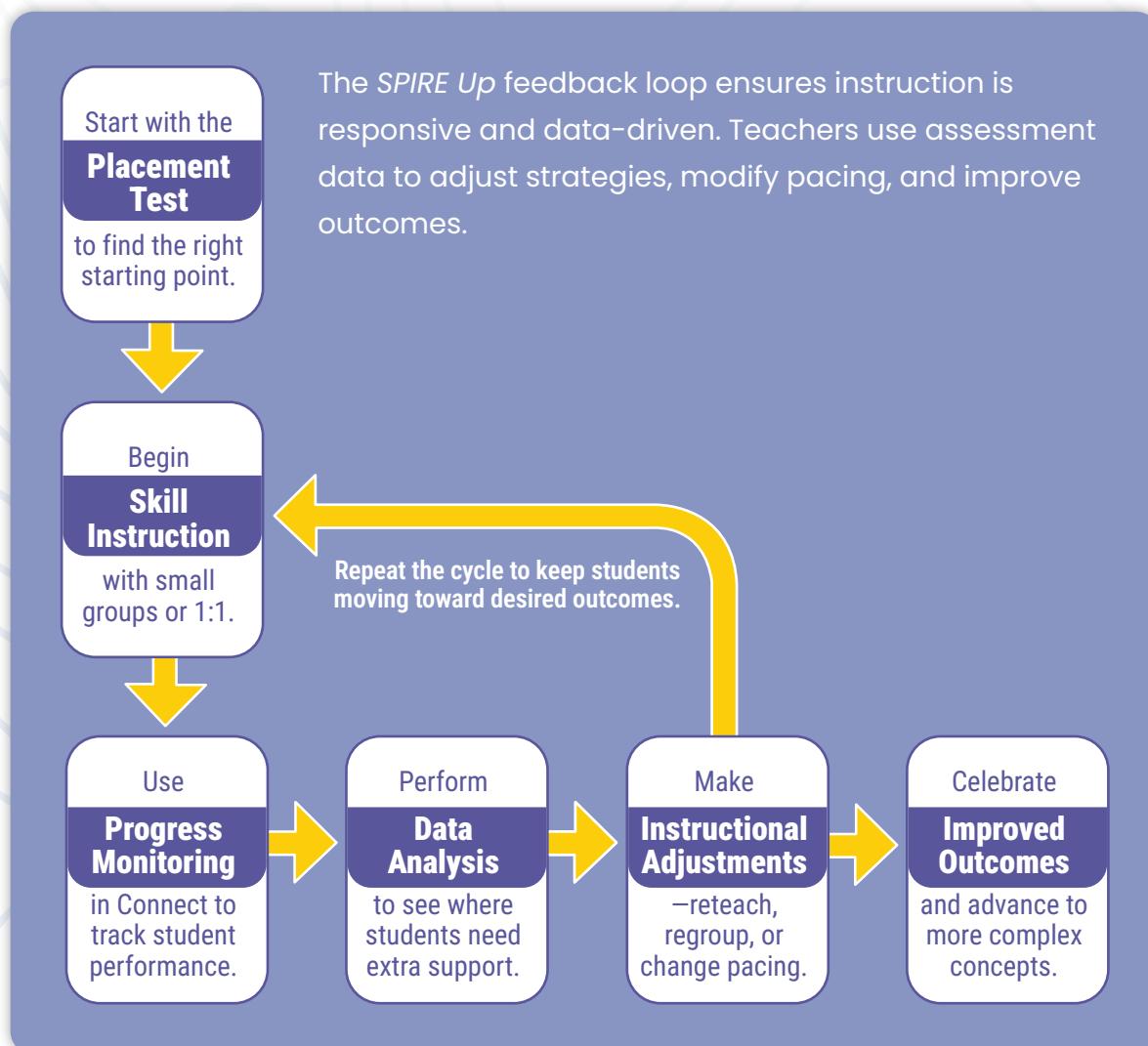
Principle	What it Means	How <i>SPIRE Up</i> Delivers	Research Basis
1. Explicit Instruction	Teach reading skills directly and clearly, with modeling, guided practice, and clear explanations.	Lessons move from teacher modeling to guided practice and then independent work (I Do, We Do, You Do). The Teacher's Guide provides scripts, corrective feedback, and structured routines for clear instruction. Teachers model blending sounds, then guide students through practice before independent application.	Moats (2005) NRP (2000) Salehomoum et al. (2022)
2. Systematic and Cumulative Teaching	Teach skills in a logical order, from simple to complex, with regular review and reinforcement.	Each new skill builds on previous skills. Lessons progress from sounds and words (A lessons) to heart words and sentences (B lessons), then to connected text (C lesson). Syllabication is introduced early, and complexity increases gradually. Temporary supports are removed as students master skills.	Blachman (2004) Moats (2005) NRP (2000)
3. Diagnostic and Responsive Instruction	Ongoing assessment helps tailor instruction to each student's needs.	<i>SPIRE Up</i> uses data-driven progress monitoring to personalize instruction. Digital tools track student performance, helping teachers decide when to reteach, change pacing, or regroup students. A placement test sets the starting point and guides grouping.	Archer et al. (2014) International Dyslexia Association (2018) Moats (2005)
4. Five Pillars of Reading	Teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.	<i>SPIRE Up</i> covers all five pillars: phonemic awareness (A lessons), phonics (systematic decoding and encoding), fluency (repeated reading and oral assessments), vocabulary (embedded in all lessons), and comprehension (connected text and oral language activities).	NRP (2000) Willingham (2006) Wolf (2008)
5. Multisensory Engagement	Use visual, auditory, and hands-on activities to reinforce learning.	<i>SPIRE Up</i> lessons include hands-on routines and interactive materials: Letter Cards, Word Cards, student activities, teacher-led articulation, and magnetic letter tiles. These techniques are used throughout all lesson types.	Archer et al. (2014) Moats (2005) Orton-Gillingham
6. Language Comprehension	Build students' ability to understand and interpret text, including background knowledge, grammar, and reasoning.	<i>SPIRE Up</i> builds background knowledge in C lessons, includes grammar instruction in B lessons, and uses oral language and comprehension strategies throughout. Teacher-led discussions help students make connections and explain their thinking.	Castro (2010) Scarborough (2001) Willingham (2006)
7. Motivation and Engagement	Foster self-confidence, persistence, and celebrate success.	<i>SPIRE Up</i> helps students feel successful and confident. Consistent routines build familiarity, scaffolded activities and feedback support growth, and multisensory activities keep learning engaging. Tools such as goal-setting sheets and Update Tickets help celebrate progress. School-home connections encourage families to join in celebrating success.	Blevins (2016) International Dyslexia Association (2018) Wolf (2008)



SECTION 4: Assessment and Feedback Integration

Effective assessment and feedback are central to *SPIRE Up*'s design. Ongoing assessment ensures instruction is responsive, targeted, and aligned with each student's needs.

Data and Feedback	What It Does	Research Basis
Placement Test	Students begin <i>SPIRE Up</i> with a placement test to determine a suggested starting point in the lesson sequence.	(NRP, 2000; Moats, 2005)
Initial Instruction	After placement, students engage with their teacher in intensive instruction through the <i>SPIRE Up</i> scope & sequence addressing skill gaps identified by the placement test. This instruction is followed by ongoing practice and progress monitoring within Connect, creating a continuous feedback loop that informs instructional adjustments.	(Moats, 2005; Archer et al., 2014; International Dyslexia Association, 2018)
Progress Monitoring	Student responses to independent practice activities on the Connect platform are tracked and reported to teachers and administrators. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Teachers can see if a student has mastered a skill and can apply it across different activities.▶ Teachers can drill down to specific items to identify which activity types or skills a student finds challenging.▶ Administrators can view class and school-wide data to identify where additional support or professional development may be needed.	Moats (2005); Archer et al. (2014); International Dyslexia Association (2018)



(Moats, 2005; Archer et al., 2014)

SPIRE Up is designed to empower teachers with the tools, routines, and supports needed for consistent, high-quality instruction. The following supports ensure every educator can deliver the program with fidelity.

Why Fidelity Matters

Research shows that structured, explicit instruction delivered with fidelity leads to stronger reading outcomes (Moats, 2005; Archer et al., 2014; IDA, 2018). *SPIRE Up* makes this possible by combining clear routines with flexible supports.

Support Type	How It Helps Teachers
Explicit Teacher Guidance and Scripting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>SPIRE Up</i> offers a “soft script”—detailed lesson plans that guide instruction while allowing for flexibility and adaptation. Each step includes clear directions for what to say and do and where to locate supporting materials. ■ Supporting materials are available in both print and digital formats (on Connect), including manipulatives and student book pages, for easy access.
Structured Lesson Format and Fidelity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>SPIRE Up</i> uses a consistent lesson structure, ensuring all components of structured literacy are addressed. This standardized format supports teacher fidelity by streamlining instructional routines. ■ Lesson pacing is guided by data collected during and after lessons, with recommendations for reteaching and independent practice based on student performance.
Corrective Feedback and Scaffolding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Corrective feedback is built into the lesson flow, with prompts for providing immediate error correction and supportive scaffolding as needed. Teachers are provided with additional examples to use when reteaching skills.
Multisensory and Language-Based Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teachers are supported with multisensory activity suggestions (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and oral language strategies to reinforce concepts and increase student engagement. Optional activities are provided for additional support and can be incorporated flexibly.
Digital Platform Support (EPS Connect)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connect offers teachers digital access to lesson plans, student activity insights, and instructional resources. Teachers can assign content, monitor progress, and access reteaching materials directly from the platform. ■ Platform navigation guidance is included, ensuring teachers can efficiently use digital tools to support fidelity and instructional decision-making.

Implementing with Fidelity: The Key to Student Growth

Delivering *SPIRE Up* with fidelity means following the program's structure, routines, and supports as they were designed. When teachers use *SPIRE Up* as intended, students benefit from the full power of decades of reading research.

Why is fidelity so important?

- Maximizing Student Growth: Studies show that structured literacy programs are most effective when implemented faithfully (Moats, 2005). Each lesson, routine, and multisensory activity is there for a reason—helping students build skills step by step.
- Ensuring Equity: Consistent use of *SPIRE Up* gives every learner, especially those who need extra support, access to proven strategies (IDA, 2018). Fidelity helps create a level playing field.
- Making Data Meaningful: When lessons are delivered as designed, progress monitoring and assessment data truly reflect student learning. This allows teachers to make informed decisions and celebrate real growth.

What does fidelity look like?

- Using the lesson scripts and pacing guides.
- Including multisensory routines and corrective feedback.
- Engaging with professional learning and support resources.
- Responding to student data with thoughtful adjustments.

When teachers embrace *SPIRE Up* and follow the program with fidelity, they not only bring their unique strengths and creativity to every lesson, they also ensure that every student benefits fully from the power of research-based instruction, unlocking new possibilities for growth and success in every classroom.



SECTION 6:

Implementation Models

SPIRE Up is designed to meet the diverse needs of students requiring foundational literacy intervention, offering flexible, evidence-based instruction. The predictable structure and simplicity of design of *SPIRE Up* lessons allow educators to deliver the program with fidelity. Supportive digital tools and ongoing professional learning are included with the program, allowing immediate, seamless implementations. *SPIRE Up* empowers teachers to make data-driven instructional decisions while maintaining consistent, high-quality practice in small groups or 1:1 settings, in alignment with RTI and MTSS frameworks.

Supporting RTI/MTSS Frameworks

SPIRE Up is designed for flexible delivery to align to Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) frameworks. It serves as an intensive intervention, providing explicit, systematic instruction for students who require support to close foundational skill gaps. Lessons are structured to build mastery in phonemic awareness, phonics, and word recognition—skills essential for crossing the decoding threshold. With every lesson, students complete practice activities that provide continual formative assessment data to inform instruction. This integrated approach to progress monitoring allows educators to individualize instruction, ensuring that every learner receives the right level of support at the right time.

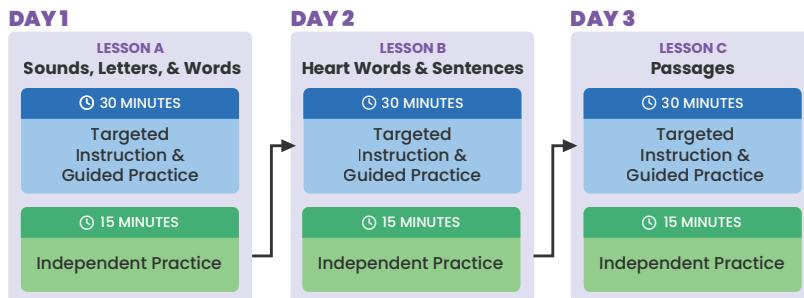
Flexible Scheduling and Instructional Delivery

SPIRE Up's lesson design allows for flexible implementation based on your unique schedule.

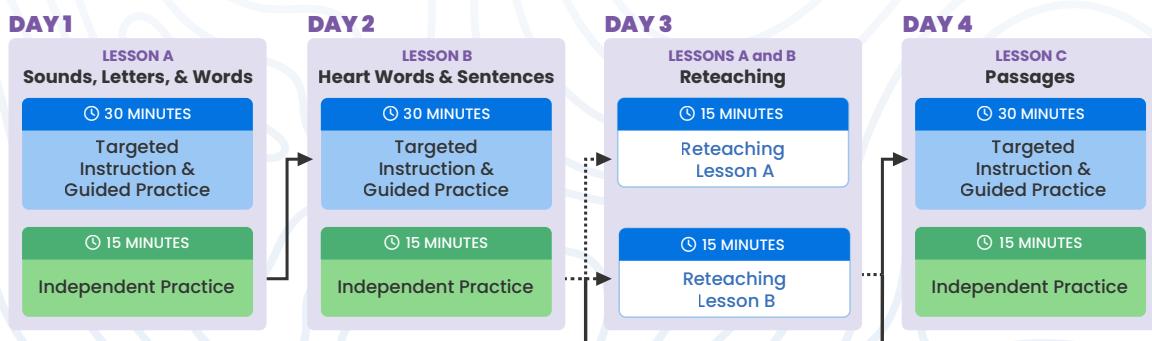
Lessons may be taught one-on-one, in small groups, or within specialized intervention periods. Digital access through EPS Connect ensures that teachers can manage pacing, track student progress, and access all instructional materials—whether instruction occurs in person, online, or in hybrid settings.

For optimal results, *SPIRE Up* should be implemented 30–45 minutes, 3–5 days per week.

3 DAYS



4 DAYS



5 DAYS





Conclusion

SPIRE Up advances a legacy of Structured Literacy that has long defined effective reading intervention. Designed with the same precision and care that educators have come to expect from EPS Learning and the *SPIRE* family of products, *SPIRE Up* transforms the principles of explicit, systematic, and multisensory instruction into a seamlessly integrated blended model for today's classrooms. Through the Connect platform, digital practice, voice-recognition assessment, and real-time reporting work in concert with teacher-led lessons to create a cohesive, data-rich environment that strengthens instruction and accelerates learning.

Every element of *SPIRE Up* reflects a rigorous commitment to research and results. Its 64 skills and three-lesson sequence lead students purposefully toward the decoding threshold—the pivotal point at which effortful reading becomes fluent and comprehension deepens. Grounded in the science of reading and the Orton-Gillingham approach, *SPIRE Up* provides educators with a dependable, evidence-based system for accelerating literacy growth. It unites the discipline of research with the realities of the classroom, equipping teachers to help every student read with accuracy, confidence, and understanding.

“ Every element of *SPIRE Up*
reflects a rigorous commitment
to research and results. **”**

Bibliography

Alqahtani, S. S. (2024). A meta-analysis of technology-based interventions for elementary students with reading difficulties. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11, 1629. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-04159-y>

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching*. Guilford Press.

Brown, P. C., Roediger III, H. L., & McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Castro, M. (2010). Translanguaging: Teaching at the Intersection of Language and Education. *WIDA Focus Bulletin*. Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

Cheung, A. C.K., & Slavin, R. E. (2013). How features of educational technology applications affect student reading outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, 7, 198–215.

EdSurge. (2023). Establishing a research-based framework for edtech product quality. Retrieved from <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2023-05-08-establishing-a-research-based-framework-for-edtech-product-quality>

ERIC. (2023). High-quality professional development in K-12 educational technology: A review of research. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED624413.pdf>

Fiester, L. (2013). *Early Warning Confirmed: A Research Update on Third-Grade Reading*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from www.aecf.org.

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Malone, A. S. (2017). The taxonomy of intervention intensity. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 35–43.

Gough, P. B., & Tunmer, W. E. (1986). Decoding, reading, and reading disability. *Remedial and Special Education*, 7, 6–10.

Guthrie, J. T., & Wigfield, A. (2000). Engagement and motivation in reading. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research* (Vol. 3, pp. 403–422). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Haring, N. G., Lovitt, T. C., Eaton, M. D., & Hansen, C. L. (1978). *The Fourth R: Research in the Classroom*. C.E. Merrill.

Hoover, W. A., & Gough, P. B. (1990). The simple view of reading. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 2(2), 127–160.

INEE. (2022). EdTech for learning in emergencies and displaced settings: A rigorous review and narrative synthesis. Retrieved from <https://inee.org/resources/edtech-learning-emergencies-and-displaced-settings>

International Dyslexia Association. (2018). Effective Reading Instruction. Retrieved from <https://dyslexiaida.org/effective-reading-instruction/>

Journal of Digital Educational Technology. (2024). Quality edtech professional development for K-12 classroom practice. Retrieved from <https://www.jdet.net/article/quality-edtech-professional-development-for-k12-classroom-practice-14809>

Kincade, L., Cook, C., & Goerdt, A. (2020). Meta-analysis and common practice elements of universal approaches to improving student-teacher relationships. *Review of Educational Research*, 90(5), 710–748.

Kilpatrick, D. A. (2015). *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties*. John Wiley & Sons.

Marks, J., Smith, L., & Johnson, R. (2019). Oral language skills predict reading comprehension; background knowledge is critical. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 51(2), 123–145.

Moats, L. C. (2005). How spelling supports reading. *American Educator*, Winter 2005/2006.

Moats, L. (2009). Knowledge foundations for teaching reading and spelling. *Read Writ*, 22, 379–399. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-009-9162-1>

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read: Reports of the Subgroups. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2010). *Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Orton-Gillingham Academy. (2023). Principles of Orton-Gillingham Instruction. Retrieved from <https://www.ortonacademy.org/>

Ray, J. S. (2020). Structured literacy supports all learners: Students at-risk of literacy acquisition—dyslexia and English learners. *Texas Association for Literacy Education Yearbook*, 7, 1–12.

Ryan Jackson, K., Fixsen, D., & Ward, C. (2018). Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: An Implementation Framework. National Implementation Research Network, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Salehomoum, M., Revelle, K., Duke, N., & Pearson, P. (2022). Gradual release of responsibility instructional model. In *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Education* (pp. 1–3). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781138609877-REE226-1>

Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Early Literacy* (pp. 97–110). Guilford Press.

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 21(2), 360–407.

Sayeski, K. L., Earle, G. A., Davis, R., & Calamari, J. (2018). Orton Gillingham: Who, What, and How. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 51(3), 240–249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059918816996>

Wang, Z., Sabatini, J., O'Reilly, T., & Weeks, J. (2019). Decoding and reading comprehension: A test of the decoding threshold hypothesis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 111(3), 387–401.

Willingham, D. T. (2006). How knowledge helps. *American Educator*, 30(1), 30–37.

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. HarperCollins.

Wu, L., Valcke, M., & Van Keer, H. (2023). Differential effects of reading strategy intervention for three levels of comprehenders: Focus on text comprehension and autonomous reading motivation.



2025
// CODIE //
FINALIST



Visit epslearning.com to view our range of curriculum programs.
Questions? [Contact your EPS Learning Account Executive.](#)

epslearning.com | 866.716.2820

EPS
LEARNING