

Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide for Module 17: Development of Literacy

Module run time: 25 minutes

Estimated time to complete the module with discussion guide: 45-60 minutes

Below are recommended stopping points and suggested questions to use in your group's discussion. Please feel free to follow your group's lead and discuss topics and questions that are of greatest value to the group!

Key points:

- Literacy is an important part of daily life. It helps empower a child's educational, societal, and civic development.
- The best curricula for teaching children how to read include explicit instruction in phonological awareness. Explicit classroom instruction is key to building a strong foundation of phonological awareness.
- Some children have difficulty learning to read. Research tells us that it is important to identify struggling readers early on, and to provide them with extra support before they fall behind their peers.
- Early intervention helps struggling children build foundational skills and improve their reading ability. Effective programs encompass the school, home, and community.

Module synopsis:

Page 1: *Title Page – Development of Literacy*

Page 2: *Acknowledgments*

Page 3: *Learning to Read: What's at Stake?*

Page 4: *Training a Brain to Read*

⊕ Recommended stopping point

- Reading is an important part of everyday life, from learning in school to navigating the workforce. Take a moment to think about the importance of literacy in your life. What daily actions would be more difficult or impossible if you couldn't read?
- **Plasticity** is your brain's ability to be molded, shaped, and changed by experience. Brain plasticity helps us become fluent readers. With experience, brain regions responsible for recognizing objects are re-wired to recognize words. What other experiences might change the wiring of your brain? For example, consider skills that you develop over time, like playing a musical instrument or learning a second language. How are these experiences similar or different than learning to read?

Page 5: *Phonic-based Teaching (1)*

Page 6: *Phonic-based Teaching (2)*

Page 7: *Explicit Instruction in the Classroom (1)*

Page 8: *Explicit Instruction in the Classroom (2)*

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✦ Recommended stopping point

- Phonics-based instruction is a necessary aspect of any program that aims to teach children how to read. Recall the concept of **phonological awareness** from Module 16. How does phonics-based instruction build on phonological awareness?
- You were just given some examples of explicit phonics-based instruction from Mr. Javier's kindergarten class. What else could Mr. Javier have done to extend his students' learning even more?
- What are some other elements of explicit phonics instruction that Mr. Javier could have incorporated into his lesson?

Page 9: *Chris And Alex*

Page 10: *Noticing Those Who Struggle*

Page 11: *Building Foundational Skills*

Page 12: *Why Some Kids Struggle*

✦ Recommended stopping point

- **Dyslexia** is a condition in which small differences in brain wiring affect a child's ability to read. If a child is struggling to learn to read, what strategies might you use to support them? What types of instruction would be most beneficial? Think about everything we've talked about so far in this module.

Page 13: *Helping the Struggling Reader*

Page 14: *A Reading Intervention*

Page 15: *Community Response to Intervention Models*

✦ Recommended stopping point

- Reading intervention programs can help struggling readers. One example is Florida's Multi-Tiered System of Supports program. What elements of this intervention program make it successful? What other elements would contribute to a program's effectiveness?

Page 16: *What Should You Do if Your Child Is Struggling*

✦ Final discussion points

- In this module, you learned strategies for teaching literacy. How could a parent support their child's literacy development at home? How can teachers support literacy development in the classroom?
- You also learned why some children struggle as they learn to read. If you have a child who is struggling to read, what steps might you take to ensure they receive the support they need? Think about the resources that exist in your own community.

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To learn more about literacy development, take a look at these resources:

[Brain Development & Education Lab](#)

Check out our lab webpage to stay up-to-date with the latest recommendations from our lab!

[Florida Center for Reading Research](#)

The FCRR is an institute affiliated with Florida State University and represents one of the largest research centers on reading. We recommend checking out the “Teaching & Learning” section, where you’ll find “Information for Parents,” “Interventions for Struggling Readers,” and “Frequently Asked Questions about Reading Instruction.”

[Multi-Tiered System of Supports: Engaging Families in Education](#)

Use this parent resource guide to see an example of how the Florida Reading Research Center has collaborated with the community to implement a model of intervention designed to help those who struggle.

[Reading 101](#)

Reading 101 is a self-paced professional development course for K-3 teachers, developed by Reading Rockets and produced in collaboration with the Center for Effective Reading Instruction and The International Dyslexia Association.

[Reading Rockets | Phonics Instruction](#)

Reading Rocket is a national multimedia literacy initiative offering information and resources on how young kids learn to read, why so many struggle, and how caring adults can help.

[Reading Rockets | Helping Struggling Readers](#)

Check out Reading Rockets resources on helping struggling readers.

[Reading Rockets | Dyslexia](#)

Check out Reading Rockets’ list of 10 resources on dyslexia.

[What Works Clearinghouse](#)

Use this resource, provided by the U.S. Department of Education, to see what reading programs and curriculums have the scientific support to help your child, and see those that don’t. A tricky website to navigate, but we recommend clicking on “Find What Works!”

We are constantly working to improve our materials. Do you have suggestions about topics to add to this guide? Did your group discuss something we didn’t suggest? We’d love to hear from you! Please email your thoughts to us at ilabsout@uw.edu.

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