

Reading Program Checklist

Use this checklist as you evaluate a new reading program.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

- Provides explicit phonemic awareness instruction in phoneme isolation, blending, segmenting, and manipulating
- In kindergarten, lessons give an immediate focus on phonemic awareness, without spending weeks or months on rhyming and syllable counting first
- Incorporates letters when building phonemic awareness

PHONICS & SPELLING

- Provides explicit phonics instruction that follows a systematic scope and sequence
- In kindergarten, letter-sound correspondences are taught in sets so students can start decoding CVC words early on
- Does NOT have a letter-of-the-week approach that doesn't allow decoding until late in the kindergarten year
- Contains decodable texts that align with the phonics skills that have been taught
- Does NOT contain predictable, leveled texts where beginners use the pictures and context to identify words
- Spelling instruction is aligned with newly taught phonics skills in the early grades
- Irregular high-frequency words are taught with an emphasis on regular and irregular sound-spellings within the words
- Does NOT ask students to memorize "sight word" as whole words

FLUENCY

- Puts a focus on automaticity with letter names and sounds
- Does NOT focus on shared reading of a predictable text as the initial fluency-building strategy
- Fluency building includes teacher modeling and many opportunities for oral reading
- Fluency building is focused on automaticity and accuracy, not just rate

VOCABULARY & COMPREHENSION

- Contains fiction and nonfiction read-alouds that are challenging and through which students will build oral language, vocabulary, and knowledge
- Provides teacher-scaffolding of complex, knowledge-building text so all students have access to grade-level material
- Teaches Tier 2 vocabulary words in depth and provides many opportunities for review
- Does NOT follow a strategies-first approach where texts are chosen to help students practice specific comprehension strategies
- Follows a text-first approach where texts are chosen based on their merits, and comprehension strategies are taught in service of the text

REVIEW & ASSESSMENT

- Contains built-in cumulative review
- Contains assessments that help teachers differentiate instruction
- Contains assessments that help teachers monitor progress