

## APPLYING TO A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM?

# Ask these questions to see if the program you're considering values research-based literacy instruction.

To become an effective teacher, attending an education program aligned with the Science of Reading is essential.

Currently, just 35% of the nation's 4th graders are proficient readers. However, studies show that 95% of students can reach reading proficiency if they receive the right instruction.

From decades of research, the Science of Reading has established how the brain learns to read, and what students need to become proficient readers.

As educators, we have the power and responsibility to address the literacy crisis, and it begins with the teacher preparation program you choose. Be certain that the investment you make in your education prepares you to enter the classroom ready to teach all children to read.

Programs and departments can vary within universities. The questions and essential concepts below can help you assess if a program is aligned with the Science of Reading. Use them to review coursework descriptions, get the most out of information sessions, or have a conversation with university faculty.

### Does coursework include how the brain works?

- Reading psychology and development
- The neurobiology of reading
- Environmental, social and cultural factors affecting literacy development

### Does coursework include how language works?

- An understanding of language structure
- How oral language development affects reading development
- Teaching English Language Learners
- Valuing dialect and cultural variations in language

### Does coursework include how teaching works?

- How to apply evidence-based practices
- Where and how the program teaches diagnostic, explicit systematic instruction
- Where and how the program teaches culturally responsive pedagogy
- A closely supervised student-teaching experience, working directly with students struggling to read

### Does coursework include how data works?

- How to use assessments to inform teaching
- Where and how the program teaches administering, interpreting, and using data to inform instruction to meet the needs of individual students



*Protecting every child's right to read.*

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### SCIENCE OF READING RESOURCES & TOOLS

Read Emily Hanford's article, [Hard Words: Why aren't kids being taught to read?](#)

Join the Facebook Group: [Science of Reading-What I should have learned in college](#)

Download the Reading League's free e-book: [What is the Science of Reading](#).

Explore [readingrockets.org](#) and [readingpromise.org](#) for great literacy resources for families.

Inquire further about your program with a sample email from: [bit.ly/SOR-University-Email](mailto:bit.ly/SOR-University-Email)

**Are students taught by faculty with expertise across general education, special education, and reading support contexts?**

**Who are the professors that I can contact to ask more specific questions?**

**To what extent is your program informed by the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading, ILA Standards, and Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE)?**

- [IDA \(International Dyslexia Association\)](#) has developed standards for teacher preparation that focus on research-based explicit and systematic instructional practices.
- [ILA \(International Literacy Association\)](#) provides research-based standards for the breadth of literacy professionals including classroom teachers, specialists, and administrators.
- [CR-SE](#) encompasses skills for educators that promote equitable access for all students.