

# WHAT IS THE SCIENCE OF READING?



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The science of reading refers to the study of how the brain learns to read and research-based teaching methods. The National Reading Panel (2000) identified five fundamental components of reading that can be found in our instruction. These are **phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension**. To support student literacy, over 150 Independence staff members are participating in LETRS training based on Missouri's priority to build knowledge and skills to deliver systematic reading instruction. More information on Missouri's literacy trainings can be found online [HERE](https://dese.mo.gov/literacy).  
<https://dese.mo.gov/literacy>

## WHAT IS WORD STUDY?

Word study is a foundational reading skill. It involves studying the relationship between sounds and written language. Word study focuses **NOT** on memorization, but on helping students see the **regularities, patterns, word origin, and meaning of words**. Word study teaches students how to use word knowledge strategically to support their writing, help them decode unknown words, and understand word parts. Students work with weekly patterns during their word study block.



## WHAT ARE HEART WORDS?

Heart Words are words that do not seem to fit a regular pattern. Examples of heart words are **said, are, and where**. Some part of the word will have to be learned by heart. When we teach this way, readers are no longer asked to memorize the whole word but rather to pay attention to the parts that make sense and the parts that do not make sense. Check out this video to see it in action: [Heart Word SAID](#)

♥  
**said**

## WHAT IS MORPHOLOGY?

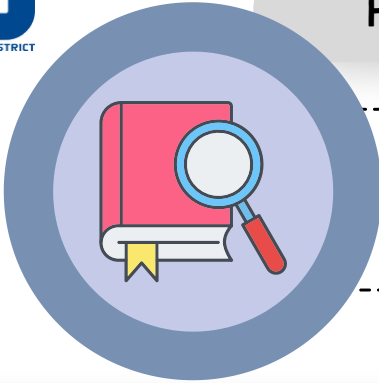
Morphemes are the smallest meaningful parts of words. Morphology is the study of those meaningful parts. When we focus on morphemes, we learn **prefixes, root words, and suffixes**. We also learned **Greek and Latin roots** to explain the way words are spelled and how roots affect their meaning—for example, the word "*intersection*". The prefix "*inter*" means *between*, the Latin root "*sect*" means *to cut*, and the suffix "*tion*" makes the word an action word.



## WHAT CAN FAMILIES DO AT HOME?

Check out the fun Family Choice Boards online [HERE!](#)  
<http://sites.isdschools.org//curriculum/elementary-curriculum>

## HOW DO STUDENTS LEARN VOCABULARY?



Vocabulary is vital to the development of reading comprehension. Vocabulary refers to understanding words in the context of reading. Students learn new words through reading, listening to read-alouds, and having conversations.

## HOW DO STUDENTS DEVELOP FLUENCY?

Fluency includes **accuracy, rate, and expression** when reading. Students need to be able to decode words automatically and with expression. Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension.



## HOW IS COMPREHENSION DEVELOPED?



Comprehension is how readers understand what they read. This is the ultimate goal for all readers. **Oral language** and **background knowledge** and experiences help younger students grow as they work on word recognition at the same time.

## WHAT CAN FAMILIES DO AT HOME?

Get free books for your home! The Independence School District is proud to be an affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library! Children living within district boundaries are eligible to receive **free** books mailed directly to their homes each month from the **month they are born until age five**. Since its inception, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has gifted more than 170,000,000 books, inspiring a love for reading and building strong academic foundations with children around the world. Check out the website [HERE](https://www.isdschools.org/imagination-library/) <https://www.isdschools.org/imagination-library/> for more information and to enroll.



GRADE	TIME FRAME	ASSESSMENTS
Kindergarten	Fall, Winter, Spring	FastBridge Early Reading - Letter Sounds, Letter Names, Word Segmenting, Nonsense Words, Sight Words - LETRS Spelling Screener
1st Grade	Fall, Winter, Spring	FastBridge Early Reading - Word Segmenting, Nonsense Words, Sight Words, Fluency - LETRS Spelling Screener
2nd -5th Grades	Fall, Winter, Spring	FastBridge aReading, Fluency - LETRS Spelling Screener