

# Understanding Reading and Reading Challenges

*Reading is the foundation of success  
in school and life . . .*

Most school's reading curriculum focuses on the "Five Big Ideas in Reading Instruction" identified by the National Reading Panel as essential to reading instruction.

## Five Big Ideas

**Phonemic Awareness:** The ability to hear and use sounds

**Phonics:** The ability to match letters and sounds and apply to reading and spelling

**Fluency:** The ability to read smoothly with proper speech and expression

**Vocabulary:** The ability to understand the meaning of words

**Comprehension:** The ability to make meaning from what is read



**A predictor of how well a student will do in school is how well they read at the end of 3rd grade!**

## What if I have concerns for my child's reading?



- ◆ **Make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher. Ask questions such as:** *Do you think my child is having trouble reading? In what specific way? What can I do to work with my child at home?*
- ◆ **Ask your school district to evaluate your child:** *Write a short letter to your principal to request the school assess your child's overall ability and academic achievement, especially in reading.*

## What is a Learning Disability?

A learning disability is a neurologically based processing problem that can interfere with learning in 8 key areas:

- ◆ Oral Expression
- ◆ Listening Comprehension
- ◆ Written Expression
- ◆ Basic Reading
- ◆ Reading Fluency
- ◆ Reading Comprehension
- ◆ Math Calculations
- ◆ Math Problem Solving



## How will my school determine if my child has a Learning Disability in Reading?

The school will ask for your permission to evaluate your child's overall ability and achievement in reading.

In the area of reading, a thorough evaluation would include assessing comprehension, fluency, decoding skills, word recognition, phonological processing, and vocabulary.

You and the school team will meet to review the results of the assessments to determine if there is a discrepancy between your child's overall ability and their academic performance in reading.

If a discrepancy exists, a *determination* of a Learning Disability in Reading is made. You and the school team will then decide if your child requires special education and related services, and if so, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be written.

## Ways you can work with your child at home.

- ◆ Emphasize your child's strengths and interests.
- ◆ Encourage your child to read – even if it isn't a book. Magazines and comics can engage children and show them that reading can be fun!
- ◆ Learn more about the five areas taught in school so you are familiar with the terms the teacher uses. Ask your child's teacher what you can do to work on skills at home.
- ◆ Motivate your child to read by making connections between what they are reading and real-world experiences.

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# Who To Talk To If I Have More Questions

## South Dakota Parent Connection

800-640-4553

[www.sdparent.org](http://www.sdparent.org)

- ◆ What Every Parent Should Know About Special Education in South Dakota
- ◆ Dare to Dialogue
- ◆ Parent Brief-What Parents Should Know About Supporting Students Through 504 and Health Plans

## SD Department of Education

605-773-3678

<https://doe.sd.gov/sped/>

## South Dakota Statewide Family Engagement Center

605-484-3401

<https://sdsfec.org/>

## Understood

[www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)

## Reading Rockets

<https://sdsfec.org/link/brief-readingrocketstips>

## A Parent's Guide to Comprehension Strategies

<https://sdsfec.org/brief-parentliteracybrochure>

## ADHD and Reading Comprehension: 11 Every -Night Ways to Build Stronger Reading Skills

<https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-reading-comprehension/>

## Simple Reading Strategies for Parents to Use at Home

<https://teachachildtoread.net/reading-strategies-for-parents/>

## 9 Strategies for Summer Reading for Parents

<https://sdsfec.org/brief-strategies-for-summer-reading>

