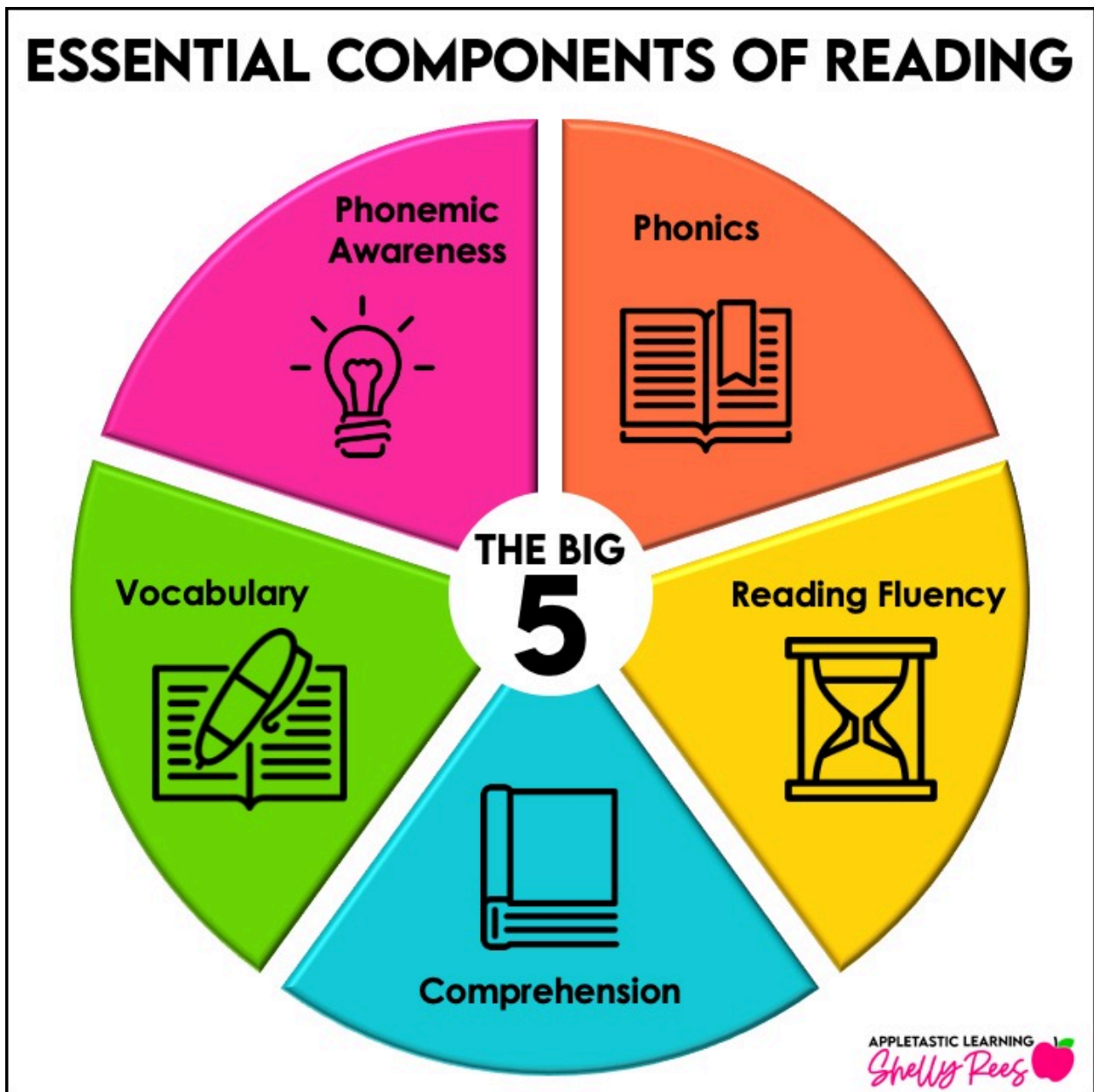


Foundational Reading Skills Grounded in the Science(s) of Reading



The School District of Beloit provides a robust learning environment for students to develop their literacy skills. Literacy consists of reading, writing, speaking, listening and comprehending language. Part of developing a strong background in literacy requires students to master early reading foundation skills that are grounded in best practices through the science(s) of reading.

Background: In 1998, The National Reading Panel (NRP) published a report which identified effective reading instruction for early readers. It identified that early reading instruction should focus on **5 Key Areas or Pillars:**

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary (this now includes oral language)
- Comprehension

The Science(s) of Reading is a vast, interdisciplinary body of scientifically-based research about reading and issues related to reading and writing. More specifically, systematic, structured phonics instruction is more effective than programs that do not follow a scope and sequence. Additionally, developing vocabulary, oral language and oral reading improves comprehension.

The Science(s) of Reading **is not:**

- an ideology or philosophy
- a fad, trend, new idea, or pendulum swing
- a political agenda
- a one-size-fits-all approach
- a program of instruction (there isn't a "science of reading" program)
- a single, specific component of instruction such as phonics

For more information on the findings of the NRP: [National Reading Panel - Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading](#)

Where we are now: More recently, Wisconsin adopted ACT 20 which created stricter parameters for reading instruction across school districts in the state. This legislation informs curriculum materials selection, assessment protocols, grade level expectations for proficiency and parent engagement procedures.

What is the Science(s) of Reading? It is a body of research that supports the original findings of the NRP. In addition to the necessary foundational skills of reading, cognitive science has shown that a primary factor in whether one is able to understand what they read is whether they possess relevant background knowledge and vocabulary. **For more information on the Science(s) of Reading:** <https://reading.uoregon.edu/>

The School District of Beloit, has a published [Early Literacy Remediation Plan](#) and updated the [Promotion Policy](#) (345.4 RULE 1) to be within compliance of ACT 20.

The School District of Beloit has accomplished many requirements as a part of the Act 20 Legislation. Some of these more critical tasks found in the Early Literacy Remediation Plan are as follows:

- **Prior to ACT 20, in 2021-22**, the district adopted a highly rated reading program, *American Reading Company* which meets the expectations for instructional practices defined under ACT 20. The materials continue to have updates that are deepening the instructional practices and the district has kept up with the updates along with providing annual professional learning opportunities for staff.
- **During 2024-25**, 4K-5 educators participated in training for reading instruction grounded in the sciences of reading through The Rollins Center for Literacy & Language. We are proud to report that approximately 95% of the teaching staff completed the mandatory training modules during that year.
- **During 2024-25**, the district adopted (updated) the Promotion Policy (345.4 RULE 1) to align with new expectations.
- **During 2024-25**, the district facilitated the usage of the universal reading screener, AimswebPlus and a diagnostic assessment to identify areas of needed growth for students. This followed with personal reading plans (PRP) for all students who scored below the 25th percentile on the universal screener.