**What is Phonological Awareness?**

Phonological awareness is the ability to analyze and manipulate the sound structure of language. In Lexia Reading Core5, phonological awareness activities include identifying, segmenting, blending and manipulating syllables and sounds in words. Phonemic awareness is a component of phonological awareness that focuses on individual sounds within words.

**What is the role of Phonological Awareness in learning how to read and spell?**

It has long been established that phonemic awareness abilities in preschool and kindergarten are highly predictive of children’s ability to learn phonic word attack strategies that are important for word identification. Before learning to read, children must develop phonemic awareness or the ability to recognize and isolate individual sounds in words. This awareness of individual sounds or phonemes is critical for mapping sounds onto print in an alphabetic writing system such as English. It directly impacts both reading and spelling. With appropriate exposure many children develop phonemic awareness with relative ease during the preschool and kindergarten years. Others, however, need more intensive systematic and explicit teaching of these skills.

**What is the approach to developing Phonological Awareness in Lexia Reading Core5?**

Phonological awareness skills are targeted in Lexia Reading Core5 through a developmental sequence of activities that begins in the preschool years. Young children first develop an awareness of the phonological patterns that occur at the end of rhyming words. A next step involves awareness of bigger chunks within words such as compound words made up of two independent words and syllables. Most importantly for reading success, students must also develop phonemic awareness as they learn to analyze and manipulate individual sounds within words. These phonemic awareness skills not only enhance phonics acquisition but also continue to grow as students work on letter-sound correspondences and application of phonics word attack strategies.

During early activities in Lexia Reading Core5 students develop phonological awareness through picture matching activities that emphasize recognition of rhyming words and the ability to blend syllables in spoken words. They also learn to segment spoken words by identifying the number of syllables they hear. Blending and segmenting activities begin with compound words and progress to three syllable words.

Once phonological awareness of syllables has been established, students begin to develop phonemic awareness by analyzing and synthesizing individual sounds in words. During phonemic awareness activities, they match pictures with the same beginning and ending sounds, and also blend and segment individual phonemes in words. These phonemic awareness or sound analysis skills are critical for learning phonic word attack strategies related to word identification and spelling. Throughout the phonics activities in Lexia Reading Core5, more complex phonemic awareness abilities involving the manipulation of sounds continue to develop.
What is Phonics?
Phonics is a method for teaching word identification strategies based on the relationship between letters and sounds. In Lexia Reading Core5, phonics activities include the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence to reading and spelling words. In addition, phonics activities involve pattern recognition of syllable types, rules for syllable division and simple spelling generalizations that are based on letter-sound correspondence.

What is the role of Phonics in learning how to read?
Phonics knowledge is important for developing accurate, and ultimately, automatic word identification skills. In learning to read, children initially rely heavily on phonic word attack strategies. They learn that there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds. At first, this allows them to decode words and build their knowledge of letter patterns. They begin to remember these letter patterns and eventually recognize most words by sight. This automaticity is essential for developing reading fluency and contributes to efficient and effective reading comprehension. Phonic word attack strategies continue to be important in the later grades when students encounter unfamiliar words in text.

What is the approach to developing Phonics in Lexia Reading Core5®?
Phonics activities in Lexia Reading Core5 begin with building letter-sound correspondence knowledge and progress to include activities that require the application of this knowledge to decoding isolated words as well as decodable phrases, sentences and paragraphs. The use of decodable text for beginning readers is essential for building the skills necessary to identify unfamiliar words, and supports the development of automatic word recognition skills. Students gain an understanding of syllable types, syllable division and simple spelling rules that are based on letter-sound correspondences as they build their decoding skills.

Initial phonics activities begin with identification of letter symbols and the alphabetic sequence. Students are then introduced to the relationship between sounds and letters for consonants and vowels as they match letters to the sounds in pictured words. This letter-sound knowledge is quickly applied to written words in tasks that require the analysis of initial and final consonants as well as medial vowels. These letter-sound activities reinforce phonemic awareness.

Students then learn to recognize letter patterns as they identify open, closed and silent-e syllables in one syllable words. In subsequent activities, they learn to combine syllables to construct and read two syllable words. They also learn to apply phonic word attack strategies to read decodable phrases and sentences. Activities throughout the phonics strand aim to simultaneously strengthen phonemic awareness skills as students continually analyze and manipulate the sequence of letters in words.

As students progress through the program, they are introduced to more complex sound and syllable patterns. Ultimately, students learn to identify all six syllable types and the basic rules for syllable division. They are also introduced to the common spelling patterns found in single syllable words. Throughout the vocabulary, comprehension and fluency activities at each level of the program, students apply their phonics knowledge to read sentence and paragraph level text.
**What is Structural Analysis?**

Structural analysis enhances the ability to identify words as well as build vocabulary through analyzing the morphological structure of words in conjunction with the syllable structure. Morphological structure refers to the study of meaningful units of language or morphemes (e.g., prefix, root and suffix) and how they are combined to create words. In Lexia Reading Core5, structural analysis activities include work on recognizing meaningful parts of multisyllabic words derived from Latin and Greek.

**What is the role of Structural Analysis in learning to read and spell?**

Research indicates that awareness of the morphological structure of language is correlated with the acquisition of reading skills. At first, students learn to decode words by applying phonic word attack strategies based on knowledge of sound-symbol correspondence and syllable types. Once they have learned to apply this knowledge to one and two syllable words, they can begin to think about meaningful word parts, including prefixes, roots and suffixes, which make up the majority of longer, multi-syllabic words. This type of word analysis, focusing on meaningful word parts rather than syllables, is often referred to as structural analysis.

Knowledge of meaningful word parts is helpful both for word identification as well as for understanding the meaning of less familiar words made up of Latin and Greek derived forms. Spelling of multi-syllabic words is also enhanced through knowledge of word parts as many spelling rules are based in morphological structure.

**What is the approach to developing Structural Analysis in Lexia Reading Core5?**

The goal of the structural analysis strand of Lexia Reading Core5 is to develop skills to read and spell multisyllabic words often found in literature as well as in the domains of math, history and science. Activities aim to strengthen reading and spelling by focusing on the recurring morphemes or meaningful word parts that make up these words. Once automatic recognition of the common affixes is in place, Lexia Reading Core5 Morphological structure refers to the study of meaningful units of language or morphemes (e.g., prefix, root and suffix) and how they are combined to create words. Initial activities expose students to simple suffixes, such as –ed and –ing, and Latin prefixes, such as un- and pre-. The goal is to improve word identification by increasing their awareness of the morphological structure of words. Students identify these affixes through listening, reading and constructing words containing these word parts. Later activities focus on Latin suffixes and common spelling rules based on the morphological structure of words (e.g., doubling rule and drop-e rule).

As students move through the program, additional emphasis is placed on the meanings of prefixes and roots to build vocabulary as well as advanced word identification and spelling strategies. Students use their knowledge of word parts to infer the meaning of academic vocabulary at the word and sentence level while continuing to strengthen their automatic reading and spelling of complex, multi-syllabic words. Ultimately, students are introduced to Greek combining forms and accent placement rules which allow them to read and comprehend vocabulary, particularly for science and the arts.
What are Automaticity & Fluency?

Automaticity is an inherent component of fluency. It involves the ability to identify letters, letter patterns and isolated words accurately and quickly. Fluency integrates automatic word identification with the application of intonation, rhythm (prosody) and phrasing at the text level. In Lexia Reading Core5, automaticity is systematically developed through a series of warm-ups and activities focused on speed of processing. Fluency is addressed through activities that involve analysis of sentence structure and ultimately the timed silent reading of passages.

What are the roles of Automaticity & Fluency in learning how to read?

Automatic and fluent reading enhances effective reading comprehension. Fluency frees the reader’s attention and cognitive energy to focus on the meaning and allows for more efficient application of higher order thinking skills. To become a fluent reader, a larger number of underlying skills necessary for word identification and sentence processing must become automatic. As students acquire word identification skills and an awareness of the syntactic structure of sentences, they increase the speed at which they can process text until it no longer competes with comprehension but rather facilitates it. The faster you process text, the easier it is to access meaning directly and integrate new information with prior knowledge.

What are the approaches to developing Automaticity and Fluency in Lexia Reading Core5®?

In Lexia Reading Core5, automaticity and fluency are targeted through systematic activities that enhance speed of processing.

**Automaticity:** A feature of Lexia Reading Core5 is the inclusion of warm-ups designed to consolidate previously learned skills and bring them to a level of automaticity. Students engage with these activities at the beginning of each session for approximately two to three minutes. Since students differ in their processing speed, the pace of these warm-ups is based on individual performance and allows the students to increase their rate of response relative to their level of automaticity. The content of the warm-ups follows the same sequence as the activities within previous levels. Warm-ups begin with letters and sound/symbol correspondences and move to recognition of both regular and irregular words as well as the recognition of key elements related to comprehension.

**Fluency:** Efficient readers learn to integrate automatic word identification with knowledge of sentence structure and meaning. In Lexia Reading Core5, fluency instruction is built systematically by work that focuses on important aspects of sentence structure. Although these sentence level activities are not timed, they address critical elements of fluency related to phrasal chunking and prosody. Fluency activities culminate at the paragraph level through timed silent reading of narrative and expository text that follows a maze format. These silent reading activities are designed to increase speed of processing while maintaining a focus on meaning.

In the passage fluency’ activities, we use a maze task where students time themselves as they silently read a passage and choose words to complete the text, ensuring that they are monitoring for meaning. Progression through the activity is based on both accuracy and rate. Lexia Skill Builders® and Lexia Lessons® support the development of additional skills important for reading fluency, including oral reading with a focus on expression and appropriate prosody.
What is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary encompasses the knowledge of word meanings in a language system, as well as the relationships among those words (e.g., categories, analogies). It incorporates both the comprehension and use of words, and requires understanding of concrete and abstract meanings.

What is the role of Vocabulary in learning how to read?

Research shows that vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of later reading success. It is critical to the development of both word identification and reading comprehension. Specifically, strong oral language vocabulary improves the student’s ability to recognize words when reading and is necessary for students to understand and connect with the information that they read. Strong vocabulary knowledge also leads to easier acquisition of the background information that is essential for comprehension.

Based on experiences and basic language abilities, children can differ greatly in their vocabulary knowledge. Given the importance of vocabulary in reading development, systematic instruction to enhance vocabulary knowledge is critical.

What is the approach to developing Vocabulary in Lexia Reading Core5®?

Vocabulary instruction must go beyond word definitions in order to affect comprehension. The vocabulary strand in Lexia Reading Core5 is structured to teach word-learning strategies, to provide exposure to rich and varied vocabulary words, and to allow students to develop an awareness of word relationships and associations. These goals are systematically integrated into increasingly more complex skill activities. Throughout the vocabulary strand, activities expose students to new words and concepts, but more importantly, require students to think critically about words and their meanings and to apply strategies to build their own vocabulary for unfamiliar words and concepts. These vocabulary tasks begin by developing oral vocabulary through the association of word meanings with pictures. As students begin to develop word identification skills, they continue to enhance their vocabulary knowledge through activities involving reading.

Early activities allow students to develop word-learning strategies as they deduce the meaning of unfamiliar, high-level words by analyzing pictures for similarities and differences. Other early vocabulary activities are aimed at building categorization skills as students must recognize relationships between words. As vocabulary activities progress, students are explicitly introduced to more abstract vocabulary concepts, such as multiple-meaning words, idioms, similes and metaphors. Through these activities, students develop skills and strategies to use sentence-level context clues to determine the meaning of these words and phrases. The most advanced vocabulary tasks continue to emphasize associations and subtle relationships between words through focus on analogies and shades of meaning. Students think about and recognize nuances in word meaning as they think critically about words and form logical relationships between word meanings.

In addition to targeted vocabulary activities, students also acquire vocabulary and word-building strategies by repeated exposure to the rich language activities that exist in all strands of the Lexia Reading Core5 program. For example, early phonemic awareness and phonics activities require students to match pictures to words, building concrete vocabulary knowledge. Later activities, found throughout the Structural Analysis strand, provide students with the skills to analyze prefixes, roots and suffixes for meaning and encourage the application of this knowledge to connected reading tasks. While the explicit goal of the activities included in the vocabulary strand is to foster the use of word-learning strategies and to build an awareness of word relationships and associations, students are constantly building their vocabulary and word awareness as they progress through all strands of the Lexia Reading Core5 program.
What is Comprehension?
Comprehension is an active process that incorporates the understanding of spoken and written language. It involves not just the meanings of words in isolation but the relationship among words within sentences and paragraphs. In Lexia Reading Core5, comprehension activities develop the ability to understand information at a concrete level as well at an abstract level through the application of higher order thinking skills. Activities develop comprehension skills through interaction with increasingly complex narrative and informational texts.

What is the role of Comprehension in learning to read?
The National Reading Panel describes comprehension as an active process that requires an intentional and thoughtful interaction between the reader and the text. Skilled readers use their prior knowledge and experience, in combination with their understanding of vocabulary and knowledge of language structure to gain meaning. As they read, skilled readers also think critically and check their understanding, constantly monitoring their comprehension. This analytical approach to reading is often referred to as close or deep reading.

Comprehension instruction must support the development of both listening comprehension as well as reading comprehension because underlying language skills are the foundation for reading comprehension.

What is the approach to developing Comprehension in Lexia Reading Core5®?
The goal of the comprehension strand of Lexia Reading Core5 is to develop active reading skills by having students engage with information they hear and read and by teaching them to think critically about this information. Early comprehension activities aim to build a student’s language comprehension skills through listening activities. Students hear stories as they think about the sequence of events and the details as well as what the story is mainly about. This teaches early learners about the structure of text and provides a framework for later reading comprehension. They learn to use context clues by analyzing pictures as they begin to develop imaging skills. Foundational critical thinking skills are fostered through questioning around details and what the stories are mainly about.

Once reading skills emerge, students are asked to associate decodable words and phrases to pictures, reinforcing comprehension at the word level. Students then engage more deeply with the structure of language as they sequence sentences within a story and then words within a sentence. Students are later required to think about the components of a sentence by attending to question words that identify key parts of a sentence (e.g., Who is the sentence about?). These activities encourage an active engagement with language while fostering the application of critical thinking skills.

As students move through the program, they are required to apply skills to independently read and comprehend multi-paragraph narratives and informational texts. After reading, they are asked comprehension questions that require an increasing focus on developing higher order thinking skills, such as making inferences and drawing conclusions. They must consistently monitor the meaning of what they are reading in order to complete the activities.