

The Science of Reading in Action

A Leadership Approach to Lasting Change



School leaders play a vital role in turning literacy research into meaningful classroom practice. That commitment was front and center during Lexia's 2025 Science of Reading Leadership Summits, where more than 250 district leaders from across the country came together to discuss bold moves, persistent challenges, and powerful strategies to ensure every student becomes a confident, capable reader. Across diverse contexts and communities, one message resonated: **Literacy cannot be left to chance—it must be built systematically and intentionally.**

But realizing this vision requires more than district-level leadership—it demands strong, strategic collaboration between **school and district leaders**. When both work in partnership to align priorities, support educators, and build cohesive systems, they create the conditions for lasting, systemwide change.

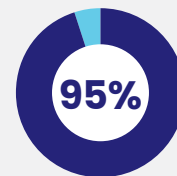
These Summits united leaders to explore evidence-based literacy practices and foster a shared commitment to literacy for all. One of the most impactful moments during the Summits focused on the “what, why, and how” of this essential work and emphasized the urgency to act. To ground that sense of urgency in both research and practice, the Summits began with this foundation: The Science of Reading: Beyond Hashtags and Headlines. The session delved into the decades of research behind the science of reading, equipping leaders with knowledge and strategies to translate into immediate action in their districts. These insights highlight what’s fueling this growing movement for **literacy for all**.

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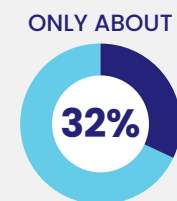
Key Takeaways for School Leaders

Reading success relies on the powerful interaction between well-prepared teachers and evidence-based instruction. Research shows that when educators combine **deep knowledge with proven teaching practices**, student reading achievement soars.

Despite evidence that 95% of students can become proficient readers, only about 32% reach this benchmark by fourth or eighth grade, with even lower rates among historically marginalized groups. This is not merely an achievement gap; it's an **opportunity gap**—one that demands we move from reactive interventions to **proactive, prevention-focused systems**.



of students have the capacity to learn to read when using instruction based in the science of reading



of fourth and eighth grade students read proficiently

The science of reading provides us with decades of interdisciplinary research, emphasizing **explicit, systematic, and adaptable instruction** in core literacy components: **phonology, orthography, morphology, semantics, and syntax**. The research shows consistent application of these key components in classrooms improves opportunities and outcomes for all students.



Learning to read isn't a natural process like speaking; it requires explicit instruction that develops new pathways in the brain. Frameworks like the Simple View of Reading and Scarborough's Reading Rope remind us **both word recognition and language comprehension are essential and intricately connected**. As students grow, their instructional needs shift, so effective programs and teaching must be both responsive and grounded in evidence to show improvements in classrooms and schools. Our ultimate goal is to ensure equitable access to literacy for every student, giving them the keys to **personal, academic, and lifelong success**.

Lexia's Legacy and Mission

For more than 40 years, Lexia® has been **singularly focused on literacy**. The goal is simple: Help students become successful readers and confident learners. Our portfolio of curriculum, professional learning, and implementation solutions for educators and administrators is research-proven to accelerate literacy gains.