

# Islands, Anchors, and Propellers: Charting Your Path to SoR Success

## DESCRIPTION

During this collaborative activity, participants envision their ideal science of reading (SoR) implementation, identify obstacles, “anchors,” and driving forces, “propellers,” and reflect on strategies to achieve literacy success. Through creative visualization and group discussion, teams develop a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities for effective SoR practices.

## OBJECTIVES

### To collaboratively:

- Envision the ideal implementation of the science of reading in schools.
- Identify obstacles (“anchors”) and driving forces (“propellers”) in achieving literacy success.
- Reflect on actionable strategies to propel effective SoR practices forward.

### Through brainstorming, group discussions, creative visualization, and reflective sharing, participants will uncover:

- Common themes across visions.
- Challenges holding back progress.
- Opportunities to drive successful implementation.

**Timing: Approximately one hour**

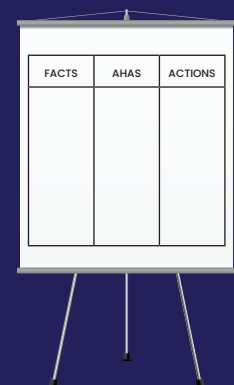
## MATERIALS

### Each group will need:

- One copy of the SoR Island notetaking device
- One piece of chart paper
- One blue, one red, and one green marker
- Sticky notes

### The Whole group will need:

- One piece of chart paper prepared with the headings: Facts, Ahas, and Actions



SLIDE NO., TOPIC, AND PACING	TALKING POINTS	NOTES
<b>Slide 2: Objectives</b> 1 minute	<p>Today, we will collaborate in a conversation about the science of reading. Our objectives today will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Envision the ideal implementation of the science of reading (SoR).</li> <li>• Identify obstacles (“anchors”) and driving forces (“propellers”) in achieving literacy success.</li> <li>• Reflect on actionable strategies to propel effective SoR practices forward.</li> </ul>	
<b>Slide 3: What is the Science of Reading</b> 3 minutes	<p>What is the science of reading?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Reading League has provided us with this detailed definition, including the span of five decades, that it is across multiple languages, and points out that the science not only tells us how reading develops but why some students have difficulty and HOW we can most effectively assess and teach. Take a moment to read this definition of the science of reading from The Reading League to yourself. (Alternatively, ask a volunteer to read out.)</li> <li>• Think, turn, talk: What words stand out to you in this definition of the science of reading?</li> <li>• Ask a few participants to popcorn out words.</li> </ul>	
<b>Slide 4: What is the Science of Reading? (con’t)</b> 1 minute	<p>Here are some important phrases. Thumbs up if you agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five decades across the world</li> <li>• Conducted in multiple languages</li> <li>• How proficient reading and writing develop</li> <li>• Why some have difficulty</li> <li>• How we can effectively assess and teach</li> <li>• Improve student outcomes through prevention and intervention</li> </ul>	

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<b>Slide 5:</b> <b>Independent Brainstorm</b> 5 minutes	<p>I have a couple of questions for you to think about.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is your ideal science of reading literacy island? What would it look like if you had to imagine the most effective implementation of the science of reading in your district or school?</li> <li>2. What would be your dream implementation of the science of reading?</li> </ol> <p>Take a few minutes, and on a sticky note, independently write down words or phrases that describe your ideal implementation.</p>	
<b>Slide 6: Think and Ink: SoR Island</b> 10 minutes	<p>You are going to design a science of reading portrait together. We will start with the top of our chart paper and the <b>BLUE</b> marker at our tables. For the next 10 minutes, work together to draw your ideal island. Using the top of your chart paper on your table and the BLUE marker, represent your ideal Science of Reading Island. You can write down words, phrases, and draw things that address the following guiding questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do curriculum, assessment, and professional learning look like in your ideal program?</li> <li>2. What are the markers for success?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Examples of Responses to Science of Reading Island: Ideal Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using an evidence-based approach to teaching reading (phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension).</li> </ul> <p><b>Ideal Classroom Practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use systematic, explicit phonics instruction.</li> <li>• Build skills progressively.</li> <li>• Avoid ineffective strategies like guessing words from pictures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ongoing training in evidence-based methods.</li> <li>• Coaching.</li> <li>• Collaboration, professional development, and districtwide consistency.</li> </ul>

SLIDE NO., TOPIC, AND PACING	TALKING POINTS	NOTES
<b>Slide 7: Anchors</b> 10 minutes	<p>Using the same chart paper on your table and the <b>RED</b> marker, represent the boat you're traveling in toward your island. You can write down words, phrases, and draw things that address the following guiding questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the anchors?</li> <li>2. What is holding you back from reaching the island?</li> <li>3. What is making you "stuck" in the process?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Examples of Possible responses for anchors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more time for training.</li> <li>• Time: It is challenging to balance strategies and curriculum demands with time to plan.</li> <li>• Need support to transition and integrate evidence-based practices.</li> <li>• Lack of resources.</li> <li>• Inconsistent opportunities for collaboration.</li> <li>• Conflicting priorities.</li> <li>• Unclear expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>Slide 8: Propellers</b> 10 minutes	<p>Finally, using the same chart paper on your table and the <b>GREEN</b> marker, represent what propels your boat toward the island. You can write down words, phrases, and draw things that address the following guiding questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is propelling your trajectory toward your island?</li> <li>2. What factors will help you achieve your goal?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Examples of Possible responses for propellers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training: Ongoing, practical professional development and coaching.</li> <li>• Resources: Access to high-quality materials and planning time.</li> <li>• Leadership: Clear guidance, funding, and consistent support from school leaders.</li> <li>• Collaboration: Opportunities to align practices with colleagues and literacy coaches.</li> <li>• Results: Early student progress and celebrated successes to build confidence.</li> </ul>

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<b>Slide 9: Gallery Walk</b> 10 minutes	<p>Now, it is time to share our ideas. Please place each poster on the wall. Grab your notetaking tool, and as you are visiting each poster:</p> <p>Keep in mind the following reflective questions and take notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What emerges as themes across all of our portraits?</li> <li>• How do our boats differ (-)? How are our boats the same (+)?</li> <li>• What tools can we use to keep us propelling toward our island? Toward successful implementation?</li> </ul>	<p>Each group should place posters on a wall. Pass out note-taking tool.</p> <p>Participants will circulate through the room to each poster and write down thoughts on the note-taking tool.</p>
<b>Slide 10: Reflection and Action Steps</b> 8 minutes	<p>Gather participants back to their tables. Ask them to use the bottom of their note-taking tool and:</p> <p>Independently Reflect and Take Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is one fact that you learned?</li> <li>• What is one aha that you had?</li> <li>• What is one action step you will take?</li> </ul> <p>Take notes on the prepared poster for the group as participants share their thoughts for each category.</p>	<p>Prepare a poster ahead of time with the three headings:</p> <p>Facts</p> <p>Ahas</p> <p>Action Steps</p>
<b>Slide 11: Conclusion</b> 2 minutes	<p>I'd like to end with this quote, "Reading is the ship that takes you to distant shores, and learning is the island where dreams are built." —Unknown</p> <p>Thank you for your time and attention, and I look forward to working with you on our science of reading journey!</p>	