I'm not a bot

As an adult, you already know how to read and write. You were given skills and tools in school to master reading and writing. These skills and tools came from a literacy program. A literacy program contains all the components necessary for you to master reading and writing. However, some literacy programs are more effective than others. Today's students are expected to master the same skills that you did, but at an earlier age. Teaching children how to read and write are two of the hardest feats a teacher will be asked to complete. Having an effective literacy program helps teachers complete that difficult task effectively. There are many different kinds of literacy programs out there, all of which use different components. Everything from individual teaching experience to popular educational theory can influence what components are used in a literacy program. 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What type of literacy program do you implement in your classroom? What are the components of your program? What do you like or dislike about your literacy program? Please share your experiences in the comment section below. At the heart of constructing a successful literacy intervention program lies a thorough understanding of the unique difficulties encountered by secondary students. Recognizing the gaps in reading proficiency and grade-level expectations catalyzes educators to address the multifaceted challenges of struggling adolescent readers. This recognition allows for the design of interventions that are effectively tailored to meet individual student needs. ThinkCERCA supports educators in bridging the literacy gap for secondary students. In our most recent webinar, Dr. Katie McKnight, professor, author, and founder of Engaging Learners, along with Dr. Jenny French, an experienced literacy coach and developer of ThinkCERCA's Foundational Reading & Linguistics program, shared their invaluable insights on the seven key ingredients for building a successful literacy intervention program. During the webinar, we heard from dozens of educators seeking expert advice on supporting their secondary students needing foundational literacy instruction. We have carefully compiled the insightful answers provided by Dr. McKnight and Dr. French to address the seven most frequently asked questions regarding the development of a successful literacy intervention program: Q: Where is a reliable, non-biased place to find reviews and recommendations for curriculums for intervention programs at the secondary level? A: Edreports is a non-profit, third-party curriculum reviewer. As a curriculum school leader, this was the most credible and reliable source for analyzing effective resources. The second best place is your local network. Find others in your role in neighboring districts through regional meetings or social media. Q: What are some systems that can be implemented to support meaningful and effective collaboration between the educators that serve a student (for example, classroom teacher and interventionist)? A: While time constraints and parallel schedules may be a challenge, good practices include having all teachers that serve the same group of students participate in regular PLCs or check-ins. Also, it's helpful for each role to have clearly defined responsibilities including parent communication and record keeping. Q: How do we build a literacy program with the intentional inclusion of diverse multi-language learners (diverse language 1, diverse English proficiency, diverse educational experiences, etc.)? A: Begin with a needs assessment to identify the individual needs of studnets. Try to provide materials in various languages spoken by the learners and consider bilingual resources. Encourage the use of students' home languages in the learning process. Finally, equip teachers with strategies for differentiated instruction and inclusive teaching practices. Q: What are the best and quickest assessments for large groups of students at the high school level? A: DIBELS MAZE for assessing Language Comprehension and DIBELS ORF and NWF for assessing Word Recognition. Q: How do you teach fluency throughout 6-8th grade? What are the best materials to do that work? Also, what high-leverage reading/writing strategies are the most effective across disciplines? A: Tim Rasinski's website and material is excellent for literacy. See Dr. McKnight's webinar "Do This, Not That" (grades 6-12) to start, strategies that promote active reading (Sticky Notes, Stop and Write) and summarization (GIST) are good starting strategies. Q: What is the easiest first step to help middle and high school teachers shift from traditional whole-class teaching (we just keep moving forward regardless of the data) to intervening with small groups? A: The Centers and Stations model is the best place to start! Dr. McKnight has two excellent books on using small group instruction at the MS and HS Level. Also, there is an asynchronous course on Teachable available. Q: Are there any good resrouces geared toward middle school students that will be helpful when I give interventions? I only have 30 minutes per session and I need quick, high-interest resources to use that are little to no prep. A: ThinkCERCA Reading Foundations & Linguistics! Check it out here or schedule a demo! Little to no teacher prep, and specifically created for adolescents! Watch the full webinar where Dr. McKnight and Dr. French break down their key steps to building a secondary literacy intervention program here. And for more information about literacy interventions and foundational reading strategies, watch any of our on-demand webinar recordings in our library here. Be sure to check out the other blogs in our Agency for All, a thought leadership community focused on literacy as a means to empowerment and self-advocacy. As an adult, you already know how to read and write. You were given skills and tools in school to master reading and writing. These skills and tools came from a literacy program. A literacy program contains all the components necessary for you to master reading and writing. However, some literacy programs are more effective than others. Today's students are expected to master the same skills that you did, but at an earlier age. 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This blog is the first in a series about literacy programs. Stay tuned for a more in-depth look at each component in an effective literacy program. The next blog in the series will be about phonemic awareness. What type of literacy program do you implement in your classroom? What are the components of your program? What do you like or dislike about your literacy program? Please share your experiences in the comment section below. Literacy programs are the backbone of education, enabling individuals of all ages to acquire essential reading and writing skills. An effective literacy program encompasses a holistic approach beyond teaching the mechanics of reading. It nurtures a love for literature, comprehension, and critical thinking. These components are essential for building strong reading and writing skills in learners of all ages. Let's explore the six key components of an effective literacy program Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate individual sounds, or phonemes, in spoken words. Phonics, on the other hand, is the relationship between these sounds and the written letters. These two components lay the foundation for effective literacy. Phonemic awareness activities, such as rhyming games and sound blending, help students understand the sound structure of words. Phonics instruction teaches the rules and patterns for connecting sounds to letters, enabling learners to decode written words and spell them correctly. A solid grasp of these concepts is crucial for early reading and writing success. Vocabulary Development An expansive vocabulary is essential for comprehension and effective communication. A strong literacy program incorporates strategies for vocabulary development, including exposure to a wide range of words and their meanings. It encourages active word exploration through reading and discussion. In addition, teaching context clues and word roots can empower learners to decipher unfamiliar words, enhancing their comprehension skills. Comprehension Strategies Comprehension is the heart of literacy. Effective literacy programs emphasize comprehension strategies that help learners make sense of the text. These strategies include summarization, questioning, prediction, and visualization. Teachers guide students in understanding the structure of different texts, such as narratives, expository texts, and poetry. By developing comprehension skills, learners can connect with the material on a deeper level, extract meaning, and critically evaluate content. Fluency Building Fluency involves reading with accuracy, speed, and expression. It's the bridge between word recognition and comprehension. A well-rounded literacy program includes activities that promote fluency, such as repeated readings, timed reading exercises, and partner reading. By building fluency, learners can read smoothly and understand the content more easily. This component is especially vital for students who struggle with reading, as it boosts their confidence and engagement with texts. Writing Skills Effective literacy programs continue beyond reading; they also nurture strong writing skills. Writing components include teaching grammar and mechanics, encouraging students to express themselves coherently, and providing opportunities for both creative and expository writing. Writing is a vital aspect of communication, and it enhances critical thinking, self-expression, and the ability to organize thoughts effectively. Independent Reading and Writing Independence is the ultimate goal of a literacy program. Students need opportunities to apply their skills to real-world situations. Independent reading and writing activities allow learners to practice and extend their literacy skills beyond the classroom. Providing access to various reading materials and encouraging students to choose texts that interest them fosters a lifelong love of reading. Independent writing tasks, such as journals or creative writing projects, empower students to apply what they've learned and develop their unique voices. Conclusion An effective literacy program is a multi-faceted journey that equips learners with the skills and knowledge they need to excel in reading and writing. Through phonemic awareness and phonics, students gain the tools to decode and encode written language. Vocabulary development enhances their comprehension and communication abilities. Comprehension strategies enable learners to extract meaning from texts. Fluency building bridges the gap between word recognition and comprehension. Writing skills empower students to express themselves and communicate effectively. Lastly, independent reading and writing activities help learners apply their literacy skills to real-life situations and develop a lifelong love of reading. By incorporating these components into their literacy programs, educators can ensure that their students not only acquire essential reading and writing skills but also cultivate a deep appreciation for the written word. A well-rounded literacy program is a powerful tool for fostering lifelong learners who are not only proficient readers and writers but also critical thinkers and effective communicators. As an adult, you already know how to read and write. You were given skills and tools in school to master reading and writing. These skills and tools came from a literacy program. A literacy program contains all the components necessary for you to master reading and writing. However, some literacy programs are more effective than others. Today's students are expected to master the same skills that you did, but at an earlier age. 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