



Targeted Literacy Interventions and Extensions

[Targeted intervention for literacy](#) is achieved through prescriptive, intentional planning based on individual student need for students who are not reading on grade level. **It involves both looking ahead to upcoming skill development and back to foundational gaps as far as is needed for each individual student.**

Purpose

Literacy outcomes for students improve when students are provided high-quality core instruction together with explicit literacy interventions and extensions based on individual student needs. Louisiana believes that students deserve every opportunity to read on grade level, and this vision will be realized through ongoing supports for educators and students around best practices in reading instruction.

What are Targeted Literacy Interventions and Extensions?

Most students experience some amount of unfinished learning throughout their educational journey for a variety of reasons. Extra time for learning is an essential part of academic recovery, and students experiencing unfinished learning in English Language Arts should be provided with ongoing and proactive support through an acceleration model that utilizes a just-in time approach to preparing students for current and future learning. Learning to read requires systematic instruction as students move through a continuum of reading skills that increase in complexity. Without support, students with unfinished learning will continue to struggle with reading. A clear example is students will struggle to read multisyllabic words if they cannot master single-syllable words. [Accelerate](#), Louisiana's PreK-12 Tutoring initiative, is a type of intervention for all students based on the core tenet of addressing student needs and connecting to upcoming core content.

The first purpose of this document is to specifically address intervening around core foundational reading skills for learners who are below grade level in reading proficiency. When this occurs, these students can be supported using high quality instructional materials or [Accelerate](#) resources, but they may need additional and more intensive intervention. Students who are found to be below grade level in reading should be supported through Targeted Literacy Interventions. Targeted Literacy Intervention is intensive, systematic instruction on foundational reading skills in small groups for students who score below the benchmark on universal screening. This targeted literacy instruction may be needed at any grade level.

The second purpose of this document is to specifically address extending learning around core foundational reading skills for learners who are on or above grade level in reading proficiency. Students who are found to be on or above grade level should receive Targeted Literacy Extensions. Targeted Literacy Extension is a method to build additional foundational reading skills based on students' strengths and interests for students who score on or above the benchmark on universal screening.



Data

Data is an essential component of initially identifying student strengths and unfinished learning, progress monitoring for flexible grouping, and planning for additional supports.

Teachers should use literacy screener data as well as diagnostic assessments available in high-quality, core instructional materials to drive decisions around instructional adjustments and intervention practices. Formative assessments during instruction can also be used as an opportunity to make adjustments to daily instruction. These usually non-graded types of assessments are embedded within the core curriculum and used to strategically check for understanding, adjust instruction, and make decisions related to interventions and extension.

All students should be screened to identify students at-risk for future reading struggles at the beginning of the year. Progress should be monitored at the middle of the year as well as through a final screener at the end of the year to provide data to show growth or additional needs. Teachers and leaders can refer to the [PreK to 3rd Grade Assessment Guidance](#) for additional information around screening and supporting students.

Students in grades 4-12 have different data points to examine when considering if literacy intervention is needed. A good place to start is by looking at LEAP data. Students who score below basic, especially in ELA, may show cause for a further look. Grades and any screening data can provide additional information. Screeners are not a common practice in grades 4-12, but they can be administered to collect additional diagnostic data. If a literacy screener is not currently used in grades 4-12, the [LIFT Kit](#) is available in the Louisiana Literacy Library.

Time

Literacy interventions and extensions should occur during the uninterrupted [literacy block](#). Adequate time should be devoted to core reading instruction utilizing high quality instructional materials for whole group learning, and time should also be set aside in the daily classroom schedule for Targeted Literacy Intervention and Extension. Small-group instruction provides an opportunity for teachers to model a skill and provide feedback as students practice.

Time for literacy intervention in grades 4-12 can be structured in different ways, depending on scheduling opportunities and student needs. Some successful methods include:

- scheduling an allotted block of time during the morning or afternoon, usually 20-30 minutes, that happens across the whole school.
- during an advisory or study hall period. (This may include ACT prep, guided study hall, or literacy interventions for those students that need it.)
- utilizing the course code that can be offered to students in middle and high school who require work in literacy interventions. Those course names are: English Intervention: Grades 6-8 and English Intervention: High School.



Focus

The use of data to create flexible small groups and identify student needs and adequate scheduling for students to receive the necessary time for literacy instruction can still be undercut if the focus of what should occur during the Targeted Literacy Intervention and Extension is not carefully considered and planned. Small group instruction should be responsive, timely, and inclusive. During Targeted Literacy Intervention, teachers provide intensive, systematic instruction on foundational reading skills in small groups to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening. This practice has shown [strong evidence](#) of successfully supporting struggling readers.

- Flexible small groups of no more than 5 students should meet at least three times per week for at least 30 minutes.
- Target the specific skills in which students show a deficit by providing explicit instruction and interactions with opportunities for guided and independent practice with feedback.
- Progress monitor students performing below benchmark at least once a month.

Professional learning needs to be provided for teachers and staff that are providing the small group instruction.

Targeted literacy interventions should be provided to students who demonstrate a weakness in any of the five components of reading.

- **Phonemic Awareness** is the ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is foundational to reading proficiency. It refers to a students' ability to identify and manipulate units of oral language. It is a crucial component of reading instruction, particularly in the earliest grade levels, and practice with phonemic awareness should occur daily. Studies have shown that the lack of phonemic awareness is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of failure to read (Adams, 1990).
- **Phonics** is the connection between sounds and letter symbols.
- **Fluency** is a reader's ability to read with speed, accuracy, and expression.
- **Vocabulary** is the knowledge of words, their definitions, and context.
- **Comprehension** is the understanding of meaning in text.

When determining what materials to use, a first step is to investigate the additional resources provided within your high-quality core curriculum. Most curricula provide intervention guidance for students who do not master the content within the context of whole-group instruction.

During Targeted Literacy Extensions, students who are on or above grade level in reading proficiency participate in challenging, content-based activities to enhance and extend learning. This includes opportunities to expand their reading and writing skills.

- Flexible small group instruction at a frequency of 2-3 times per week for 30 minutes to continuously improve fluency and build comprehension and vocabulary.



- Independent and partner work around current classroom topics in ELA, Science, and Social Studies to expand knowledge and vocabulary.
- Additional reading in a variety of genres based on student choice in [classroom](#) and [school](#) libraries.
- Open-ended, exploratory questions and activities based on student interests.

Where can I find out more information about properly supporting all students?

Teachers and leaders can access the [Literacy Library](#) for instruction, intervention, and extension activities and additional support. Support and resources are available on the following topics:

- Setting and monitoring literacy goals
- Implementation of literacy best practices
- Classroom and school libraries
- Engaging families and providing literacy activities
- Science of reading professional development

Specific, actionable guidance is also provided through ongoing, on-demand professional development sessions available in the [Literacy Library](#):

- K-2 Teacher PD Series presentations, recordings, and redelivery guidance
- Leader PD Series presentations, recordings, and redelivery guidance
- Middle and High School PD Series
- Grades 3-12 Literacy Support PD Series
- Content Literacy Series
- Additional PD schedules and resources

The Department's [Accelerate](#) program offers tutoring guidance and support. Utilize the Department's [Staffing and Scheduling Guidance](#) to ensure time is allotted for small group instruction and intervention.

Contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.