

Typical Literacy Practices vs. Structured Literacy Practices

Typical Literacy Practices	Structured Literacy Practices
Phonemic awareness is covered randomly or not at all.	Understanding that phonemic awareness is a required pre-reading skill because brains first learn speech before moving to print.
Assumption that sound-letter correspondence occurs naturally; phonetic patterns taught as words appear in a text and not systematically.	Phonetic patterns explicitly and systematically taught following a scope and sequence beginning with simple patterns and moving to more complex patterns as student learning increases.
An emphasis on sight word memorization with little or no attention to the phonetic elements of the word.	Instruction of high-frequency words according to phonetic patterns; irregular (sometimes called 'tricky' or 'heart') words are analyzed for phonetic or non-phonetic components. <i>Ex. 'said' - The /s/ and /d/ sounds are regular with the only non-decodable sound being /ai/, pronounced /e/.</i>
Emphasis on using the first and last letters of a word or context clues and pictures to "read" a word.	Emphasis on all letters and sounds in a word; context clues used sparingly for irregular words or to clarify meaning after the word has been decoded.
Misread words are not corrected if they do not change the meaning of the text. <i>Ex. A student may use picture clues to determine a word is 'horse' when the word is actually 'pony.'</i>	The sounding out of words is encouraged with misread words immediately corrected, prompting readers to attend to phonetic patterns.
Use of predictable or leveled texts which contain unlearned phonetic patterns and pictures that encourage guessing of words.	Use of decodable texts that only use words with previously-learned phonetic patterns.
Little to no focus on reading fluency.	Consistent focus on fluency.
Large portions of class time spent on independent reading.	Very little class time spent on independent reading.

Adapted from Typical vs. Structured Literacy from www.breakingthecode.com retrieved March 1, 2023 from www.azed.gov

