



Raising the Bar for Reading Instruction using High Leverage Practices



The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), in partnership with the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform (CEEDAR) Center, has identified twenty-two High-Leverage Practices (HLPs). Implementing systematic (HLP 12) and explicit (HLP 16) reading instruction are two HLPs that can be easily and effectively utilized by teachers to improve students' reading skills. HLPs are essential to consider and apply when planning and delivering lessons with developed approaches for teaching reading (Kilpatrick, 2015). When teachers provide students with clear and sequentially designed lessons, stated learning intentions, and specific success criteria, students can make significant improvements and begin to soar with functional reading skills.

Be Ready to become an educator who plans and delivers lessons that encompass the five essential components of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel in a clear, complete, and diagnostic way ([National Reading Panel, 2000](#)). Using the explicit instruction approach of “I do, We do, You do”, teachers can model and anticipate common misconceptions and scaffold each component of the reading process.

Get Ready to develop readers who flourish when taught through explicit and systematic instruction. Effective teachers of all readers, particularly those with students who are struggling, utilize assessment to drive instruction (Reading Rockets, 2020). It is also essential for struggling readers to have consistent, structured lessons that meet specific learning and reading needs.

Get Set to use systematic and explicit reading instruction by studying the developmental progression of skills involved in learning to read described in the Educator’s Practice Guide [Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade](#). Because skills progress from simple to more complex, foundational skills should be understood and addressed before moving on to more advanced skills. The nine course modules in “[Reading 101: A Guide to Teaching Reading and Writing](#)” will help develop a strong knowledge base regarding a systematic approach to teaching reading (Reading Rockets, 2020).

Plan lessons which are organized in a logical sequence with routines that help facilitate learning. Introduce new concepts to students in ways that are clear, precise, and connected to what students already know. In the video, “[The Power of Explicit Instruction](#)”, the presenters emphasize why all students but especially those with disabilities, benefit from teaching that does not solely rely on discovering new content through guesses and inferences (Reading Horizons, 2011).

Make learning goals clear and activate students’ prior knowledge. Next, utilize explicit instructional techniques which follow the “I Do, We Do, You Do” model of systematic instructional release. During the “I Do” sequence, directly teach a new concept and model learning activities. Next, during the “We Do” sequence, work together with students and provide corrective and confirming feedback. Finally, during the “You Do” sequence, ask students to practice their learning independently now that they have been explicitly taught the needed skills.

Go to the following resources for more information on how to harness the power of systematic and explicit instruction to improve reading skills!

- Anita Archer’s [Explicit Instruction Sample Lessons](#)
- IRIS Center’s HLP Modules- [Instruction: 16 Explicit Instruction](#)
- High Leverage Practices in Special Education- HLP #12 Video: [Systematically Design Instruction Toward a Specific Learning Goal](#)
- High Leverage Practices in Special Education-HLP #16 Video: [Explicit Instruction](#)

References

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