



# Standard 2: Early Reading

## What consumers need to know about teacher preparation

To learn more about how programs are scored on this standard, including how individual indicators are satisfied, please see its [scoring methodology](#).

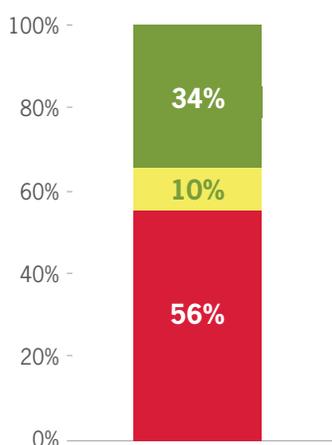
For examples of model materials on this standard, please see the [resources section](#).

Teaching children how to read is “job one” for elementary and special education teachers because reading proficiency underpins all later learning. Unfortunately, some 30 percent of all children do not become capable readers. Using the knowledge gained from decades of research and articulated in rigorous state student learning standards, effective reading instruction could cut this unacceptable rate of failure by two-thirds or even more.

Lectures, assignments and textbooks of required reading courses are examined to determine whether the training that teachers receive is in line with the findings of the National Reading Panel, the most authoritative source on how children learn to read. Programs meeting the “strong design” 🏆 indicator are exemplary in every aspect of training in reading instruction we examined.

### Overview

Distribution of scores on Std. 2: Early Reading  
(N=959 elementary and special education programs)



Program coursework comprehensively prepares teacher candidates to be effective reading instructors by addressing at least four of the five essential components.



Program coursework addresses only three of the five essential components, providing teacher candidates with some preparation in reading instruction.



Program coursework cannot prepare teacher candidates to be effective reading instructors as it addresses no more than two essential components.

## Sample for this standard

The sample encompasses all undergraduate and graduate elementary and special education programs for which data obtained were clear enough to evaluate.

### What are common reasons that programs do not satisfy or only satisfy a small part of the Early Reading Standard?

- *Coursework adequately addresses only three or fewer essential components of effective reading instruction.* Preparing teacher candidates to teach reading by covering some but not all components is like asking candidates to sit on a two-legged stool. Phonemic awareness and fluency are the components most often neglected in instruction.
- *Coursework does not require high-caliber comprehensive reading textbooks to support instruction.* With a number of strong textbooks readily available, instructors should require texts that adequately and comprehensively cover all five essential components of reading instruction.
- *One or more literacy courses require a textbook that addresses the components of effective reading instruction, but they are not complemented by lectures and practice.* Lectures and practice must complement a strong textbook to fully support candidates as they learn how to be effective reading instructors.

Four institutions of higher education (IHEs) earn the distinction of having both the undergraduate and graduate elementary programs in our sample meet the standard because they require one or more courses in which the combination of texts, lectures and practice adequately address the five essential early reading components: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. These institutions are **California State University – Bakersfield**, **California State University – Dominguez Hills**, **Florida State University**, and the **University of North Carolina at Charlotte**.

Another seven IHEs in our sample have both an elementary and a special education program that meet the standard: **Arizona State University**, the **University of Central Florida**, **Anderson University** (IN), **Mississippi University for Women**, **William Carey University** (MS), **Elon University** (NC), and the **University of Washington – Tacoma**.

Forty-two states have at least one elementary program in our sample at either the undergraduate or graduate level that meets the standard.

## Programs earning the “Strong Design” designation

Only five programs earn “strong design” designations on this standard, and all are undergraduate elementary programs. These programs deserve special recognition for their comprehensive and efficient instruction in the five essential components, with all required courses and textbooks supporting that effort:

- **College of Charleston** (SC)
- **Colorado State University – Pueblo**
- **Rockford College** (IL)
- **Southern Methodist University** (TX)
- **University of Minnesota – Morris**

- ✓+ **Colorado State University – Pueblo, Southern Methodist University (TX), and the University of Minnesota – Morris**, earn the highest possible score in their coverage of *each* of the five essential components of effective reading instruction. For each component, at least two lectures are provided and at least one type of practice (assessments, writing assignments or practice teaching) is required.
- ✓+ **University of Minnesota – Morris** earns a strong design designation in early reading and also meets the two other reading-related standards, the **English Language Learners Standard** and the **Struggling Readers Standard**.

## More information on English language learner preparation

Seventeen percent of elementary and special education programs meet the standard. Five percent of programs meet all three reading-related standards in the *Review*: **Early Reading, Struggling Readers** and **English Language Learners**.

- ✓+ **California State University – Dominguez Hills** meets all three reading-related standards (**Early Reading, Struggling Readers** and **English Language Learners**) in both its undergraduate and graduate elementary programs.

## Programs that satisfy the three *Review* reading standards

Undergraduate elementary	Graduate elementary
California State University - Dominguez Hills	California State University – Dominguez Hills
Chaminade University of Honolulu (HI)	California State University – East Bay
College of Saint Scholastica (MN)	Christopher Newport University (VA)
Dallas Baptist University (TX)	Loyola Marymount University (CA)
Delta State University (MS)	University of Maryland – College Park
Elon University (NC)	University of Montana
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	
Florida State University	
Fort Lewis College (CO)	
Gordon College (MA)	
Keuka College (NY)	
Langston University (OK)	
Miami University of Ohio (OH)	
Neumann University (PA)	
Norfolk State University (VA)	
North Central College (IL)	
Olivet College (MI)	
Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)	
SUNY – Fredonia (NY)	
Texas A&M International University	
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi	

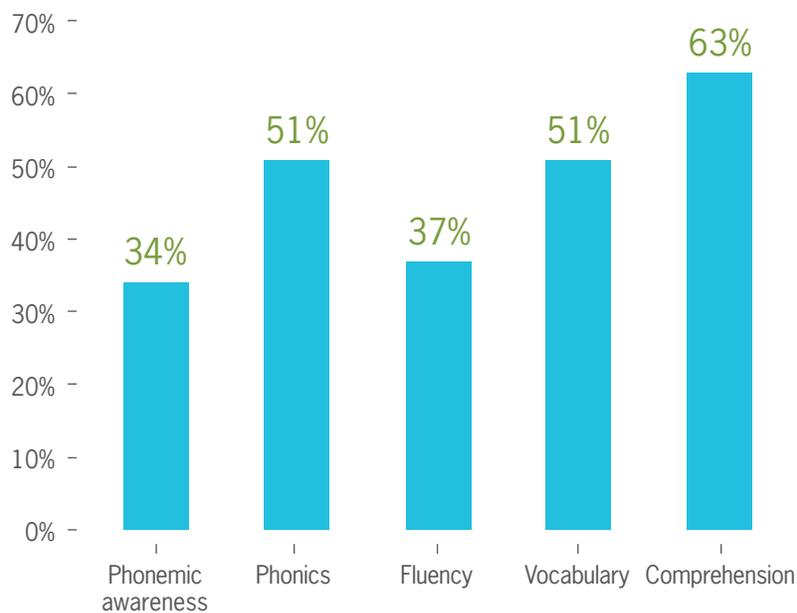
### Undergraduate elementary

University of Alaska Fairbanks  
University of Colorado Colorado Springs  
University of Dayton (OH)  
University of Delaware  
University of Houston (TX)  
University of Louisiana at Lafayette  
University of Minnesota - Morris  
University of Mississippi  
University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma  
University of Texas at Austin  
William Carey University (MS)

At the other end of the spectrum, 35 percent of programs in our sample do not meet this standard, which means that required literacy coursework adequately addresses at most one of the five essential components of reading instruction.

Digging a bit deeper, we find that the programs in our sample do not address the five components evenly in instruction.

Percent of programs adequately addressing component



*While comprehension is covered in 63 percent of programs, vocabulary and phonics are each addressed in only about half of programs, and phonemic awareness and fluency are addressed adequately in only slightly more than one-third of programs.*

## Textbooks

Unlike the field of elementary math preparation, where a relatively small number of textbooks are used, there appears to be no end of possible elementary reading texts. We added evaluations of 116 texts during the Review for a total of 962 current editions in our database for which we have done evaluations. **The majority (67 percent) of these 962 textbooks are inadequate or irrelevant for early reading instruction.** There can be no mincing words here: Both the number of different textbooks used and the fact that most do not convey scientifically-based reading instruction represent a scandal in teacher education, one which should be addressed immediately.

Below are the 10 textbooks most commonly used in courses evaluated in the Review that comprehensively and rigorously cover the scientific basis and instructional elements of the five essential components of effective reading instruction. Names of additional acceptable textbooks can be found in the [full list](#) of all evaluated texts.

### Texts covering all five elements of effective reading instruction

Title	Author(s)	Edition	Number of courses in which text is used in programs evaluated in the Review
<i>Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students</i>	Gunning, Thomas G.	8	108
<i>Teaching Children to Read: The Teacher Makes the Difference</i>	Reutzel, D. Ray & Cooter, Robert D.	6	80
<i>Strategies for Reading Assessment and Instruction: Helping Every Child Succeed</i>	Reutzel, D. Ray & Cooter, Robert	4	47
<i>CORE: Teaching Reading Sourcebook Updated Second Edition</i>	Honig, B., Diamond, L.; & Gutlohn, L.	2	43
<i>The Essentials of Teaching Children to Read: The Teacher Makes the Difference</i>	Reutzel, D. Ray & Cooter, Robert	3	35
<i>Teaching Reading in the 21st Century</i>	Graves, Michael F; Juel, Connie F; Graves, Bonnie B; & Dewitz, Peter F	5	34
<i>Literacy: Helping Students Construct Meaning</i>	Cooper, J. David; Kiger, Nancy D.; Robinson, Michael D.; & Slansky, Jill A.	8	33
<i>Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties</i>	Cockrum, Ward A. & Shanker, James L.	10	19
<i>Teaching Reading to Students Who Are At-Risk or Have Disabilities: A Multi-Tier Approach</i>	Bursuck, William D. & Damer, Mary	2	14
<i>Engaging in the Language Arts: Exploring the Power of Language</i>	Ogle, Donna; Beers, James	2	11



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