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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION'S LATEST BRIEF HELPS EDUCATORS EXPLAIN PHONICS INSTRUCTION TO FAMILIES

Newark, Del. (Feb. 20, 2018) — Despite ongoing debates over how to teach reading, research has proven that phonics instruction is an essential element of a comprehensive literacy program, according to ILA's latest brief, *Explaining Phonics Instruction: An Educator's Guide*. Phonics helps students to learn the written correspondences between letters, patterns of letters and sounds, leading to word knowledge.

"Because phonics is often students' first experience with formal literacy instruction," states the brief, "families might be anxious about their children's learning." Educators can assuage these concerns by answering families' questions and by providing effective at-home learning activities.

The brief shares research-based insights to explain the *what*, the *when* and the *how* of phonics instruction to noneducators, providing guidance on phonics for emerging readers, phonological awareness, the layers of writing, word study instruction, approaches to teaching phonics and teaching English learners.

Key takeaways include:

- Students should have acquired phonological awareness, concepts of print, concepts of word of text and alphabetic principles before beginning to learn phonics.
- Most phonics programs incorporate both analytic and synthetic activities.
- Word study is an approach to teach the alphabetic layer (basic letter–sound correspondences) and pattern layer (consonant–vowel patterns) of the writing system by including spelling instruction that is differentiated by students' development.
- Phonics instruction depends on the characteristics of a specific language; students who learn to read in multiple languages apply phonics that fit the respective letter–sound, pattern and meaning layers.
- Emergent bilingual readers and writers use their knowledge of one language to learn other languages.

To read more, visit the brief [here](#).

About the International Literacy Association

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers and experts across 78 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students and inform policymakers. ILA publishes *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *Reading Research Quarterly*, which are peer reviewed and edited by leaders in the field. For more information, visit literacyworldwide.org.

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