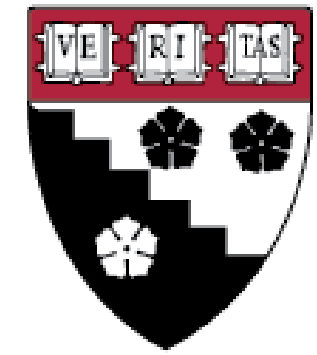


HARVARD



GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION

Teaching for All: Literacy Practices for Middle Grade Emergent Bilinguals that Benefit All Students

Phil Capin, Ph.D

Assistant Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Director, BRIDGES Lab

A bit about me...



A bit about me...







Current Research

- Improving Reading Outcomes for **Emergent Bilinguals** in Multitiered Systems of Support
 - Enhancing Narrative Language and Reading Comprehension Among EBs (IES; PI: Capin)
 - Center for Success of English Learners (IES; PI: Francis)
- Enhancing Reading and Related Factors Influencing Through **Intensive Interventions**
 - Supporting Attention and Reading for Kids (SPARK; NIH; PI: Capin)
 - Intervention to Support Mindset and Reading Together (i-SMART; PI: Cho)
 - Enhancing Reading and Reducing Anxiety (PI: Vaughn)



Our Plan

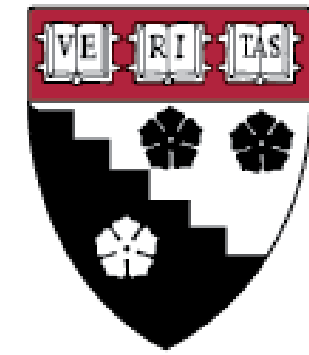
1. Discuss the **strengths and opportunities** that emergent bilinguals present
2. **Preview an instructional approach** that features evidence-based practices for EB students
3. Present Recommendations for **moving the needle with EBs**



Our Plan

- 1. Discuss the strengths and opportunities that emergent bilinguals present**
2. Preview an instructional approach that features evidence-based practices for EB students
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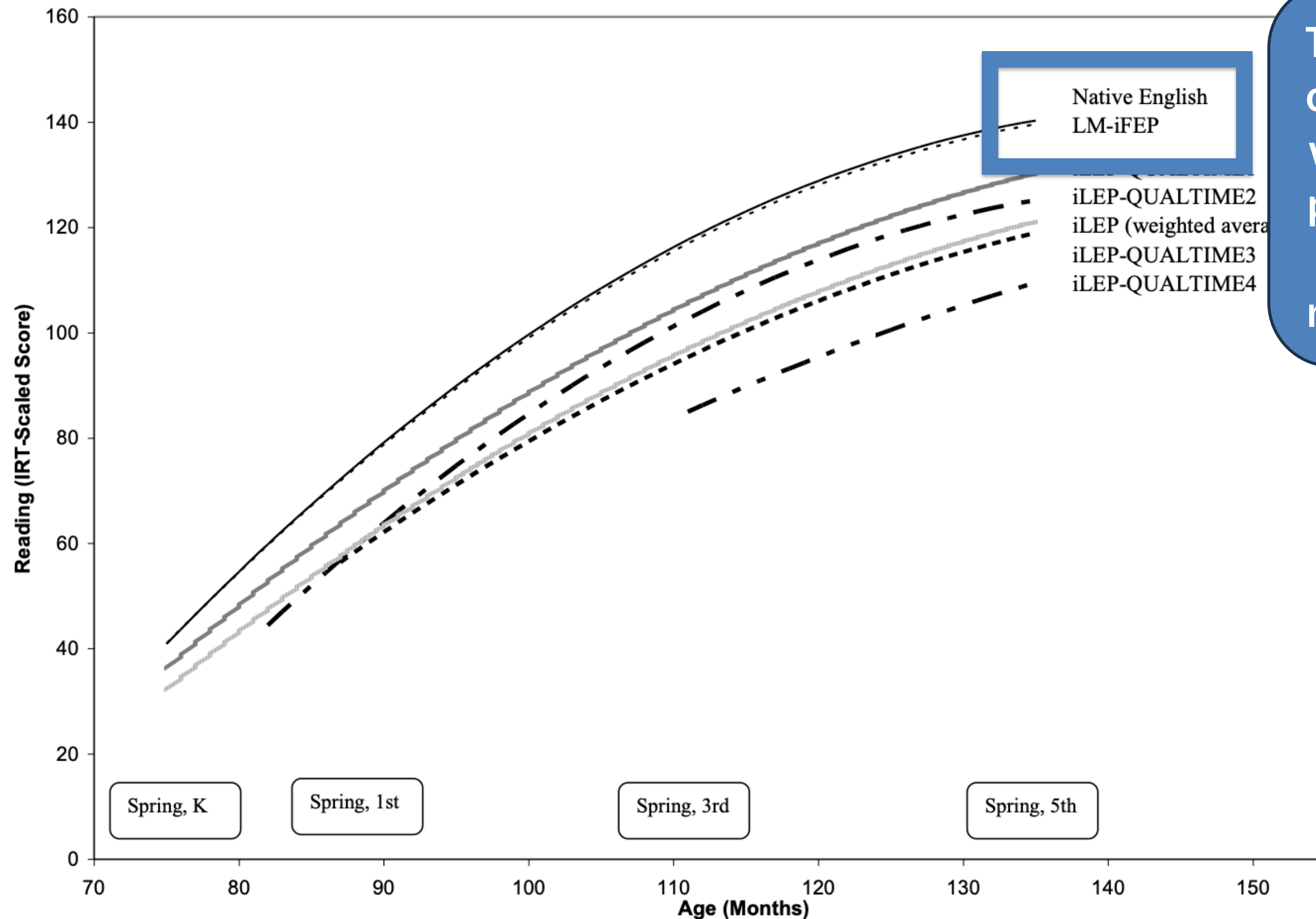


GRADUATE SCHOOL
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Emergent Bilinguals: Strengths and Opportunities



What do we know about multilingual students?



The reading trajectories of multilingual students who enter kindergarten proficient in English are indistinguishable from native English speakers

Kieffer, 2008



In this presentation, I am going to focus on emergent bilingual students because these are the students who could really benefit from additional supports



Even within this subgroup, there is a lot of heterogeneity

EBs represent a heterogenous population of students with a broad variety of strengths and needs, including varying degrees of academic skills, subject matter knowledge, and proficiency in their native language and in English

Genesee et al., 2006

What are the Strengths of Emergent Bilinguals?



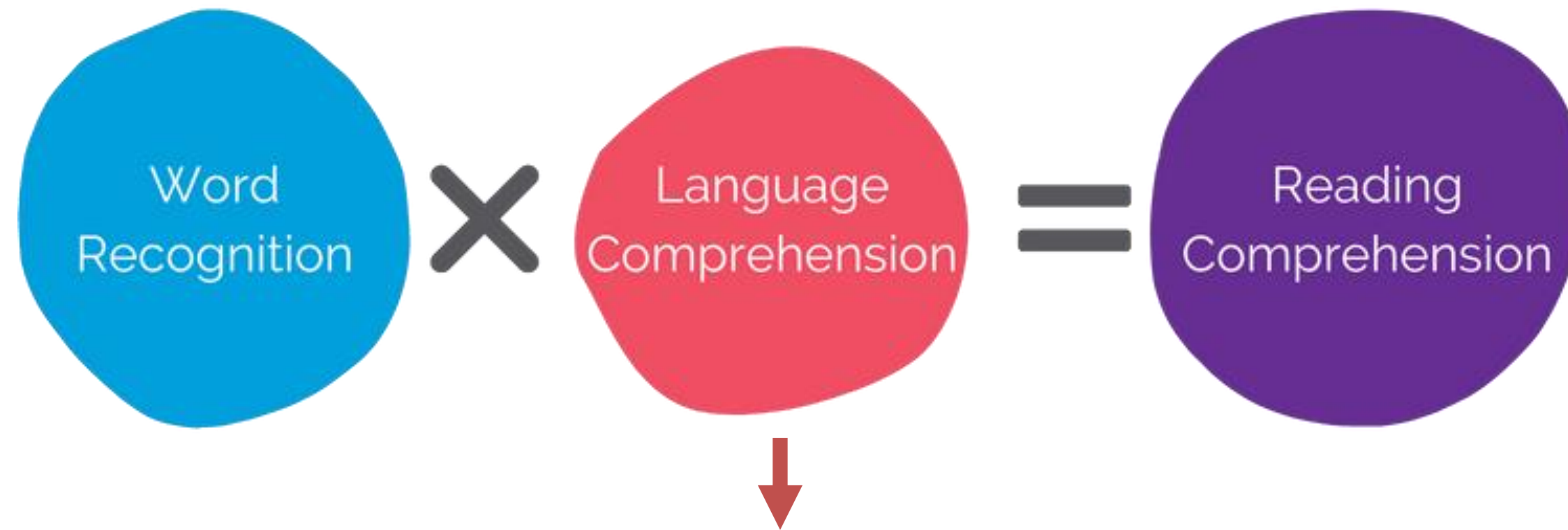


What Are The Strengths of Emergent Bilinguals?

- Knowledge in their primary language
- Cultural knowledge
- Intelligence
- Curiosity
- Work ethic
- Problem solving
- Dedicated

Simple View of Reading

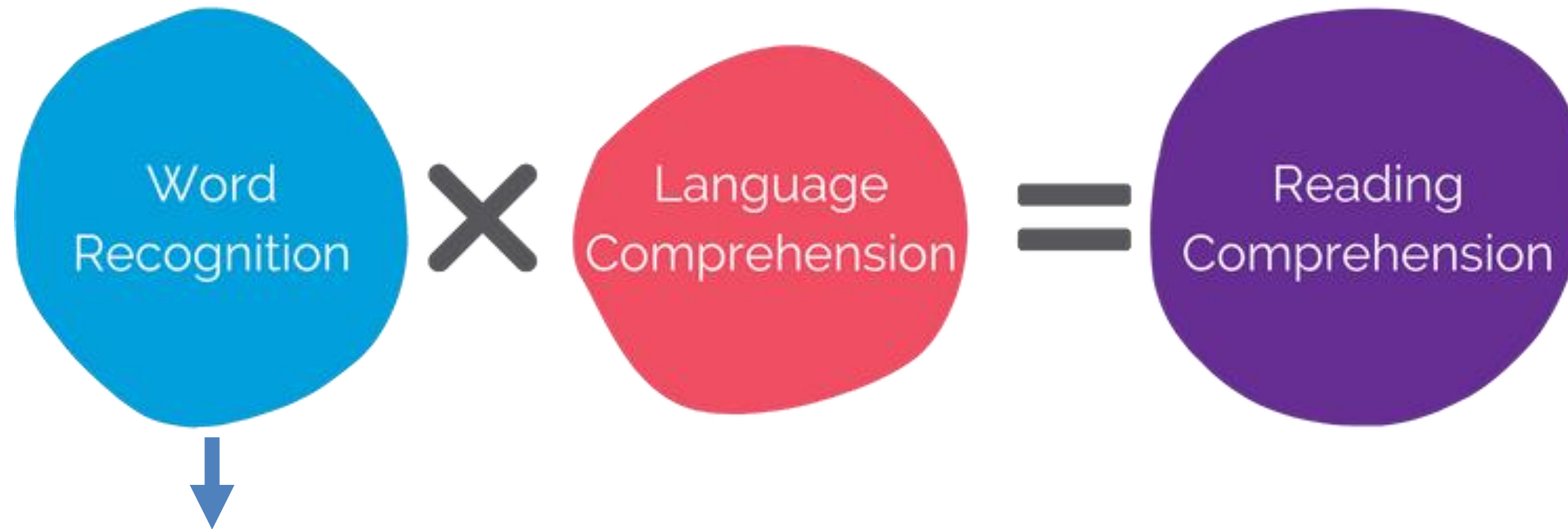
Gough & Tunmer, 1986



EBs, by definition, are developing in their English language proficiency

Simple View of Reading

Gough & Tunmer, 1986



EB students develop code-based skills (e.g., word reading) comparable to their monolingual peers; however, some EBs will also demonstrate difficulties in word reading (e.g., Capin et al., 2023; Cho et al., 2019; Miciak et al., 2022)."

THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURES
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

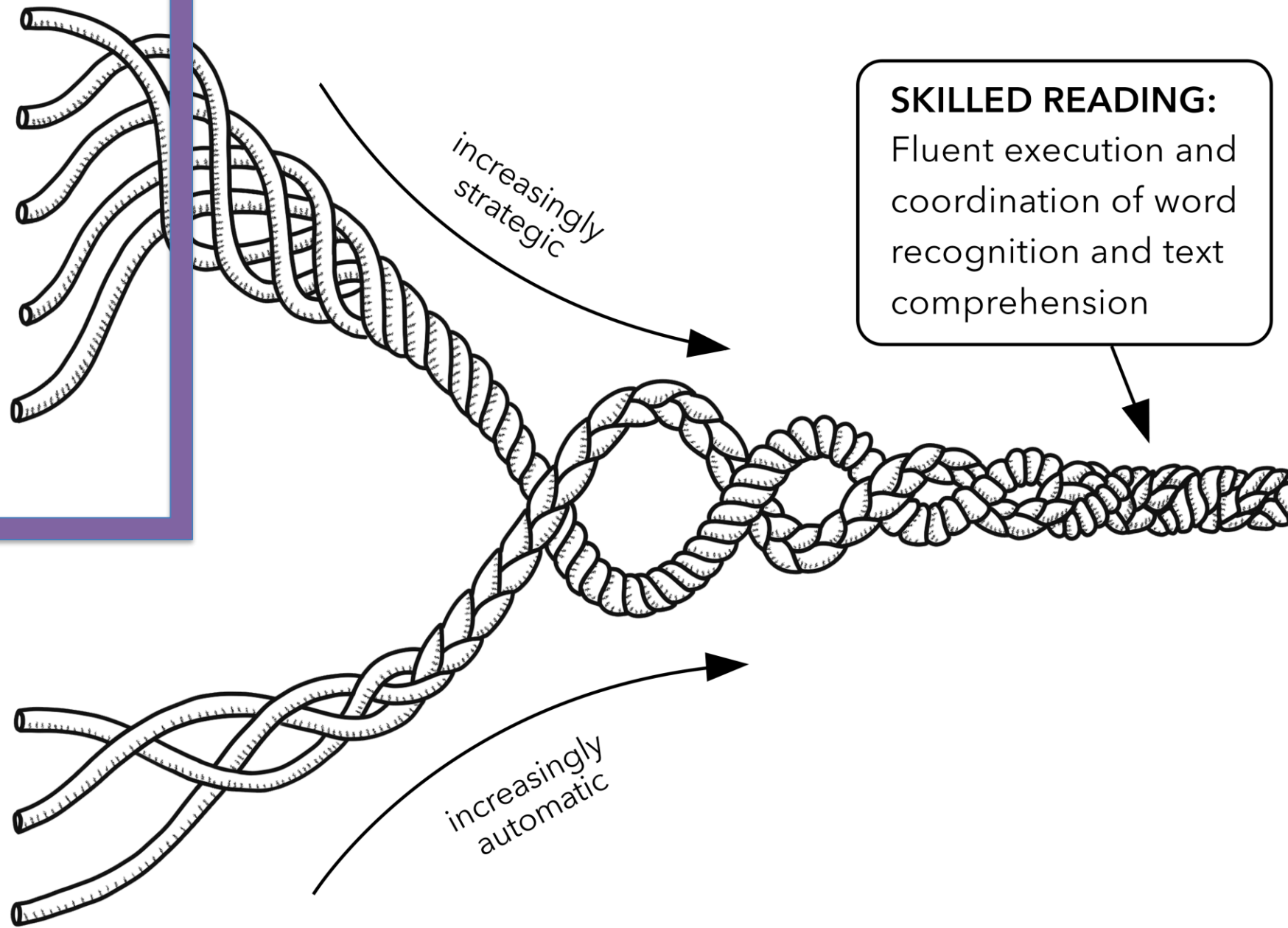
LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

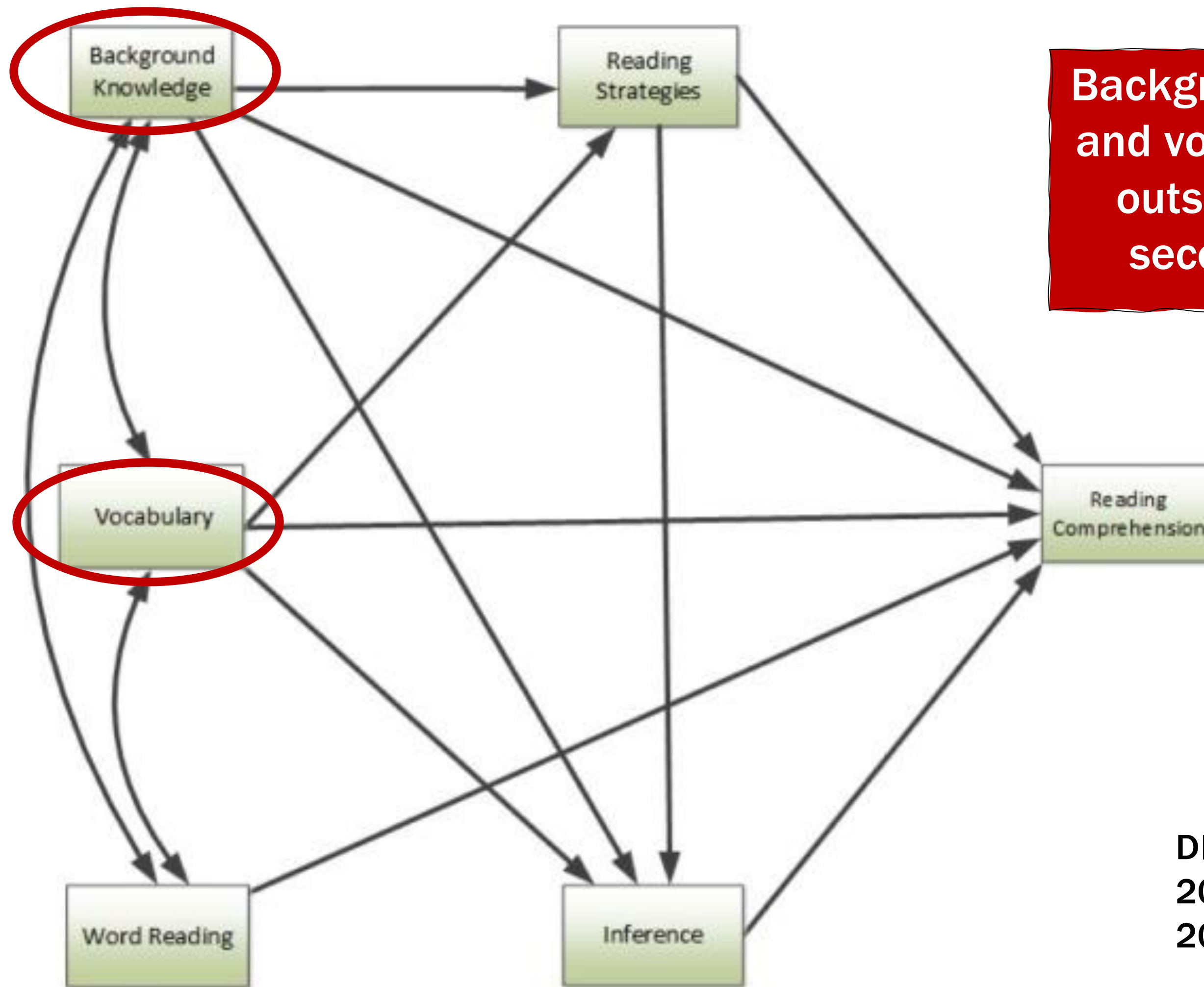
DECODING (alphabetic principle,
spelling-sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)



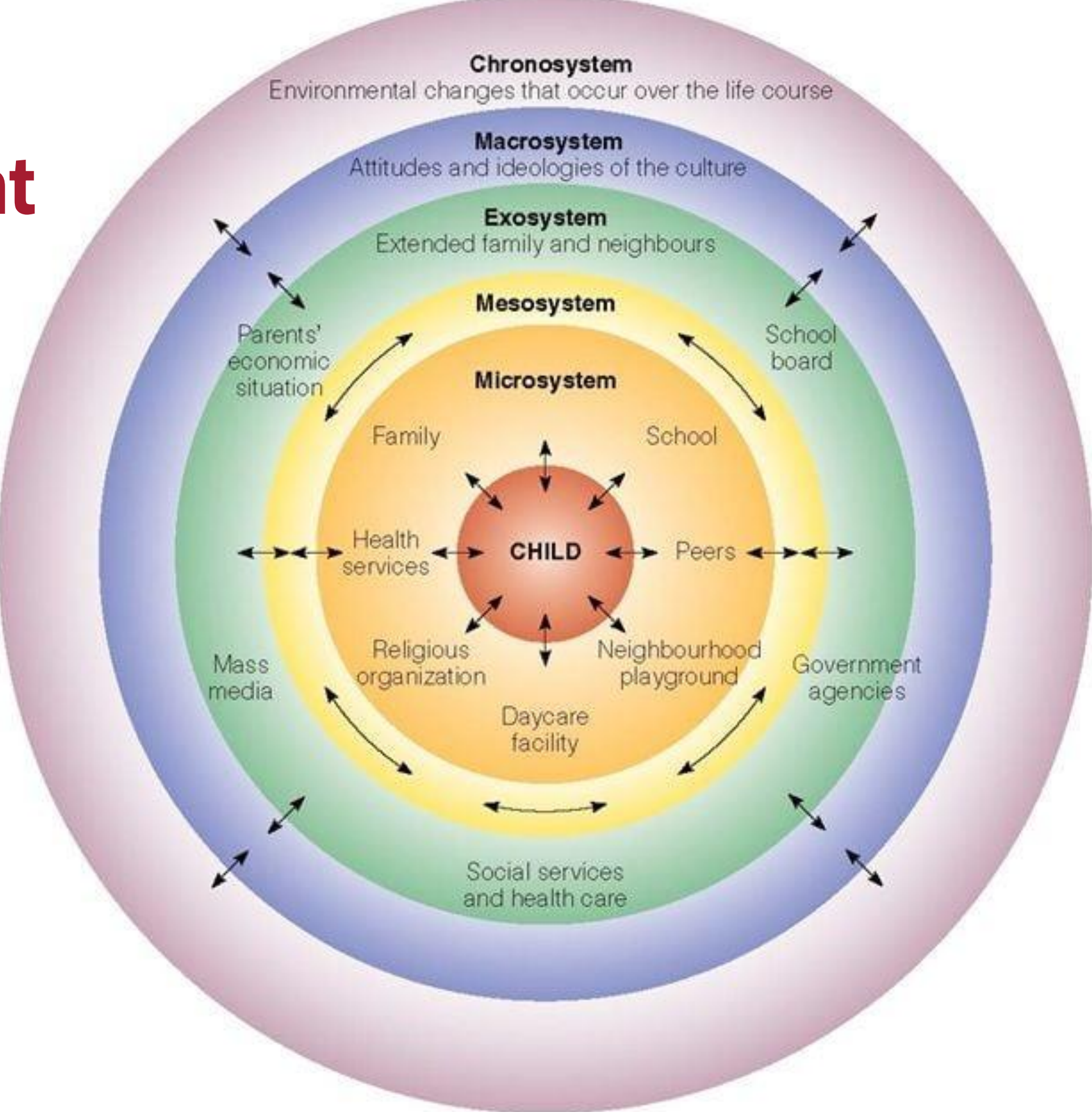
SKILLED READING:
Fluent execution and
coordination of word
recognition and text
comprehension

Background knowledge and vocabulary play an outsized role in the secondary grades



DIME Model (Ahmed et al., 2016; Cromley & Acevado, 2007; Cromley et al., 2010)

Of course, the language and literacy development of EB students is influenced by various environmental factors



What Beliefs and Practices May Contribute to the Current Reading Performance of Emergent Bilinguals?



“I’m not sure how to best help him”

Classroom teachers often do not feel prepared to support the increasingly diverse students (Banilower et al., 2013; Llosa et al., 2016)

EBs often do not receive the linguistic supports needed to access grade-level course content, which make it difficult for them to successfully engage instruction (August & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux et al., 2014)



“Oh, he is an English Learner. He’ll catch on eventually”



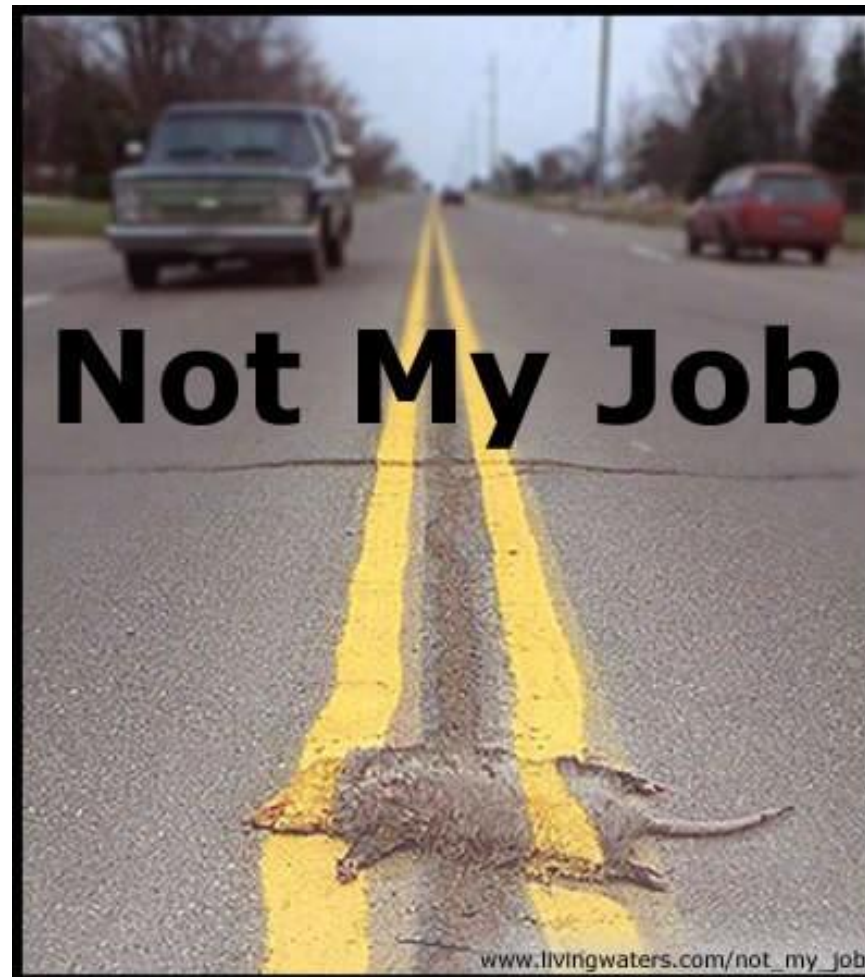
Some may believe that if they wait long enough, EBs will “catch on” and develop foundational literacy skills

Some may think that EBs difficulties will always reside with developing oral language and vocabulary



This thinking may prevent some emergent bilinguals from receiving intervention or special education services

“I’m a history teacher—not an ESL teacher”



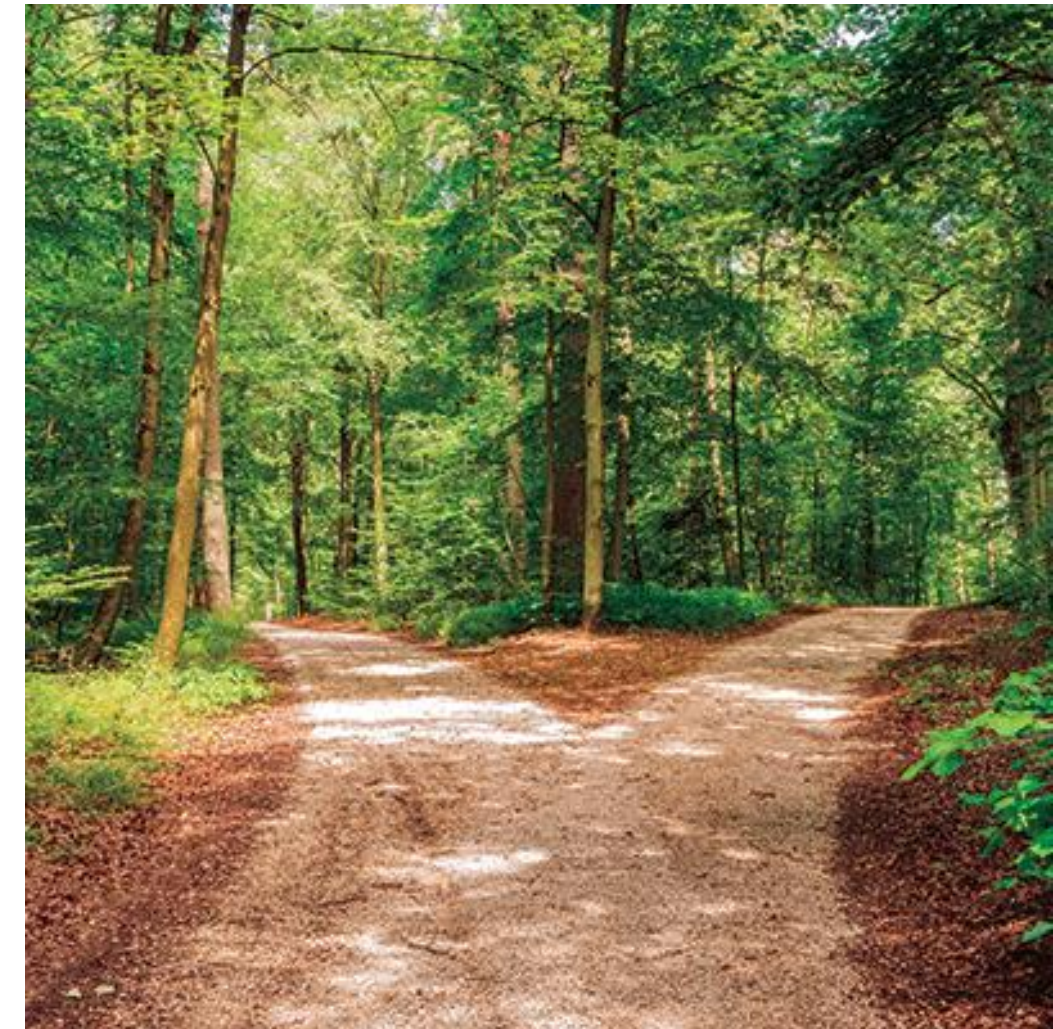
Some content-area teachers do not see the development of language or reading skills as integral to their instruction (Bunch et al., 2009)

Some teachers who see value in integration have difficulty putting this it into action (Patchen & Cox-Petersen, 2008)

“I’m not sure he is ready for that class”

EBs in the middle school and high school grades are often **clustered and tracked into non-college preparatory classes and classes with simplified curricula** (e.g., Callahan, 2005)

EBs in these classes have **fewer opportunities to learn complex content and vocabulary and fewer opportunities to engage with peers whose academic language and vocabulary is more developed**





Other Challenges In and Outside of School

Due to policies that lead to inequities in school funding, EBs are more likely to be enrolled in under-resourced schools (Cosentino de Cohen et al., 2005).

Unfortunately, EBs in the U.S. experience elevated levels of poverty and other socio-cultural factors that influence their development.



Reasons EBs May Perform Lower than Expected

Misconceptions about EBs

Teachers do not feel prepared to support EBs

Teachers do not consider it their role to support EBs

Tracking EBs in less rigorous classes

Often attend lower-resourced schools

EBs are more likely to experience poverty

**Affect the
Literacy
Opportunities
and
Achievement
of EBs**



Reasons EBs May Perform Lower than Expected

Misconceptions about EBs

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Teachers do not consider it their role to support EBs

Tracking EBs in less rigorous classes

Often attend lower-resourced schools

EBs are more likely to experience poverty

**We Can
Impact Many
of these
Factors**



Our Plan

1. Discuss the strengths and opportunities that emergent bilinguals present
2. Preview an instructional approach that exemplifies these features
3. Present Recommendations for moving the needle with EBs

What Instructional Practices Improve Reading Outcomes for EBs?



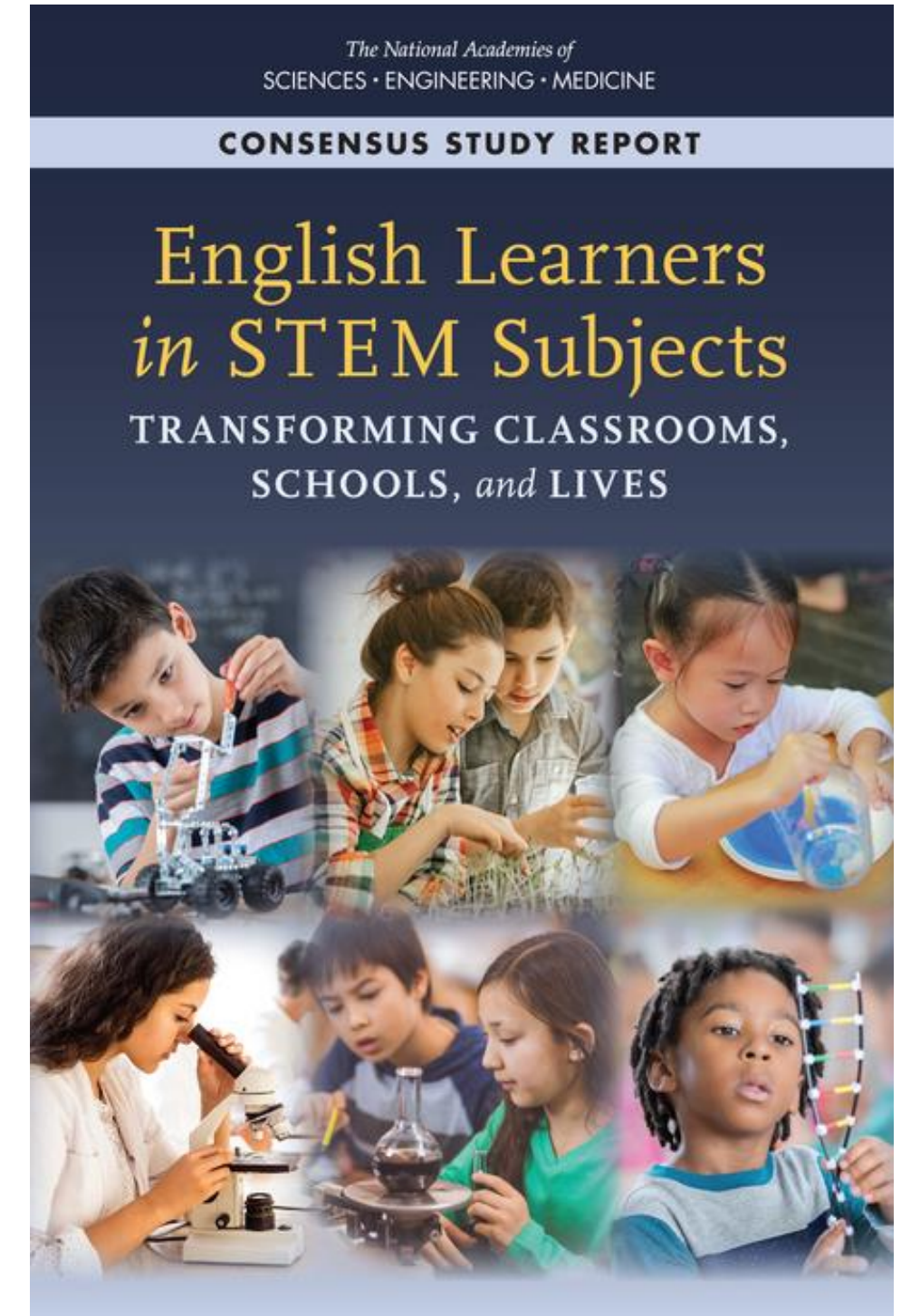
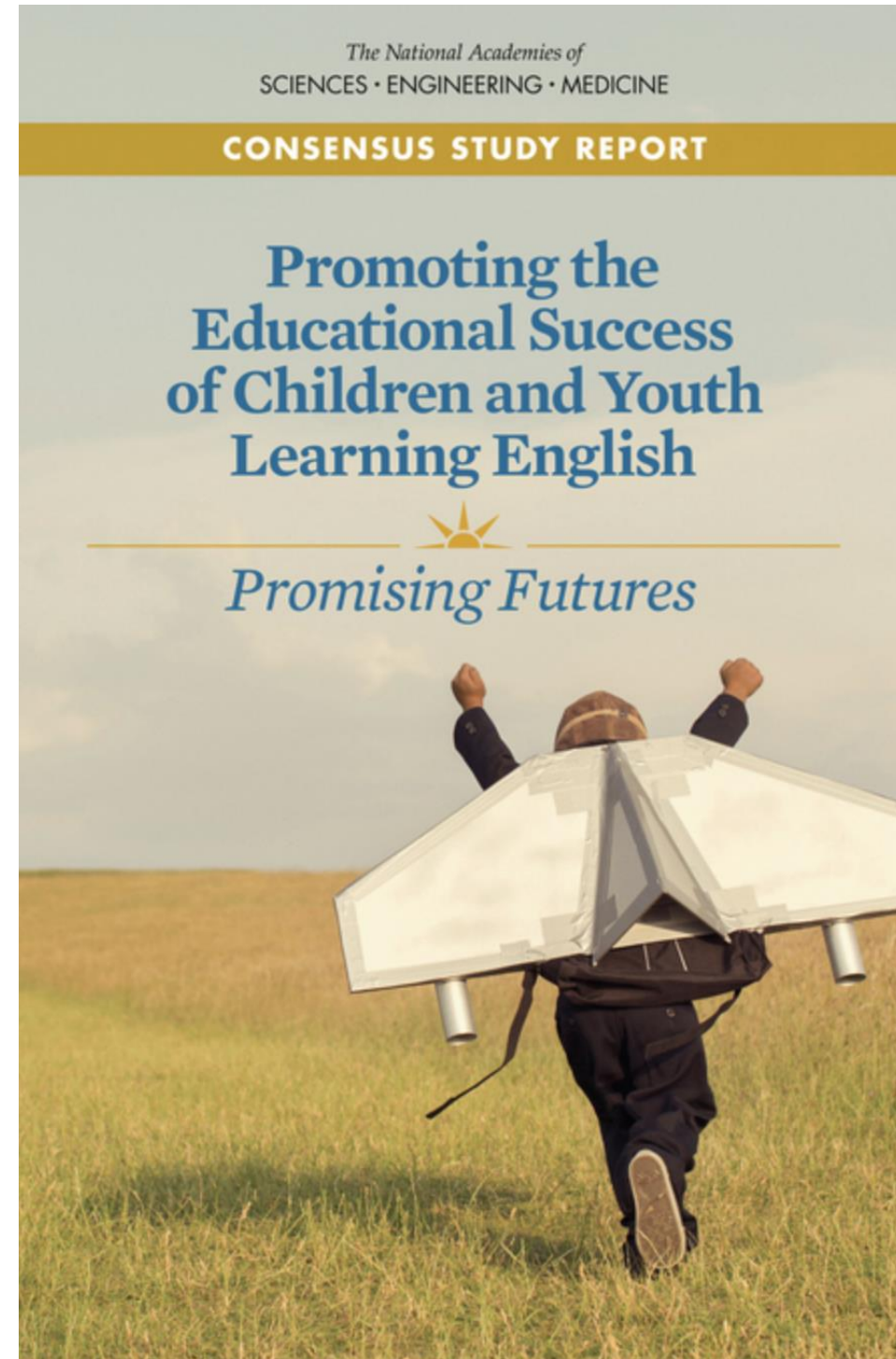
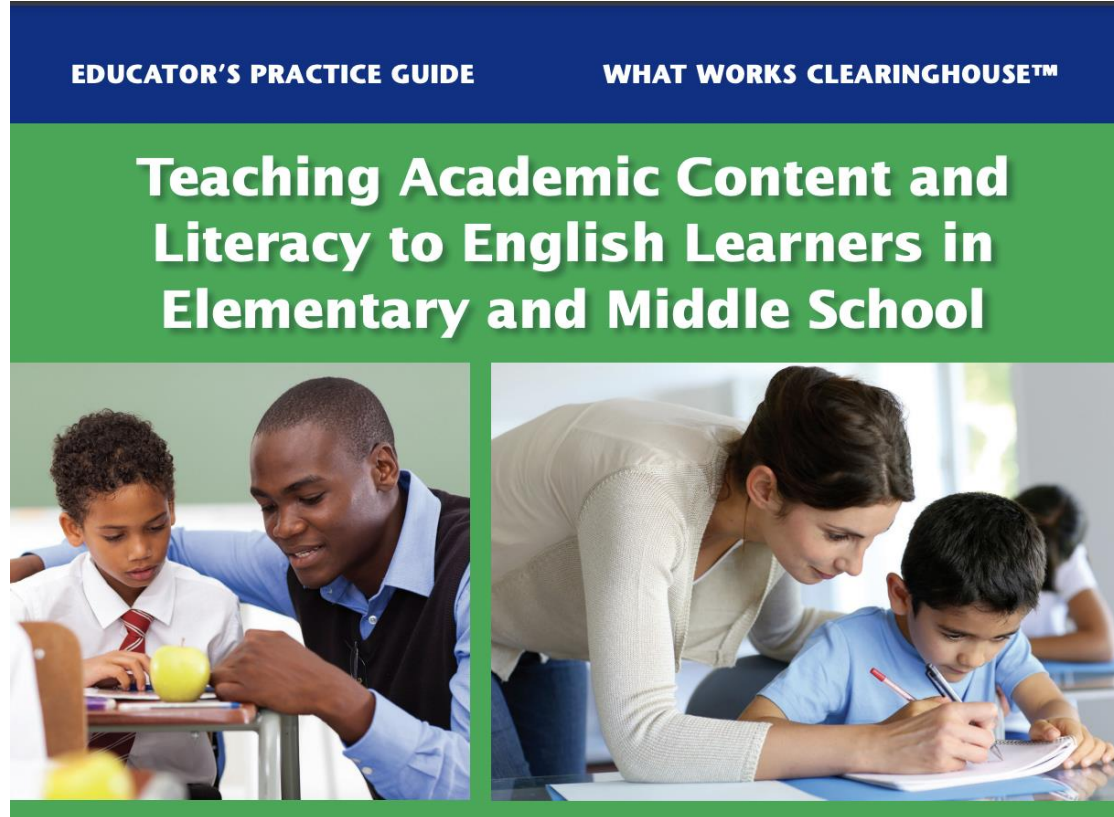
Good News: Many Evidence-Based Practices for Early Reading are Efficacious with EBs

Evidence-based practices for teaching foundational reading skills grounded in reading science appear to be similarly effective for EBs with or at risk for reading difficulties (Capin et al., 2021; Richards-Tutor et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2023; Solari et al., 2022).

Of course, it is prudent to leverage students' primary language and cultural knowledge and incorporate academic language instruction when teaching EBs, throughout their development



Recommendations for Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to Adolescent EB students





Themes Among These Recommendations

Support academic language development during content-area instruction

Use explicit and systematic instructional routines

Embed oral and written instruction in meaning, discipline-specific activities

Facilitate collaborative learning opportunities

Leverage students' home language, knowledge, and cultural assets

Screen for reading difficulties and provide intervention to students who may benefit





Let's Look at a Evidence-based Curriculum for Improving Social Studies Knowledge and Literacy Among Middle School EBs and Their Peers

World Generation

Unit 1
The Egyptian
Pharaohs: Wise
Investors or
Wasteful Spenders?



Unit 2
Was is Better to be
an Athenian or a
Spartan?



Unit 3
Ancient Roman
Government: Whose
Voice Counts?



Unit 4
Pompeii: An
Irresponsible
Decision or an
Unexpected
Disaster?



World Generation was the byproduct of integrating additional supports for EBs in SoGen (SERP, 2015)



World Generation



World History Instructional Units with Integrated Language and Literacy Supports

Originally developed by Strategic Education Research Partnership in collaboration with researchers and teachers in Massachusetts (Social Studies Generation)

Our team—the Center for the Success of English Learners—collaborated with educators in an effort to improve to make the units even stronger for EBs



**The
Egyptian
Pharaohs:**

*Wise Investors or
Wasteful Spenders?*

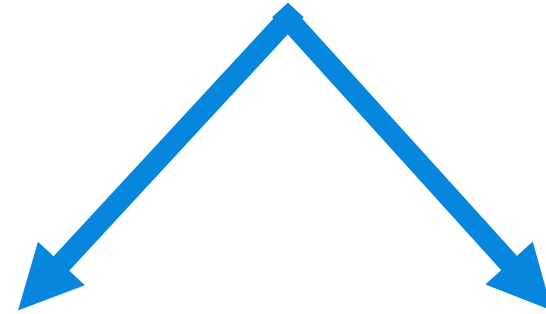


**What Evidence is there to
Support World Generation?**



Study Design

**World History Classes of 13 Teachers
from Massachusetts and Texas**



**WorldGen Treatment (31
classes; 494 students)**

**Business-as-Usual
Instruction (30 classes;
515 students)**

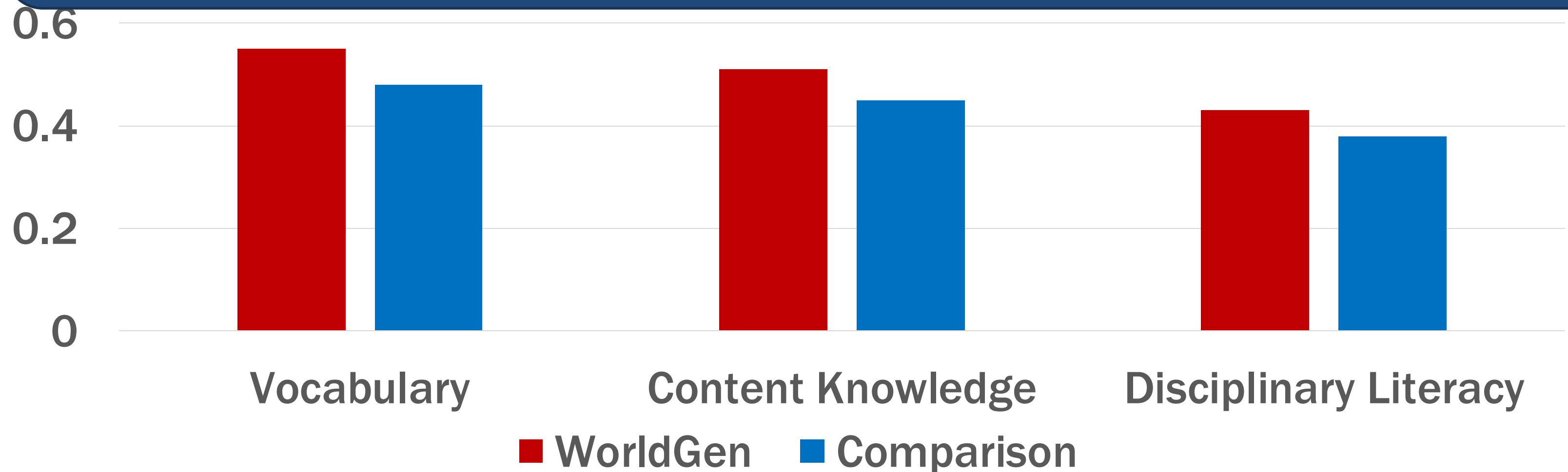


Study Sample

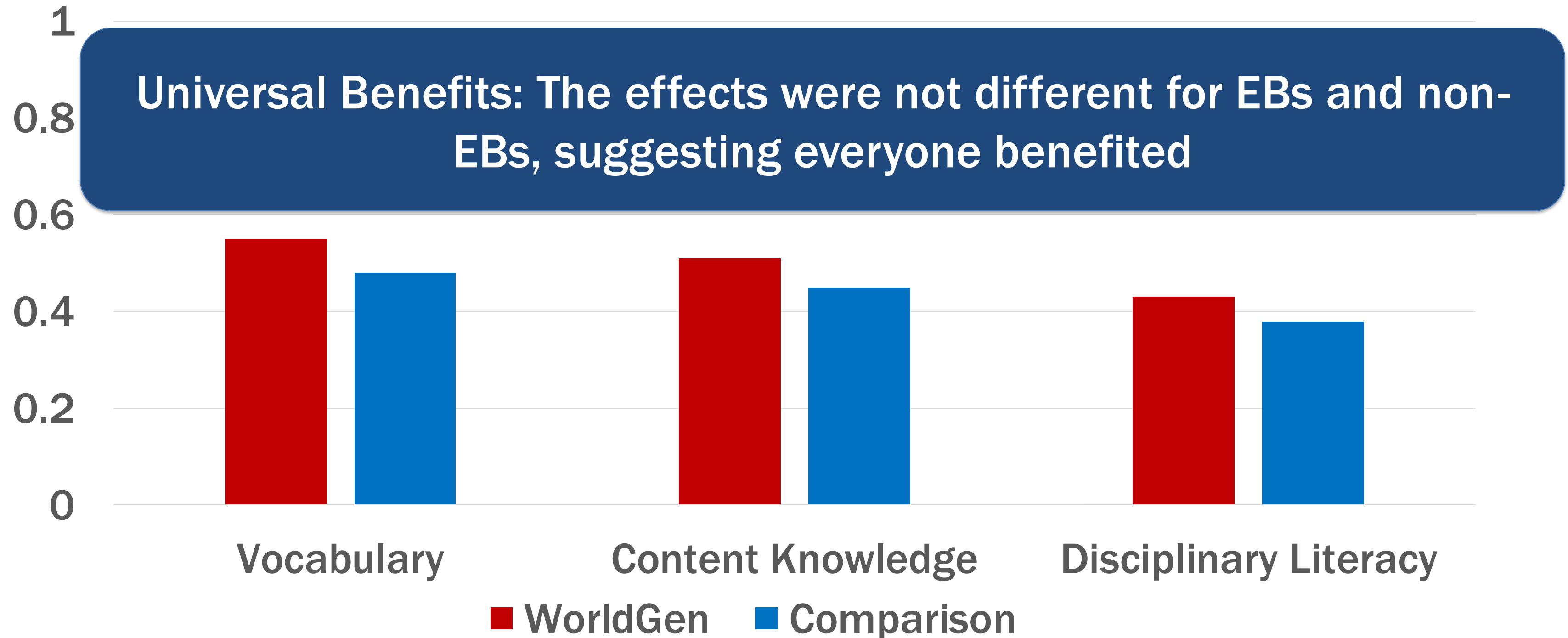
- 48% female
- 82% Hispanic
- 33% currently identified by schools as EB
- 69% receive free or reduced lunch
- No differences between conditions in pretest scores or demographic variables

Impact of World Generation Across Outcomes for All Learners

Robust Effects: WorldGen led to statistically significant improvements across domains



Impact of World Generation Across Outcomes for All Learners





Key WorldGen Findings

Robust Effects: WorldGen led to improvements across vocabulary, social studies knowledge, and disciplinary literacy

Universal Benefits: The effects were not different for EBs and non-EBs, suggesting everyone benefited

Still Work to Do: The magnitude of the impact was statistically significant, but we should still wonder if we can do better



Key WorldGen Practices

1. Make content relevant to students lives and provide a purpose for learning

2. Use explicit and systematic instruction to build language, literacy, and social studies expertise

3. Provide daily opportunities for purposeful language use within the discipline of social studies

4. Incorporate Frequent Opportunities for Structured Peer Interactions

5. Scaffold learning to promote access to appropriately challenging texts & tasks.



1. Making Content Relevant to Students Lives and Provide a Purpose for Learning

1. Introduce students to the unit's dilemma



The Egyptian Pharaohs:

Wise Investors or Wasteful Spenders?

In this social studies unit, students will explore ancient Egypt by learning about the Egyptian social structure and why and how the pyramids were built.

Throughout the unit students will engage in collaborative discussions within teacher-arranged heterogeneous groups and within various grouping structures. A set of social studies disciplinary literacy practices will be targeted. Students will engage with new academic vocabulary, read informational text, identify different perspectives, and produce evidence-based arguments and counterarguments in debate and essay writing. All unit activities relate and build to answer the central question of the unit: Were the Egyptian Pharaohs wise investors or wasteful spenders?

Unit Question:
Were the Pharaohs Wise Investors or Wasteful Spenders?

1. Making Content Relevant to Students Lives and Provide a Purpose for Learning

1. Introduce students to the unit's dilemma
2. Build knowledge through Springboard Activity

Just got to Egypt after traveling for over 10 hours!! I'm exhausted, but can't wait to be near some of the greatest wonders of the world! #jetlag #adventure



1. Making Content Relevant to Students Lives and Provide a Purpose for Learning

1. Introduce students to the unit's dilemma
2. Build knowledge through Springboard Activity
3. Make content relevant through Reader's Theater

Reader's Theater

Amazing Investment or Money Down the Drain?



Note: You are going to read about an example of spending that some consider an investment and others consider wasteful. Also, think of yourself as a word detective- when you encounter the words in bold or any words you would bold because they are difficult, consider ways to detect their meaning.

Before you begin reading, discuss with a partner a time when you (or your family) spent money wisely. Next, tell about a time when you wasted money.

2. Use explicit and systematic instruction to build language, literacy, and social studies expertise

- Teach High-Leverage Academic Vocabulary

Hierar

Reactions from Egyptians Across the Hierarchy

How might Egyptians across the hierarchy have reacted to the strike at Deir el-Medina?

Infrast



Peasants

Peasants were mostly **agricultural** workers. worked the farmlands outside of Deir el-Medina. They paid the Pharaoh's tax collectors with the crops they grew. Some of these crops, in turn, fed the crafts workers at Deir el-Medina.






3. Provide daily opportunities for purposeful language use within the discipline of social studies

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

Identifying Different Perspectives

Who would say such a thing?

Read these quotations, then match the quotation to the person most likely to have said it. The first one has been done for you.

<p>"Your strike is not justified because you must work hard in order to be rewarded when the pharaohs and priests are happy in their afterlives and watching over you."</p>		<p>"I'll tell you my opinion. Go up, gather your gear, close your doors, fetch your wives and your children, and I'll lead you to the temple of Menmaatre and let you settle down there right away." (actual translation from ancient text!)</p>
	 <p>Peasant working near Deir el-Medina</p>	 <p>The police chief in Deir-Medina (Speaking to the crafts workers)</p>
<p>"Allowing the artisans to strike is a bad idea because the artisans are already well enough off. We work hard every day and give a portion of our crops to the tax collectors. If anyone deserves a better quality of life, it is us."</p>	 <p>A crafts worker in Deir-Medina: (Speaking to the officials)</p>	 <p>Priest of Thebes</p>
<p>"The prospect of hunger and thirst has driven us to this; there is no clothing, there is no ointment, there is no fish, there are no vegetables." (actual translation from ancient text!)</p>		

Identifying Different Perspectives

Warm-up:

Reading the statements to the right. Can you tell which supports building a swimming pool and which opposes?

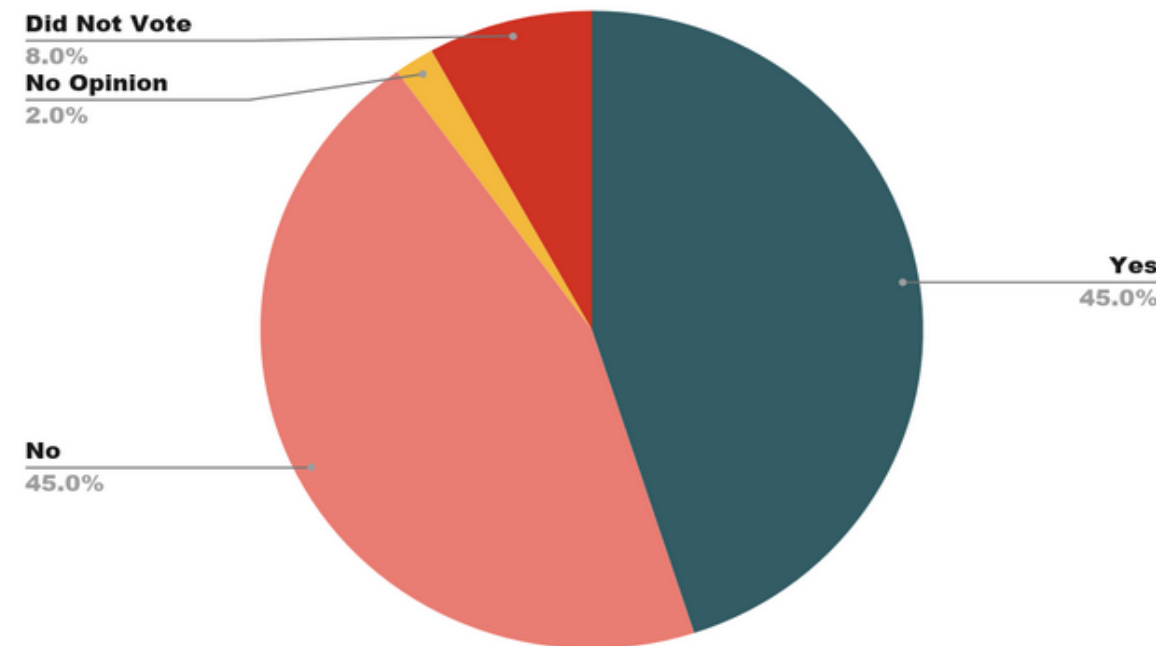
"This pool is easy to **justify**. If we don't build it, the athletes and families will be disappointed!"

"Make a fuss! A swimming pool is not the way to spend our **surplus!**"

Directions:

During this activity, refer to the Reader's Theater script and work with your partner.

The student body at Horace Mann Middle School voted on whether or not to build a swimming pool. The results are below. Examine the data and answer the questions that follow.



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- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

Generating Arguments and Counterarguments

To be a good debater, you not only need to come up with good arguments (reasons to persuade others), but you also need to come up with counterarguments (reasons to oppose other arguments). Furthermore, you need to be able to respond to the counterarguments against your argument! The first column in the chart below lists arguments to support the idea that Horace Mann Middle School should build a pool. The second column lists the counterarguments to the arguments in the first column. The third column lists the reasons to oppose the counterarguments.



Directions:

We will work through this table as a class.

ARGUMENTS ➔	COUNTERARGUMENTS ➔ ➔	OPPOSING THE COUNTERARGUMENTS ➔ ➔ ➔
The extra money should not be spent on building a pool because there are so many items at our school that need to be fixed first. For example, the bathrooms and desks!	Actually the argument you just gave is not that strong because the bathrooms and the desks are OK being in a bit of a messy state. It is not hurting anyone or affecting anyone's learning. It seems it would be way more beneficial to have a new pool.	I don't think so! Maybe it is not hurting anyone to have old desks and messy bathrooms, but not too many students will benefit from the pool. EVERYONE would benefit from fixing the bathrooms and desks.

3. Provide daily opportunities for purposeful language use within the discipline of social studies

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

Debate

Here is a rundown of today's debate. There are four rounds with short breaks in between for teams to strategize.

ROUND 1



Team Representatives present **opening statements**.

Other team members **listen carefully to the other team's opening statement and write ideas for counterarguments**. Use your Thoughtbook to jot down ideas.

→ STRATEGY SESSION:

Each team discusses how to counter the argument presented in opening statements



ROUND 2



Team Representatives present a **counterargument** to the other team's position.

Other team members listen carefully to their representative and the other team's representative. **As they hear counterarguments against their team's position, they write down ideas about how to respond**. Use your Thoughtbook to jot down ideas.

→ STRATEGY SESSION:

Each team discusses how to respond to the counterargument the other team presented.



ROUND 3



Team Representatives **defend against the counterargument** made by the other team.

Other team members hear responses to counterarguments and **write down ideas the team might want to add to the closing statement**. Use your Thoughtbook to jot down ideas.

→ STRATEGY SESSION:

Each team discusses what to include in the closing statement.



ROUND 4



Team Representatives make **closing statements**.

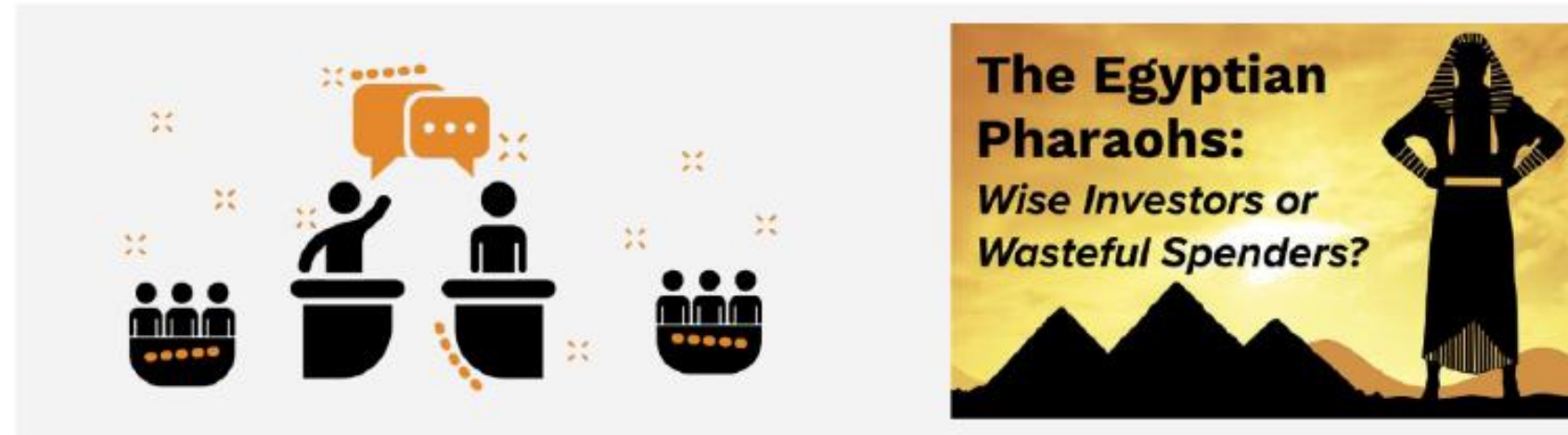
Other team members stand in support of the representative and applaud when they finish. Thank the opposing team for the opportunity to debate them.

3. Provide daily opportunities for purposeful language use within the discipline of social studies

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

Session 7: Debate Day

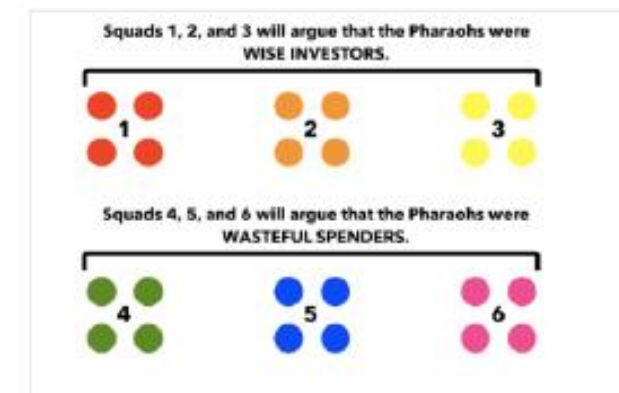
Session Introduction



How to debate effectively:

1. Speak clearly and with confidence
2. Maintain proper body language
3. Maintain eye contact with your opponents and the audience
4. Stay on topic.

You can see how the debate will run by [reviewing the animation:](#)



3. Provide daily opportunities for purposeful language use within the discipline of social studies

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

Drafting Your Essay



You have the option of taking the same position as you did in the debate, OR you can switch sides and write your essay from the other perspective!

Use your Thoughtbook notes and debate statements to help you with your essay.

Here are two examples of ways to structure your essay:

Model #1

Introduction Paragraph

Introduce the topic:	"The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt used..."
Claim:	"This use of resources was wise/wasteful..."
Introduce your 2-3 reasons to support your claim:	[Reason 1] [Reason 2]

Body Paragraph 1

Reason 1	"One reason..."
Evidence	"For example..."
Explain	"This shows that..." "This proves that..."

Body Paragraph 2

Reason 2	"Another reason..."
Evidence	"For example..."
Explain	"This shows that..." "This proves that..."

Body Paragraph 3 (optional)

Counterargument	"One counterargument might be..."
Evidence against	This argument concerns me because...
Explain	"This does not show that..." "This does not prove that..."

Conclusion Paragraph

Restate your claim and reasons	
End with a final thought	

4. Incorporate Frequent Opportunities for Structured Peer Interactions

- Lots of opportunities to read, write, and discuss with peers!



Turn, Talk and Write:

Why did the artisans strike? What was the cause of the strike? Was it *justified* or not? Explain your answer...

5. Scaffold learning to promote access to appropriately challenging texts & tasks

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies

The Pyramids

About 4,600 years ago, thousands of men worked under the hot Egyptian sun to build the Great Pyramids for the Pharaoh (photo on right). Imagine what it must have been like to haul more than 2 million limestone blocks, averaging to about 12 tons each, after the blocks were used to

The Great Pyramid of Giza is the largest structure in the world. The machines such as wheels and levers were built as tombs for the pharaohs, important to Egyptian culture even after death. The

Not Just the Pyramids



Ancient Egypt was a region of monumental architecture. The region is important

pharaohs to live well after their earthly lives were statues, wall paintings, precious jewelry, and gold. A pharaoh to help guide him or her along the journey were thought to enable the pharaohs to continue

Striking Workers: Deir el-Medina

As we read, think about the upcoming debate and the power the pharaohs had and why the artisans wanted to strike.

This picture shows the recently excavated remains of the ancient village Set Maat (now called Deir el-Medina), home to the laborers and artisans working on the nearby tombs. We know a lot about how the inhabitants of Set Maat lived from papyrus documents and inscribed pottery shards found in the ruins – these include receipts, prescriptions, magic spells, and even love songs! About 70 workers and their families lived in the village, in 3–5 room mud brick homes. Though these houses are simpler than Egypt's temples, tombs, and other **monumental** forms of **architecture**, the people who lived there were not peasants. They were skilled artisans – potters, carpenters, coppersmiths, sculptors, jewelers, and **architects**.



5. Scaffold learning to promote access to appropriately challenging texts & tasks

- Develop specialized reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in social studies



Today you will write a brief essay answering the unit question:



What is one
feature of World
Generation that
you think may
help the
emergent
bilinguals you
serve?



Check out an
Instructional Unit



<https://shorturl.at/AxGI8>

Access the full World Gen materials on the SERP website:

<https://www.serp.link/worldgen-1>



Happy to chat about intensive interventions for Emergent Bilingual Students too...

Research Study

 HAMMILL INSTITUTE
ON DISABILITIES


An Extensive Reading Intervention for Emergent Bilingual Students With Significant Reading Difficulties in Middle School

Remedial and Special Education
2024, Vol. 45(4) 230–246
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Philip Capin, PhD¹ , Jeremy Miciak, PhD², Bethany H. Bhat, MEd¹,
Greg Roberts, PhD¹, Paul K. Steinle, PhD¹, Jack Fletcher, PhD²,
and Sharon Vaughn, PhD¹ 

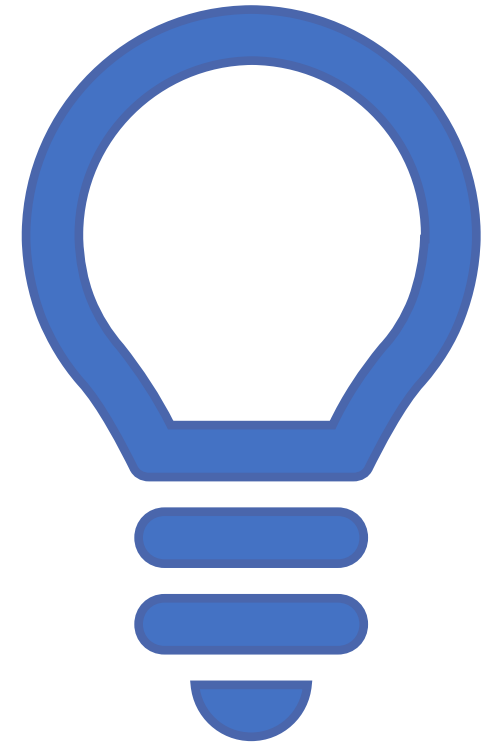
Abstract

This U.S. study evaluated the effects of a reading intervention for emergent bilingual students with significant reading difficulties in Grades 6 and 7 within a multisite randomized controlled trial. Emergent bilinguals were randomized to a researcher-provided intervention ($n = 171$) or business-as-usual comparison condition ($n = 169$). Results on a measure of word reading indicated significant differences favoring treatment after Year 1; however, there were no significant differences between groups on standardized measures of reading comprehension. Initial English vocabulary knowledge moderated reading comprehension scores at the beginning of the second year of intervention, indicating that students' response to instruction varied as a function of their initial English language proficiency. The discussion focuses on interpreting these findings with an emphasis on improving the effectiveness of interventions for secondary grade emergent bilinguals with significant reading difficulties.



My Plan

1. Discuss the strengths and opportunities that emergent bilinguals present
2. Preview an instructional approach that features evidence-based practices for EB students
3. Present Recommendations for moving the needle with EBs



Ideas for Moving the Needle for EBs

Develop a School Culture That Supports the Language and Literacy Development of EBs



We are all reading teachers!

We are all ESL Teachers!

Consider Designing All Instruction to Assure it is Successful for EBs and Watch All Kids Reap the Benefits





Cultivate Language, Literacy, and World Knowledge Through Reading and Discussing Complex Texts Every Day



Adopt Schoolwide Practices for Supporting Academic Language Development

<p>Cognate or translation for English learners →</p>	<p>compassion (<i>compasión</i>)</p>		
<p>Student-friendly definition →</p>	<p>Showing great care or concern</p>		<p>Visual representation to make the word vivid</p>
<p>Synonyms or related words →</p>	<p>Synonyms: tenderness, sympathy</p>		
<p>First example relates to students' everyday lives →</p>	<p>Example Sentences</p>	<p>Turn and Talk</p>	<p>First question relates to students' prior knowledge or experience</p>
<p>Second example relates to the unit of study or passage →</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Red Cross workers showed great compassion toward the people of Haiti after the earthquake struck by providing food and shelter to many homeless people. 2. Mahatma Gandhi is known throughout the world for his compassion, dedication to peace, and commitment to nonviolence. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell your partner about a time you showed compassion toward others. 2. Why do you think that Gandhi is known for his compassion? 	<p>Second question relates to your course content</p>

Create a Learning Environment that Values and Leverages EL Home Language, Knowledge, and Cultural Assets



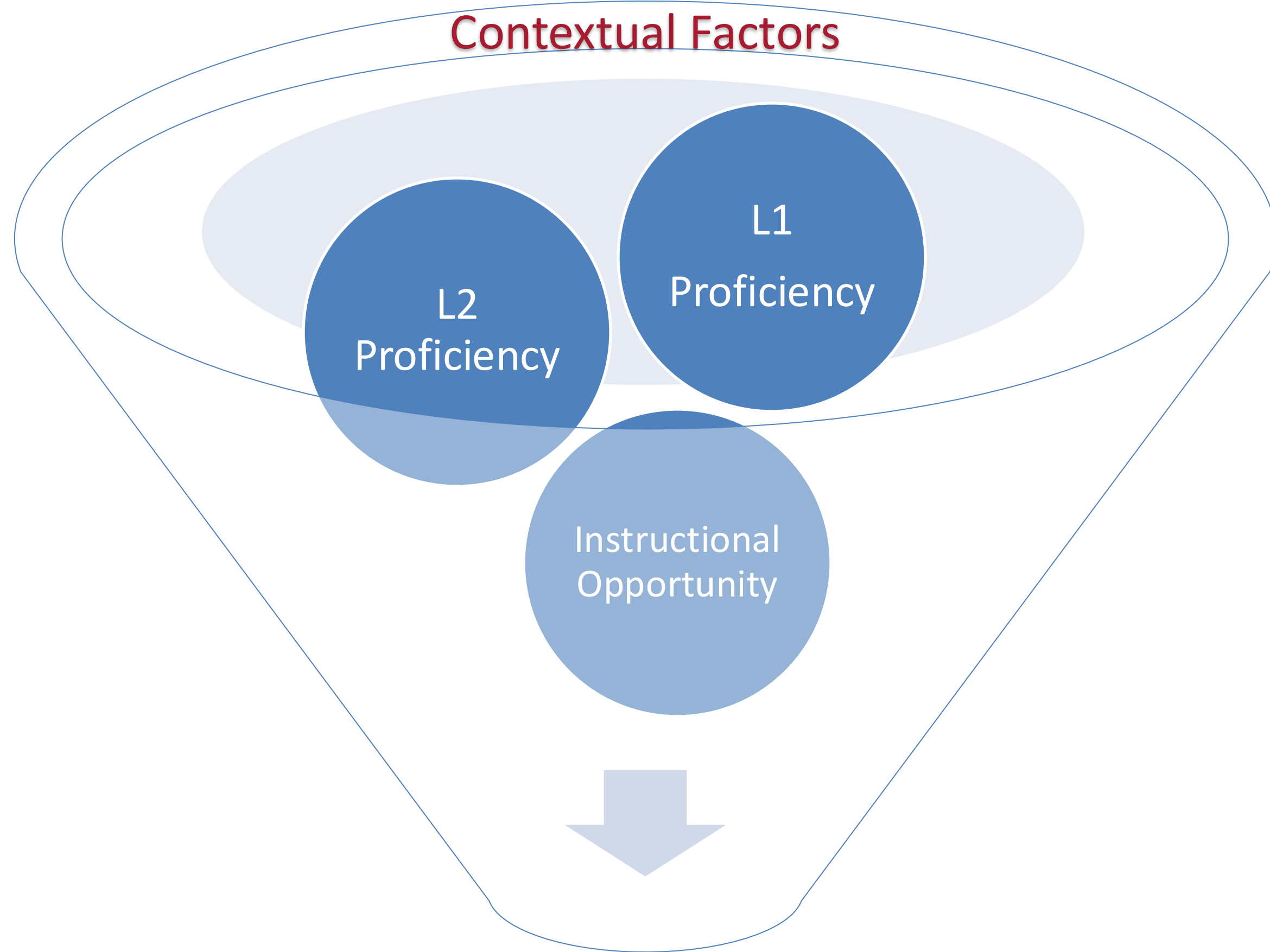
Engage EBs in Complex Tasks Knowing Language Development is a Product of Interaction and Learning, not a Prerequisite





Err on the Side of Providing Code-based Instruction and Use Instructional Response to Determine if it is Necessary to Continue





Informed Decision Making



Err on the Side of Providing Code-based Instruction and Use Instructional Response to Determine if it is Necessary to Continue



**What is one thing
you are going to
support emergent
bilinguals in the
next month?**



Research-Practice Partnerships Opportunities

STORIES:

SYSTEMATIC TEACHING OF ORAL LANGUAGE AND READING INTEGRATED FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Researchers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Utah State University invite elementary school educators to partner with them in developing and piloting an intervention called STORIES aimed at promoting narrative language and literacy among students at risk for language and literacy difficulties in Grades 2 – 4.



Teachers and researchers will learn about evidence-based practices for improving language and literacy skills and co-develop a new narrative language and literacy program.

Students will gain access to high-quality instructional practices and materials

Participating teachers will receive a stipend for work completed outside of their regular hours.



INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Contact Assistant Professor
Phil Capin, Ph.D.

phil_capin@gse.harvard.edu

Join Us!

SPARK:

SUPPORTING ATTENTION AND READING FOR KIDS

BENEFITS:

HIGH QUALITY INTERVENTION

Research team will provide small-group, evidence-based reading intervention at participating schools at no cost

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Free professional development for teaching staff

Researchers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education are inviting elementary school educators to join them in understanding the impact of scaling up an evidence-based intervention designed to improve reading and attention for elementary students with difficulties in these areas.

Learn More:

Assistant Professor
Phil Capin, Ph.D.
phil_capin@gse.harvard.edu



Presentation Materials

Thank you!

I'm happy to connect at

phil_capin@gse.harvard.edu

[LinkedIn](#)



<https://shorturl.at/AxGI8>

Access the full World Gen materials on the SERP website:

<https://www.serp.link/worldgen-1>