

enCORE

 TEACHTOWN®

AND THE SCIENCE OF READING

GUIDE

INTEGRATED

SYSTEMATIC

COMPREHENSIVE

INCLUSIVE

REPRESENTATIVE

ENGAGING

RESPONSIVE

 **TEACHTOWN®**

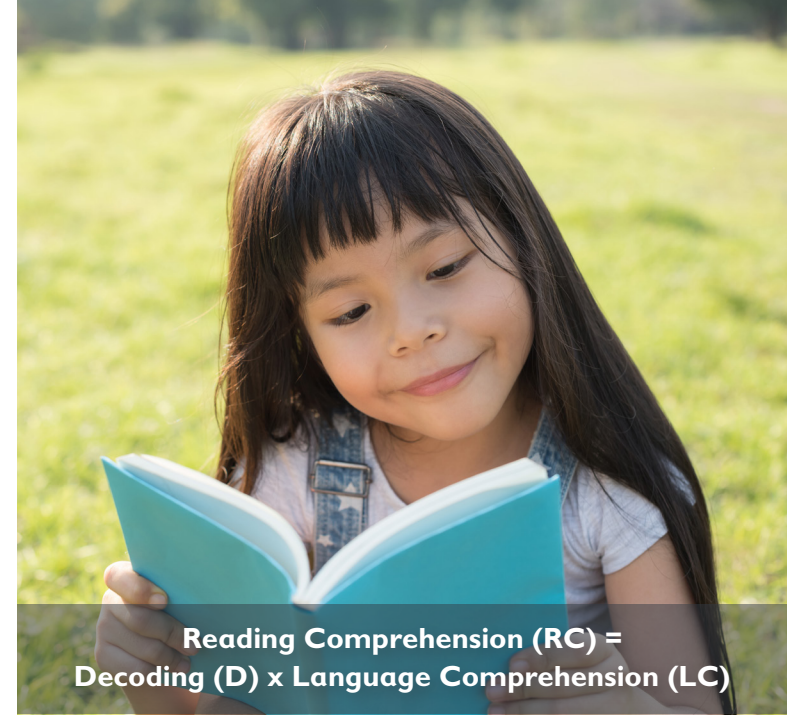
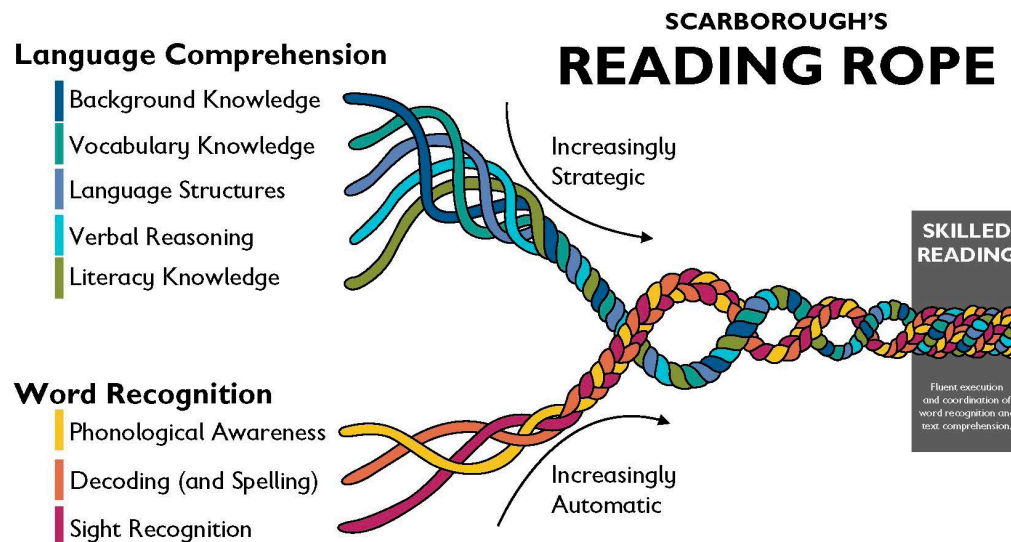
There is overwhelming consensus among literacy experts and reading specialists in favor of the **Science of Reading**. The Science of Reading embodies the reading research that has been conducted during the past 5 decades.

The Simple View of Reading¹ states that **reading comprehension** (or skilled reading) is the product of **decoding skills** (or word recognition skills) and **language comprehension**. As a result, deficits in either decoding or language comprehension abilities can result in reading comprehension deficits.

The National Reading Panel, comprised of 14 experts in the field of literacy instruction, conducted a meta-analysis to review all the available research on different literacy practices. Their report² listed five skills that significantly contribute to reading ability:

1. VOCABULARY
2. PHONEMIC AWARENESS
3. PHONICS
4. FLUENCY
5. TEXT COMPREHENSION

Scarborough³ effectively summarized how different skills that contribute to language comprehension and word recognition lead to skilled reading with her reading rope.



Reading Comprehension (RC) =
Decoding (D) x Language Comprehension (LC)



Recent research continues to affirm the National Reading Panel's findings and the importance of making educational decisions based on the Science of Reading.⁴

¹Gough, P. B., & Tunmer, W. E. (1986). Decoding, Reading, and Reading Disability. *Remedial and Special Education*, 7(1), 6–10.

²National Reading Panel (U.S.) & National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (U.S.). (2000). Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction. U.S. Dept. of Education.

³Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy*. New York: Guilford Press.

⁴Petscher, Y., Cabell, S. Q., Catts, H. W., Compton, D. L., Foorman, B. R., Hart, S. A., Lonigan, C. J., Phillips, B. M., Schatschneider, C., Steacy, L. M., Terry, N. P., Wagner, R. K. How the Science of Reading Informs 21st-Century Education. *Reading Research Quarterly* 2020 Sep;55(Suppl 1):S267-S282.

HOW DOES ENCORE ALIGN TO THE SCIENCE OF READING?

enCORE is a K-12 standards-first, adapted core curriculum that provides students with moderate to severe disabilities access to the general education curriculum. enCORE offers a blended approach of hands-on learning, technology-facilitated lessons, and individualized, technology-delivered instruction. The English Language Arts (ELA) domain of enCORE was systematically designed based on the Science of Reading.

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1. VOCABULARY

Every unit of enCORE K-12 focuses on vocabulary that is embedded within that unit's literature. The vocabulary targets were chosen to be useful for students in daily situations and to aid in comprehension of the text. The vocabulary words are embedded in the text multiple times so that students have multiple opportunities to engage with the words and develop deeper semantic knowledge.

Vocabulary instruction is incorporated into the scripted teacher lesson plans as well as within the technology lessons in order for the students to have repeated exposures with multiple exemplars. At the middle and high school level, enCORE incorporates vocabulary graphic organizers to develop deeper semantic knowledge of vocabulary targets.

2. PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Phonemic awareness is built into every grade band of enCORE:

- enCORE Elementary (K-2) addresses rhyming skills and phonological/phonemic awareness skills by following a developmental progression.
- enCORE Elementary (3-5) begins at the word level and progresses to the phoneme level. It also reviews all of the skills taught in enCORE Elementary (K-2) and adds in morphological awareness.
- enCORE Middle School and High School includes phonemic awareness skills in the *Skills Review* unit for those students that it may be appropriate for.



3. PHONICS

Every unit of enCORE K-12 contains phonics instruction.

enCORE Elementary (K-2) phonics instruction begins with single sound-letter correspondences and short vowels and progresses through digraphs, initial and final blends, common inflections, and silent “e” (see Table 1 for examples). Decoding is also addressed at the word level. Words selected for decoding practice contain the target for the specific book/unit and only letters that have been previously taught.

Every unit of enCORE K-12 contains phonics instruction.

Consonants	Short Vowels	Digraphs	Initial Blends	Final Blends	Common Inflections	Silent “e”
“m” says /m/, as in “mother”	“a” says /ă/, as in “apple”	“sh” says /sh/, as in “short”	“sp” says /sp/, as in “spoon”	“nd” says /nd/, as in “hand”	“s” can say /s/, as in “lights,” /z/ as in “balls,” or /iz/ as in “watches”	“a” says /ā/, as in “space” because of the silent “e”

Table 1. Phonics targets and examples.

enCORE Elementary (3-5) addresses phonics instruction the same way as enCORE Elementary (K-2) but at an accelerated pace. enCORE Elementary (3-5) addresses the full scope of phonics instruction including vowel teams, vowel digraphs, r-controlled vowels, word patterns, and the most common prefixes and suffixes. Decoding again only contains words where every letter-sound correspondence has been previously taught.

enCORE Middle School contains a phonics review within every unit that focuses on sound-letter correspondences, decoding, and spelling.

enCORE High School contains instruction with every unit on rimes (e.g., “op” as in “stop,” “hop,” and “drop”). Students are taught to decode and spell one of the most commonly occurring rimes in each unit.



4. FLUENCY

Repeated readings are embedded in the enCORE implementation guide within every unit. For example, students have the opportunity to read from the literature, read from the e-Reader, or have the e-Reader read to them.

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5. TEXT COMPREHENSION

Every unit of enCORE K-12 focuses on text comprehension in several different ways. Every segment begins with *Anchor Instruction* which is used to connect the information that students will have read in the text to their daily lives or to build background knowledge prior to reading.

Every unit of enCORE K-12 focuses on text comprehension in several different ways.

enCORE Elementary contains leveled comprehension questions for every book, as well as a recall or sequencing activity.

enCORE Middle School contains leveled comprehension questions for every chapter in the adapted chapter books and for every companion text, as well as a review/recall

technology lesson and graphic organizers that focus on story grammar elements, character maps, poetry elements, main ideas, etc.

enCORE High School contains everything that enCORE Middle School contains as well as additional comprehension application activities that focus on making text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.



The Ultimate enCORE ELA Goal: Building Comprehension

At TeachTown, we believe the journey from recognizing letters to fluent reading and comprehension is one that every child, including students with moderate to severe disabilities, can partake in. While the definition of reading success will look different for every student, all students deserve access to rich stories and informative texts to learn about the world.

To this end, the ultimate goal of the ELA domain across enCORE K-12 is to build comprehension skills that allow students to make meaning of texts. By providing adapted, accessible texts across all Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 books, all students have the opportunity to apply their growing knowledge of phonics and phonological awareness skills alongside vocabulary acquisition to solve new words and comprehend the story.

How Text Complexity Works in enCORE ELA

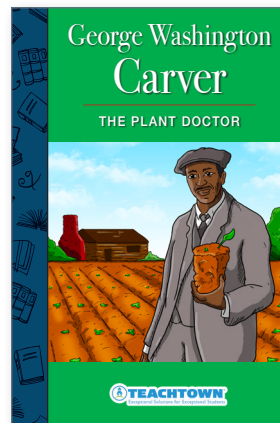
Text complexity refers to the level of challenge a text presents to readers. It is typically determined by a combination of qualitative, quantitative, and reader/task-related factors.

- **Qualitative measures** include elements like the text's structure, language clarity, and the levels of meaning or purpose it conveys. Texts with abstract themes or unconventional structures are typically more complex.
- **Quantitative measures** assess aspects such as word length, sentence length, and vocabulary frequency, and are often evaluated through readability formulas like Lexile levels.
- **Reader and task considerations** factor in a student's prior knowledge, motivation, and the specific purpose for engaging with the text. In other words, text complexity is also influenced by the experiences of students as well as the specific assignment (task) associated with the text.

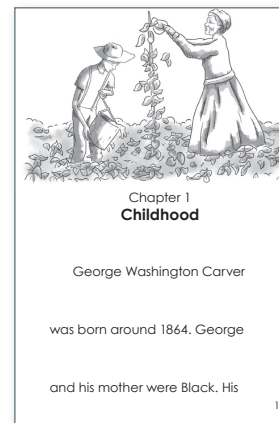
Together, these dimensions help educators determine the appropriateness of a text for a particular student or learning objective, ensuring it aligns with both the developmental readiness of students and the goals of instruction.

In enCORE, text complexity increases across Level, Unit, and Grade Band. Level 1 texts present fewer words, shorter sentences, simpler vocabulary, and correspond to lower Lexile levels. Level 3 texts have increasingly more complex characteristics across qualitative, quantitative, and task considerations. See an example below from enCORE Middle School with Levels 1, 2, and 3 for the non-fiction text, *George Washington Carver: The Plant Doctor*, written by TeachTown. Notice the change from Level 1 to Level 3.

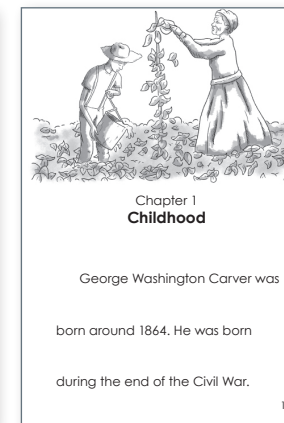
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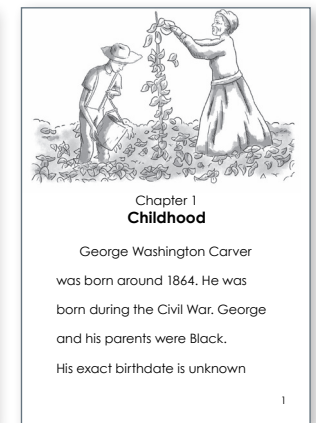
Cover



Level 1



Level 2



Level 3

Additional Skills from Scarborough’s Reading Rope (2001) Addressed:

- enCORE Elementary and enCORE Middle School provide sight word instruction that targets words that occur multiple times within that unit’s literature.
- enCORE Elementary embeds instruction on print concepts through the Interactive Read Aloud of the literature.
- enCORE Middle School and enCORE High School provide instruction on figurative language.
- Morphological awareness is explicitly targeted in every band of enCORE K-12.

Why the Science of Reading Matters for Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that schools provide students with disabilities with programs, curricula, and teaching practices that are built on scientifically-based research. In other words, federal law requires students with disabilities have access to reading instruction that is evidence-based. This means it has been proven to be effective under strict research requirements.

The 5 tenets of the Science of Reading – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension – are all research-supported components of becoming a skilled reader. These 5 tenets have been systematically embedded into the ELA domain of enCORE, from Kindergarten through the transition years.

For additional resources on how enCORE aligns to the Science of Reading, visit:

- [Overview Webinar](#)
- [Phonics & Phonemic Awareness Scope & Sequence](#)
- [Phonics & Phonemic Awareness Blog](#)

To learn more about how enCORE K-12 can meet the needs of your students with disabilities, contact us [here](#).

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Contributor Bio

Jessica Godsey, Ph.D., currently serves as TeachTown’s Senior Editorial Director of Curriculum Development.



She received her master’s degree in Speech-Language Pathology from [The University of Memphis](#) and her Ph.D. from the [University of South Carolina](#). Prior to joining TeachTown, Jessica served students with language and literacy disorders in a variety of clinical and school settings. She also taught courses in language development and disorders and supervised students at [Western Michigan University](#). Additionally, Jessica has co-authored a reading program for students with dyslexia and speaks frequently about the Science of Reading.