

NICHCY Connections... to Literacy

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NICHCY is pleased to connect you with sources of information and assistance on literacy. Literacy is knowing how to make meaning from written language by:

- reading,
- writing,
- thinking, and
- communicating.

This includes everything from knowing how to read and write your name and address to reading or writing scholarly works, *and* everything in between. With appropriate access, active learning, and balanced instruction *every child* can gain their own personal literacy level. We hope this resource list will help parents and professionals find the tools they need so that all children reach their fullest literacy potential.

The list below isn't intended to be exhaustive of the literacy resources available---it's ever-growing. We'll be adding to this page constantly, so check back often to see what's new! New entries are marked with a ★.

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Research Basics

- *Visit NIFL, an authoritative source for literacy information.*
www.nifl.gov/nifl/index.html
NIFL is the National Institute for Literacy, and its site overflows with resources. Search NIFL's national database of literacy programs to find one in your neck of the woods. Access NIFL's many publications, including a 58-page teacher's guide for using the findings of the National Reading Panel in the classroom (called *Put*

Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read; a Parent's Guide called *Helping Your Child Learn to Read*; and a series of adult literacy publications entitled *Bridges to Practice*.

- *What does the research have to say about what works in literacy?*
www.ciera.org/index.html
Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) offers technical reports that have the latest research findings of different literacy studies. You'll also find publications on reading, appropriate for both teachers and parents. Don't miss the series of instructional resources.
- *And then there's the National Reading Panel and its research reports.*
www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Publications/publications.htm
In April 2000, the National Reading Panel (NRP) released its research-based findings in two reports and a video entitled, "Teaching Children to Read." The first report is an excellent resource for anyone interested in learning about reading instruction research. The second report (a more technically-written document) reviews the reports of subgroups that assessed the status of research-based knowledge on the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read.
- *What has NICHD found out about reading development, reading disorders, and reading instruction?*
www.ld.org/research/keys99_nichd.cfm
During the past 33 years, scientists at NICHD (the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) have studied the reading development of 34,501 children and adults. This includes 12,641 individuals with reading difficulties, many of whom have been studied for as long as 12 years. The link above leads to a synthesis online at the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) and authored by Reid Lyon, which is derived from an analysis of over 2,500 publications generated by NICHD scientists since 1965.
- *What do we know about preventing reading difficulties in young children?*
stills.nap.edu/html/prdyc/
Teachers and researchers may wish to read this 1998 report of the National Research Council that synthesizes the research on early reading development. It paints an integrated picture of how reading develops and how reading instruction should be provided.
- *What about the Reading First program?*
http://www.nasdse.org/publications/reading_first.pdf
The Reading First program is a focused effort to improve reading skills of students in kindergarten through the third grade. The link above connects you to Project FORUM's synthesis of information shared by the Department of Education at the Reading Research Symposium for the Council of Great City Schools in March 2002.

- *What types of parent involvement help children learn to read?*
www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/digest/literacy.html
 This Research Digest investigates: What types of parenting practices are related to children's early literacy in reading, math, and general knowledge performance at the end of the kindergarten year? How does the relationship between parent involvement and early literacy vary for children from different racial/ethnic and income backgrounds?
- *And for parents---here's something written just for you about the research on reading.*
http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/positions_evidence_based.html
 The International Reading Association offers *What is Evidence-based Reading Instruction?* to help parents understand the research in reading, including how to identify literacy instruction methods that are likely to lead to high student achievement. Download the brochure at the link above.
- *More about the research base on reading---and PowerPoint slides!*
www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/approach.pdf
 In 28 pages, find out about *Reading: A Research-Based Approach*, available online (at the link above) at the NICHD, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, at the National Institutes of Health. You may also be interested in NICHD's PowerPoint slides on the subject, at:
www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/reading/index.htm
- *Summarizing the knowledge base.*
<http://www.ncrel.org/info/sitemap.htm>
 NCREL (the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory) provides summaries, syntheses, and links to literacy resources on its site.
- *Be sure to visit NICHCY's Research to Practice database.* ★
<http://research.nichcy.org/search.asp>
 There are more than a dozen major reading meta-analyses summarized there for you---complete with practical examples and links to research-based materials you can use today to improve children's reading skills.
- *Research-based literacy materials from the U.S. Department of Education and the projects it funds.*
<http://pplace.org/Litguidepage.html>
 Our federal tax dollars at work! Download the *Literacy Resource Guide for Families and Educators* and connect with current research-based literacy resources available through the U.S. Department of Education and its funded projects. The guide lists whether the resources are available in print, online, CD-rom, and videotape. The description of each item also includes information about cost (many are free!), ordering (including bulk copies), and the relevance for specific audiences (e.g., older students, students with disabilities, and English-language learners).

- *To teach phonics or not?*
Ah, to answer that burning question! Try these resources.
 - www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/report.htm
The National Reading Panel's report *Teaching Children to Read* includes reports of the Panel's subgroups. The link above will lead you to the Table of Contents for the subgroups' reports. Chapter 2 focuses on Alphabeticity and includes closer looks at phonemic awareness and phonics instruction.
 - Reading Rockets. ★
www.readingrockets.org/research/topic/phonics
Reading Rockets's by-line is "Launching Young Readers" and that's exactly what this content-rich site intends to help you do. At the link above, you'll find selected research studies that investigate issues important to phonics.

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NCLB and Reading

- *The law speaks to reading improvement.*
www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov/
This Web site includes an easy-to-read overview of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), tips for helping children learn to read, school reform news, lists of state education contacts, FAQs on reading, testing, accountability, safe schools and much more.
- *Find helpful materials on the NCLB Web site.*
www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml
Parents, caregivers, teachers, and others will find useful publications on the NCLB Web site. Check out: *School-Home Links Reading Kit*, *A Compact for Reading Guide*, the *READ*WRITE*NOW series*, *Helping Your Child Become a Reader*, and many, many more! Some are available in Spanish, too.

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Teaching Reading--Is it Rocket Science?

- *Yes, it is! See why in this report.*
www.aft.org/edissues/rocketscience.htm
Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science: What Expert Teachers of Reading Should Know and Be Able To Do reviews the reading research. It also describes the

knowledge base essential for teacher candidates and practicing teachers to master if they are to be successful in teaching all children to read well. Finally, the report makes recommendations for improving the system of teacher education and professional development.

- *Interested in an online workshop?*
www.cec.sped.org/pd/reading.html
The Council for Exceptional Children offers this online workshop in Beginning Reading Instruction. Educators, paraeducators, administrators, and teachers-in-training can take the online course whenever it best fits their schedule. The workshop focuses on research-based strategies to strengthen students' phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, word recognition, and comprehension skills.
- *To the point: A quick read.*
www.sedl.org/pubs/sedl-letter/v14n03/welcome.html
The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) focuses an edition of its SEDL Letter on *Putting Reading First*. Find out about 10 myths of reading instruction, the importance of phoneme awareness, and activities teachers can use in their classrooms.
- *What teaching strategies help?*
www.vanderbilt.edu/CASL/outreach.html
Teachers! You'll find reports on teaching strategies on this Web site of the Center on Accelerating Student Learning (CASL). Topics include reading, writing, handwriting, math, spelling, phonological awareness, and reading comprehension. Also available are CASL newsletters, manuals, and videotapes.
- *Looking for instructional materials?*
www.teachers.net/4blocks/
The Four Blocks Literacy Center provides information and support to teachers and parents based upon the Four Blocks Literacy program. You can find instructional materials, books and information on training seminars on this site.
- *More on teaching strategies.*
cela.albany.edu/publication/ilu.htm
Visit the site Improving Literary Understanding Through Classroom Conversation. Teachers will find their publications on literacy and teaching strategies very useful.
- *NCITE is the National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators.*
idea.uoregon.edu/~ncite/programs/read.html
Visit NCITE's site to get an information kit, principles for learning to read, tips for teaching reading to children with learning disabilities, and tips for parents on how to strengthen reading skills.
- *Attend a teacher prep and professional development conference virtually.*
www.connectlive.com/events/learningsummit/

Watch the video from the 1999 conference, the National Summit Revealing Keys to Learning Success for All Children. Focusing on teacher preparation and ongoing professional development, this conference highlighted successful examples of teachers incorporating research into practice---in particular, taking learning disability research findings and applying them to teaching methods for all students.

- *Useful information if you're training teachers.*

www.texasreading.org/utcrcla/default.asp

Anyone who is involved with training teachers will find lots of useful information at the site of the Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (TCRLA). Read about research efforts, get a booklet on co-teaching, and access a series of professional development guides. TCRLA is developing a national training model for kindergarten through second-grade teachers in effective early reading instruction.

- *Read, write, think: Free standards-based lesson plans and online resources.*

www.readwritethink.org/

The Read-Write-Think Web site connects theory to practice and was developed by the International Reading Association in partnership with NCTE (the National Council of Teachers of English). A wide range of lessons are available to help teachers work with students to learn language, learn *about* language, and learn *through* language.

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Beginning Reading Instruction

- *What are the developmental milestones for reading and writing?*

www.ed.gov/pubs/CheckFamilies/

Read *Checkpoints for Progress in Reading and Writing for Families and Communities* to find out the developmental milestones for kids from birth through grade 12. Also find out what most children will be able to read and write within those milestone periods. Print out the reading suggestions for each age group to take with you to the library. Read about strategies and resources parents can use to assist their children.

- *Building early literacy skills of preschool children.*

<http://getreadytoread.org/>

The Get Ready to Read site is friendly, colorful, and chock-full of ideas for building the early literacy skills of preschool children. Information is broken down into helpful categories for parents, educators, health care professionals, and advocates. Use the twenty-question, easy-to-use, research-based screening tool to determine your child's progress in building the skills needed to learn to read and write.

- *Dynamic indicators of early literacy skills.*
idea.uoregon.edu/
The acronym is IDEA but on this Web site, it stands for the Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Educators, this site is especially for you! You'll find lots of useful reading and literacy materials. Don't miss the links to *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* and *Big Ideas in Beginning Reading*.
- *Check out the Early Literacy Network.*
<http://literacy.edreform.net/>
The Early Literacy Network at the Education Reform Network connects you to resources promoting early literacy. The materials are organized by the following categories: phonemic awareness; phonics and spelling; fluency; comprehension; vocabulary; writing; motivation; family literacy; struggling readers; English Language Learners; professional development; and instructional approaches.
- *103 things to do before, during, and after reading.* ★
www.readingrockets.org/articles/82
This article features ideas on how to engage students in what they read in class.
- *Match the books you use to the literacy goals you have.*
www.uth.tmc.edu/circle/
Visit the Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE). There, you'll find a terrific list of children's books (both English and Spanish) categorized by different literacy goals (e.g., "Motivation to Read" "Phonological Awareness"). Don't miss the fun activities to help children learn letters, sounds, and more. Also available is a list of publications produced from research studies.
- *Try this early childhood learning kit.*
www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/RSRkit.html
Ready Set Read! was developed to help every child in America read well, on their own, by the end of the third grade. The kit includes activity guides for families and caregivers, a growth chart, and an activity calendar filled with helpful tips and special activities to promote reading and language skills for young children. A Spanish version is also available.
- *Getting children started on the right track.*
bob.nap.edu/readingroom/books/sor/
Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success is reader-friendly. It explains how children learn to read and how adults can help them. It provides realistic tips and ideas that parents, educators, policy-makers, and others can use to help young children get on the right track for reading.
- *And what if there's a problem?* ★
www.readingrockets.org/helping/target

Target the Problem! is a Web site by Reading Rockets that helps parents and teachers determine the specific problem a child may be experiencing with reading. The Web site describes aspects of reading such as phonological awareness and fluency and gives examples of how each area affects a child's reading. Here, you'll find ways to help and resources for more information.

- *For parents.*
A Child Becomes a Reader: Proven Ideas for Parents from Research-Birth to Preschool. This booklet offers advice for parents of children from birth to preschool on how to support reading development at home, and how to recognize preschool and day care activities that start children on the road to becoming readers. It's available online at:
www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/pdf/low_res_child_reader_B-K.pdf. A separate booklet looks at kindergarten through grade 3, available at:
www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/pdf/low_res_child_reader_K-3.pdf

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Reading with Older Children

- *Adolescent literacy workshops.*
www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adolescent/
A series of workshops was held to review and summarize the critical issues relevant to adolescent literacy. Results are summarized on the Partnership for Reading's Web site, at the link above, and include *Video Summary of the Second Adolescent Literacy Workshop: Practice Models for Adolescent Literacy Success.*
- *Need high interest / low reading level materials?*
www.accessiblebookcollection.org/default.htm
Try the Accessible Book Collection. Here you can find age-appropriate reading materials for students reading below their grade level (often called high interest/low reading level materials). Qualified students can borrow digital copies, or e-books from the vast collection. These are great for students who are prevented from reading standard print due to visual, perceptual or physical disability such as: blindness, physical disability, visual impairment, learning disabilities and dyslexia.
- *For middle schoolers and up.*
www.literacymatters.org/
The goal of the Literacy Matters project is to improve the literacy development of middle grades and secondary school students, especially those students who are struggling to succeed. Find helpful resources for teachers, parents, and students themselves. Electronic workshops are available, too!

- *When secondary students struggle.*
www.sedl.org/pubs/sedl-letter/v14n03/5.html
The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) offers insight into and suggestions for addressing reading instruction with students in high school.
- *15 elements of effective adolescent literacy programs.*
www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/
Written by five of the nation's leading researchers, "Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy," charts an immediate route to improving adolescent literacy.
- *Adolescent Literacy Learning Link.*
www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/projects.html
Called ALL-Link, Adolescent Literacy Learning Link is a field-initiated research and development project. Currently being field tested by adolescents with severe speech and physical disabilities across the country, ALL-Link is a comprehensive, integrated, web-delivered set of reading and writing instructional materials at the beginning levels. Spanish is coming soon, according to the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies (CLDS).
- *Heard of the SIM, the Strategic Instruction Model?*
www.ku-crl.org/index.html
The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning has developed the SIM, which is a comprehensive approach to adolescent literacy that addresses the need of students to be able to read and understand large volumes of complex reading materials as well as to be able to express themselves effectively in writing. Visit the Center (use the link above) and take a look at their available materials on the SIM---and more!

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Don't-Miss Resources

- *Reading is Fundamental--a Web site, an organization, and a statement of fact.*
www.rif.org/
Reading is Fundamental (RIF) offers guides that parents will love on how to start the habit of reading in your family. Teachers will use the variety of book lists, Internet resources, articles, teacher tips, and student activities. In addition, you can find out general information about RIF and how to start a program in your area.
- *Reading Rockets---more than a TV program.*
www.readingrockets.org/
This friendly site has reading information for both parents and teachers. Keep up

on reading and literacy issues through the world news headlines (updated daily). Chat with others on the two lively online bulletin boards: *Reading with Your Child*, and *Teaching Reading*. Spanish information is available, too.

- *It's all online.*
www.readingonline.org/
Reading Online is a journal of K-12 practice and research, published by the International Reading Association. Visit the "Electronic Classroom" for ideas and information about applying technology in literacy instruction; find out about literacy practices all over the world; and read peer-reviewed articles about all aspects of literacy.
- *Especially for principals.* ★
www.readingrockets.org/professionals/principals
Reading Rockets created a new web page especially for principals seeking to raise reading achievement. They are also partnering with the National Association of Elementary School Principals, which is highlighting a Reading Rockets article in each issue of its *Before the Bell* newsletter.
- *Connecting to literacy through your doctor.*
www.reachoutandread.org/
Reach Out and Read promotes early literacy by making books a routine part of pediatric care. Reach Out and Read trains doctors and nurses to advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and to give books to children at pediatric check-ups from six months to five years of age, with a special focus on children growing up in poverty. Currently, there are more than 1,800 ROR program sites based on the ROR model, all located at clinics, hospitals, office practices, or other primary care sites. To find where programs exist in your area, visit:
www.reachoutandread.org/about_find.html
- *Volunteering to help children learn to read.*
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/>
The National Service Resource Center can connect you with resources related to community service and volunteering. The NSRC's online publications include connections to such literacy topics as tutoring (student to student and cross-aged tutoring), guidebooks, volunteer tutor programs, and more. See what's available at: http://nationalserviceresources.org/resources/online_pubs/#literacy
- *It's a family thing.*
www.barbarabushfoundation.com/
The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Reading works to promote literacy within the family and to break the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.
- *The Family Involvement Storybook Corner.* ★
www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/storybook/index.html

This section of the Harvard Family Research Project Web site is a new source for information on using children's storybooks with family involvement themes to engage families in their children's education and encourage family-school-community partnerships, all while supporting literacy. Launched in partnership with Reading Is Fundamental, Storybook Corner provides a list of storybooks with family involvement themes and tools for using the storybooks.


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Literacy and Children with Disabilities

- *Ever tried accessible books?*
In addition to the Accessible Book Collection mentioned above under "Reading with Older Students," there are a number of notable sources of materials specially designed for individuals with reading or physical disabilities that impede their use of print text. Try:
 - the National Library Service for the Blind & Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress, at: www.loc.gov/nls
 - Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, at: www.rfbd.org
 - bookshare.org, a Web-based system supplying accessible books in digital formats designed for people with disabilities, at: www.bookshare.org

- ★ *The Access Center knows about improving access to reading--especially for students w/disabilities.*
www.k8accesscenter.org/training_resources/languagearts.asp
The Access Center: Improving Outcomes for All Students K-8 develops informational resources and tools to help educators ensure that students with disabilities learn through rigorous curriculum across language arts, including reading. This work is based on research findings developed by some of our nation's most respected researchers and is incorporated into classroom tools that can be applied across settings.

- *A ground-breaking center working on literacy and children with disabilities.*
www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/
The Center for Literacy and Disabilities Studies (CLDS) promotes literacy learning and use for individuals of all ages with disabilities. Their site describes their ongoing literacy projects and connects you with upcoming events in your area.

- *Need to know about Braille and literacy?*
www.afb.org/
 Visit the American Foundation for the Blind, and find an overview of literacy, Braille literacy resources for parents, resources for teachers of Braille, discussion of electronic books, a newsletter on Braille literacy, a Braille email discussion group, and more.
- *Looking for embossed Braille resources?*
www.bookshare.org
 Braille books originating from the bookshare.org's digital Braille files can be ordered in embossed Braille form and mailed directly to you or as a gift.
- *For children with learning disabilities.*
 The materials available on literacy for children with LD are a splendid resource for all of us. The problem is---where to begin? Here is an obviously short list that will lead you into a universe of more...
 - LDonline, at : www.ldonline.org/
 - National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), at: www.ld.org, and its generous sister-site, at: www.getreadytoread.org
 - the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA), at: www.ldaamerica.org/
-  *Finding the right reading software for students with special needs.*
www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/technology/readingmatrix.html
 With the range and variety of commercial software products on the shelves today, how can an educator or parent choose a program that will most benefit a particular student? Where are product reviews that can inform the decision? This "Tech Works" brief from the National Center for Technology Innovation (NCTI) connects you with four Web-based resources containing detailed information on reading software programs that address specific needs of students with special needs in reading.
- *For deaf and hard of hearing children.*
ncam.wgbh.org/cornerstones
Cornerstones: A New Approach to Literacy Development for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children has a great tool for teachers of children who are deaf and hard of hearing: A Cornerstones teaching unit based on an episode of "Between the Lions," the award-winning PBS literacy series for beginning readers. Included are clear lesson plans as well as supportive material.
- *For children with Down syndrome.*
www.woodbinehouse.com

Woodbine House makes available *Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*. For more information about the book, its cost, and how to order, visit the Web site above.

- *For children with mental retardation.*
www.cec.sped.org/bk/catalog2/autism.html
The link above connects you to the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) catalog. Scroll down until you reach the description of *The Quest for Literacy: Curriculum and Instructional Procedures for Teaching Reading and Writing to Students with Mental Retardation*. Order this 80-page book online, by calling CEC's toll-free number 1.888.232.7733, or by e-mail at service@cec.sped.org.

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Reading and English Language Learners

- *What works with students learning English as a second language?*
www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/techReports/Report66.pdf
Hot off the press in December 2003, "Effective Reading Programs for English Language Learners: A Best-Evidence Synthesis" is available from the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR).
- *Effective reading instruction for struggling Spanish-speaking readers.* ★
www.ldonline.org/articles/6363
Why do so many Hispanic students demonstrate a high rate of reading failure, and what can we do about it? Find out here, in this LDonline article.
- *And when the ESL student also has a learning disability?* ★
www.ldonline.org/article/8765
LDonline offers *A Guide to Learning Disabilities for the ESL Classroom Practitioner*.
- *More on learning disabilities in English language learners.* ★
www.ldonline.org/spearswerling/8001
- *What works with adults learning English?*
www.cal.org/ncle/readingbib/
Find out in "Research on Reading Development of Adult English Language Learners: An Annotated Bibliography," available at the link above from NCLE, the National Center for ESL Literacy Education.

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What's Next from NICHCY?

You tell us! What "Literacy" information are you looking for that you didn't find here?

Drop us a line at: nichcy@aed.org

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