

Lexia LETRS Empowers ELL Educators in Colorado

**Transform Literacy
and Change Lives**



High-quality literacy professional learning is essential to student success. Lexia® LETRS® (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) empowers teachers to understand the what, why, and how of scientifically based reading instruction. It is purposefully designed to help early-childhood, elementary, and English Language Learner educators and administrators become literacy and language experts in the science of reading. LETRS outlines how to teach the skills required for proficient reading and writing, specifically noting areas where English Learners may need particular emphasis.

LETRS and English Language Learner Educators: Volume 1

Unit 1

- * Explores Spanish orthography, explaining its use of both a syllabic writing system and alphabetic orthography and how cognates in Spanish aid in the acquisition of English words/language.
- * Helps educators who teach English Language Learners understand how reading and writing depend on language abilities and the importance of developing oral language proficiency for students. This is especially important as educators aim to maintain the home language while introducing General American English.
- * Educators learn to apply the Simple View of Reading model to understand and instruct English Learners.

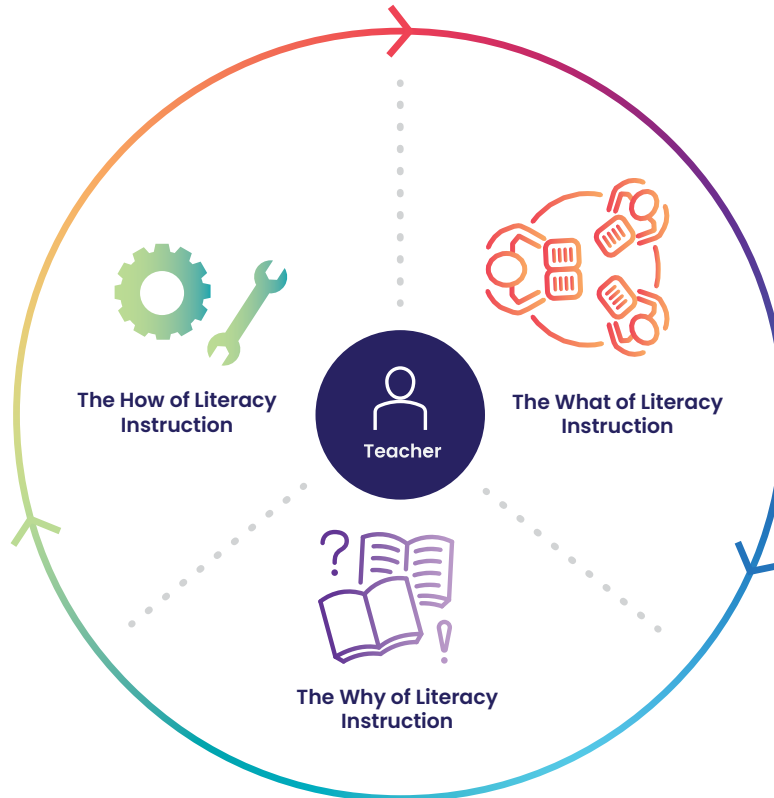
Unit 2

- * Focuses on the speech sounds of English and expressly addresses phoneme variations for English Learners. The unit introduces the phonemes of English, their place and manner of articulation, and how they differ due to coarticulation.
- * Educators who teach English Language Learners will benefit from understanding English phonology, how phonological skills develop, and what kind of phonological awareness practices can be used as students learn the English sound system. This unit also emphasizes the importance of assessing phonological skills in English.
- * Spanish is the second most common language spoken in the United States (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022). Therefore, in support of Spanish-speaking students, this unit includes information about Spanish phonology to help educators anticipate phonological substitutions and confusion that Spanish-speaking students may have. This unit also includes the Spanish Vowel Phonemes by Order of Articulation chart and the Spanish Consonant Phonemes by Place and Manner of Articulation table. These resources will help educators understand a Spanish-speaking student's existing phonology, as well as identify phonemes that may transfer from Spanish to English. This transfer of oral language skills is a proven practice that will accelerate the acquisition of English phonology while maintaining the home language.



Units 3 and 4

- * Focus largely on teaching beginning phonics, word recognition, spelling, and advanced decoding in English. This is especially important for educators who teach English Language Learners to understand best practices when planning for instruction.
- * Unit 3 gives educators practical information about how to provide extra practice Spanish-speaking English Learners will need due to some phonemes that either do not exist in Spanish or are represented by other letters.
- * Unit 4 provides educators with an understanding of how to implement effective strategies with English Learners, such as phoneme-grapheme mapping, teaching multisyllabic word-reading strategies, and best practices for teaching spelling. Many of the routines embed research-based strategies, including scaffolding, modeling, explicit instruction, visual manipulatives, and repeated and multisensory practice—all of which are also proven strategies beneficial for English Learners.



Unit 5

- * Examines the role of oral language and vocabulary, two very important topics for educators of English Language Learners as they acquire the English language. Educators will learn how to modify explicit vocabulary instruction for English Learners, specifically how to choose words that will benefit students' vocabulary acquisition.
- * Educators will examine the research explaining how a student's vocabulary knowledge in their first language easily allows them to transfer that knowledge as they learn English. They will be provided with a research-based routine for introducing target vocabulary known as the Explicit Teaching of a New Word. An adaptation of the routine for English Learners is also provided to support their specific needs for learning the pronunciation, form, usage, and meaning of the word.
- * Provides a variety of graphic organizers to help students truly own vocabulary word(s) by learning the many dimensions of a word, including word structure, common contexts, multiple meanings, and categories.

Units 6 and 7

- * Provide educators with an understanding of reading comprehension and how the goal of constructing a coherent mental model of text can help in their planning for instruction. In Unit 6, specific content for English Learners—such as explaining comprehensible input and how to apply it during instruction—is provided. As English Language Learners acquire the English language, it is especially important to provide multiple opportunities to develop their oral language skills. Structured collaborative conversations are explained in Unit 6 with specific steps and examples of how to incorporate this routine with students.
- * In Unit 7, educators will gain insight into the importance of providing extra support and instruction for English Learners as they not only acquire decoding skills in English but also develop vocabulary and language comprehension skills to understand the text they are reading. Applicable strategies such as oral language modeling and extension illustrate how educators can best elicit responses in a supportive manner from English Learners who may not yet feel comfortable responding in English.

Unit 8

- * Focuses on the reading and writing connection by providing a review of research-based effective writing instruction and a framework for foundational skills and composition.
- * Addresses how to systematically teach letter formation, generating and building sentences, understanding narrative, informational, and opinion writing. This unit provides a Writing Planning Checklist with specific lesson components that will help teachers effectively plan for instruction.
- * Provides educators with effective routines to support English Language Learners in the writing process. For example, when practicing syntactic awareness through sentence anagrams, educators provide scaffolded support by beginning with picture cards while English Learners create sentences as complete thoughts. Teachers then provide the model of their sentences by writing the words for students. This unit also discusses the importance of explicit instruction on the rules and conventions of the English language when a student's home language has significantly different syntax.



Reference

Dietrich, S. & Hernandez, E. (2022). *Nearly 68 million people spoke a language other than English at home in 2019*. United States Census Bureau.



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Lexia[®]

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