

Why the Science of Reading Will Increase Illiteracy

Science of Reading is proclaimed to be phonetically based reading instruction that has drawn from “various disciplines, including education, psychology, linguistics, and neuroscience.”

In the Hunt Institute’s (a key player in the push for Science of Reading) “The Science of Reading: Issue Brief”, a “balanced literacy framework” was described as a “compromise in the debate between phonics and whole language” (see/say or word memorization reading instruction). At a recent event at Hillsdale College, Science of Reading was promoted but attendees were warned of its whole language influence. A well-known reading expert, the late Dr. Sam Blumenfeld, along with journalist extraordinaire Alex Newman documented the damage done by any form of whole language instruction in their collaborative work, Crimes of the Educators.

According to the Learning Lab’s article titled “Orton Gillingham and The Science of Reading,” “Orton Gillingham is an instruction rooted in the science of reading. It was developed... to help students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties.” Both referenced documents state that the “Science of Reading approach” believes “that reading is not a natural process but a complex cognitive skill that must be explicitly taught.” Teaching all students as though they are dyslexic or have learning difficulties seems contrary to the intent to improve literacy; rather, it is the further “dumbing down” of our children as the late great Charlotte Iserbyt called it.

The People Behind the Push for Science of Reading

The very people and corporations who foisted the failure of Common Core on our schools are behind Science of Reading, a

term used to rebrand whole language. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Chan- Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI), and The American Legislative Exchange Council whose members include The Hunt Institute and the Eli Lilly Endowment are pushing the Science of Reading for one reason – the “corporatization” of education in the United States. Simply stated, “corporatization” refers to the financial gain and the control of the children’s education usurped from parents by corporations. Not one of these above listed people or groups are invested in the children in our schools.

This writer has taught for 50 years, currently serving as Elementary Director Emeritus and Curriculum Director for FreedomProject Academy, and has a BA in elementary education along with graduate studies at Butler University, Ohio State University, and IUPUI. The experience of teaching many students to read confirms that teaching reading phonetically works with rare exceptions. With a thorough foundation in decoding, such skills as comprehension, increased vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and writing develop readily. It is how previous generations who were much more literate than we are today learned. Why are those who have no constitutional authority or, in most cases, have no teaching experience telling teachers how to teach?

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<https://lillyendowment.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/the-science-of-reading-issue-brief.pdf>

<https://learninglabfl.com/orton-gillingham-and-the-science-of-reading/#:~:text=In%20conclusion%2C%20Orton%20Gillingham%20is,needed%20for%20reading%20and%20writing>

<https://nancyebailey.com/2022/05/23/the-science-of-reading-corporate-connection-replacing-teachers-with-tech/>

<https://www.edweek.org/education/alec-votes-down-anti-common-core-resolution/2012/11>