

ORAL ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PROMOTES READING AND WRITING

Fluent word reading is necessary for reading comprehension, but not sufficient.

Although reading comprehension strategies (e.g., main idea, summarizing) can have short-term effects, if students do not understand the language, strategy instruction will be ineffective.

Skilled reading and writing require the integration of background knowledge, inferencing, vocabulary, complex syntax, and discourse structures, all of which can be learned and practiced in the absence of text.



It is now well accepted that the chief cause of the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups is a language gap.

Academic language is the pivotal skill repertoire for closing the achievement gap and attention to it is nearly absent in primary grades.

Academic language involves the understanding and production of discourse structures, vocabulary, and complex syntax.

Young students cannot write what they cannot think or say.

Vocabulary instruction alone does not translate to reading comprehension improvements.

Integrated oral academic language instruction improves reading comprehension and writing.

Preventing reading comprehension and writing problems in early grades is easier and less expensive than remediating them in later grades.



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