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# The Need to Revise the Nation's Reading Curriculum

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A White Paper by

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Developers of The Reader's Edge® Efficient Reading Software Program

*Changing The Way People Read and The Way Reading Is Taught™*

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## Call to Action – To Revise the Nation's Reading Curriculum

In order to create a more literate society where the potential and productivity of its citizenry is not limited or constrained by poor reading skills.

Four facts drive this call to action:

- Our citizenry's reading skills are abysmally poor.
- Children who can read and enjoy reading are better equipped to avoid drugs, teen suicide and dropping out of high school, where 90% of learning is based on reading.
- Children who cannot read by the end of 3rd grade are far more likely to be school dropouts, experience teenage pregnancy, and rely on state social services as adults; thereby limiting their eligibility, throughout their lives, for only low-skill, low-wage jobs.
- Through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, all reading is done out loud, i.e., orally. From 4<sup>th</sup> grade on, all reading is done silently. Oral reading skills vs. silent reading skills are opposite to each other.

## The Problem – Reading Education Stops After 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Our thesis is that the USA's citizenry's abysmally poor reading skills are because reading education in America stops after the 3rd grade, where they have learned:

- **ONLY** to read one word at a time, out loud, **Learn To Read** skills, which I define as "Oral Reading Fluency."
- **NONE** of the silent reading, **Read To Learn** skills, which I define as "Efficient Reading Skills."

## The Solution – Four Revisions to the U.S. Reading Curriculum

We propose four revisions to the Nation's Reading Curriculum which will teach children to become Efficient Readers. Simply put, individuals who master Efficient Reading Skills see, read and process groups of words, or units of meaning, with each eye fixation, without vocalizing (lip or subliminally).

The four revisions are to:

1. **REVISE** the former **No Child Left Behind** (NCLB), now “**Core Competency**” goals to redefine Oral Reading Fluency as the **Interim-Goal** and incorporate Efficient Reading Skills as the new **End-Goal**. *Efficient Readers read better and faster with improved comprehension, retention and recall.*
2. **TRAIN** educators to teach the principles of Efficient Reading Skills to children before, during and after 3rd grade.
3. **REQUIRE** mastery of The Literacy Company's 2,000 Prime Words™ which incorporates approximately 75% of all English words in print.

These words have three important characteristics which facilitate learning to see, read and process groups of words automatically, with improved comprehension, retention and recall. They:

- a. Are immediately recognizable
  - b. Do not need decoding, and
  - c. The eye does not fixate on them
4. **MEASURE** improvements in standardized tests scores, attributable to students that are taught Efficient Reading skills.

These revisions will guarantee successful teaching, and mastery of Efficient Reading Skills; required in today's information-based society. A society where all reading is silent and all individuals are ultimately judged on their ability to read.

*NOTE: Efficient Readers read better and faster with improved comprehension, retention and recall.*

## About America's Current Reading Curriculum

**The Good Side** – *Teaches **Learn To Read** Skills, which are only 50% of the reading skills necessary for individuals of all ages to become literate.*

NCLB set a standard that all the nation's children should perform at grade level, e.g., by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade they should read at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level.

This means being able to smoothly read one word at a time, out loud to an audience; a parent or teacher. I define this as the **Learn To Read** phase of today's reading curriculum, i.e., achieving oral reading fluency.

**The Bad Side** – *Does not mandate the teaching of Efficient Reading Skills, i.e., **Read To Learn Skills**; the remaining 50% of reading skills that individuals of all ages must master in order to become literate.*

Children are not taught Efficient Reading Skills because of the myth that if one has mastered **Learn To Read** skills, as taught in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they will know how to **Read To Learn** when they enter the 4<sup>th</sup> grade silent reading world. **Not true!**

Hence, 4th graders, whose education has been limited to the Oral Reading Skills learned in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, are not prepared with reading skills required in the silent reading world. Fourth grade and on requires reading skills, **Read To Learn** skills, which are the exact opposite of Oral Reading Skills.

Individuals employing **Oral Reading Skills** in a **Silent Reading world** are condemned to become poor readers throughout their lives. As a result:

- Students experience the well-known “Fourth Grade Slump” — universally understood to be caused by poor reading skills.
- Poor readers in elementary school continue to become worse readers in high school. They enter adulthood lacking minimal levels of reading skills necessary to achieve successful lives and careers.
- Without modifying the nation’s curriculum to teach Efficient Reading Skills, our nation will continue to create poor readers with all the negative issues associated with a citizenry unable to read efficiently.

***Note:** Arizona, and other states, utilize 4th grade reading assessment results as one basis for long-term projections of how many prison beds will be required.*

## **Technology to Accomplish the Solution**

The Reader’s Edge Program utilizes scientifically sound and pedagogically solid principles to teach Efficient Reading Skills to individuals of all ages; skills needed in the real world, where all reading is done silently. It teaches how to:

- Unlearn the habits of slow readers (Oral Readers)
- Learn the habits and skills used by Efficient Readers (Silent Readers)

## How Long Does It Take to Learn Efficient Reading Skills?

The Literacy Company guarantees that by using its Reader's Edge® program, individuals of any age can double their reading speed with increased comprehension, retention and recall by spending a minimum of 15 minutes every other day for three weeks with The Reader's Edge. Greater improvement will come with additional practice.

## Contact

Additional facts and information are available by contacting:

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