Supporting Comprehension with Sentence-Level Writing

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Acknowledgments

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- Literacy How, Margie Bussman Gillis & Nancy Chapel Eberhardt

- Reading Universe: All About Teaching Reading & Writing

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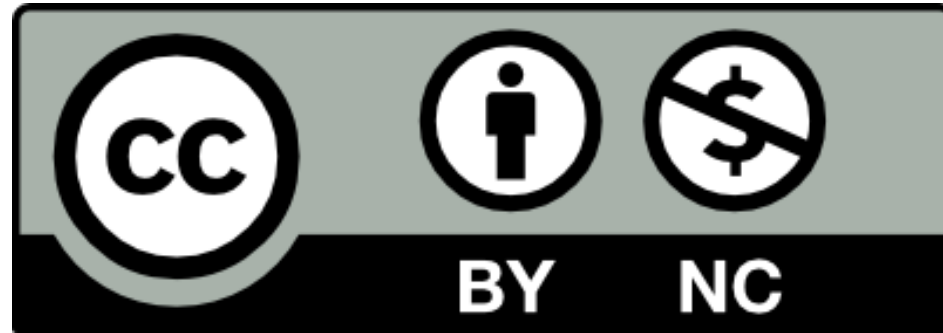
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Structured Literacy Series Overview

1. Who, What, How & Why of Structured Literacy
2. Phonemic Awareness and Phonics for Effective Instruction
3. Foundational Writing Skills: Handwriting and Spelling
4. **Supporting Comprehension with Sentence-Level Writing**
5. Vocabulary and Morphology: Essential for Comprehension

Training Effectiveness

- At the end of the session, you will be asked to provide feedback on today's training

- Results will be used to make improvements to professional learning and for reporting to TA Center stakeholders

- One of the feedback questions you will see is related to promoting and positively portraying diversity among educators and learners (e.g., focus on asset-based language, positive representation of multiple identities)

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Purpose

- To learn about syntax in the context of reading and writing
  - Writing: students produce sentences that are syntactically correct
  - Reading: students utilize their understanding of the function of words to facilitate comprehension

Intended Outcomes

- Participants will summarize syntax and how it relates to comprehension

- Participants will use function based questions to expand sentences

Agenda

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Syntax

3.0 Comprehension

4.0 Function Based Questions

5.0 Closing

1.0 Introduction

Literacy

- Reading instruction grounded in the Science of Reading

- Instruction that is beneficial for all

- Instruction that is essential for students at risk, including those with Dyslexia

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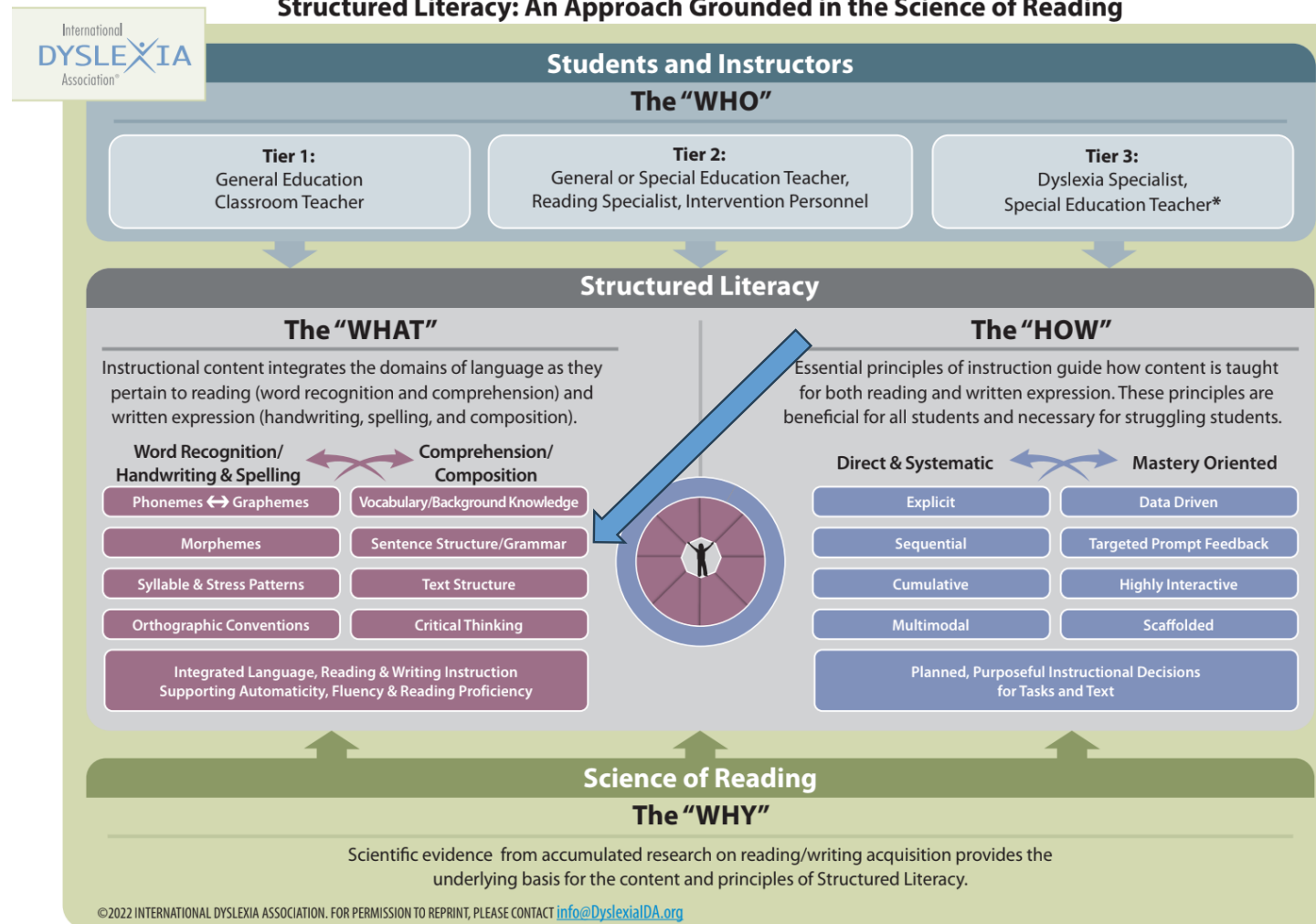
Required Professional Learning Topics
Public Act 146

By not later than the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year, professional learning,…(is provided)… as determined by the department, regarding all of the following:

(e) Evidence-based instructional methods and features of evidence-based interventions that are **grounded in the science of reading and principles of structured literacy** that are designed for pupils with characteristics of dyslexia and pupils at risk for difficulties in learning to decode accurately and efficiently.

Public Act 146, 2024

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Required PL Topics (cont.)

(f) Evidence-based instructional methods and features of evidence-based interventions that are **grounded in the science of reading and principles of structured literacy** that are designed to effectively meet the needs of most pupils.

Public Act 146, 2024

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Structured Literacy: An Approach Grounded in the Science of Reading

International Dyslexia Association, 2024

13

Simple View of Reading

Word Recognition (Decoding) X **Language Comprehension** = **Reading Comprehension**

Ability to read words accurately and quickly

Ability to extract and construct meaning from spoken language

Ability to extract and construct meaning from text
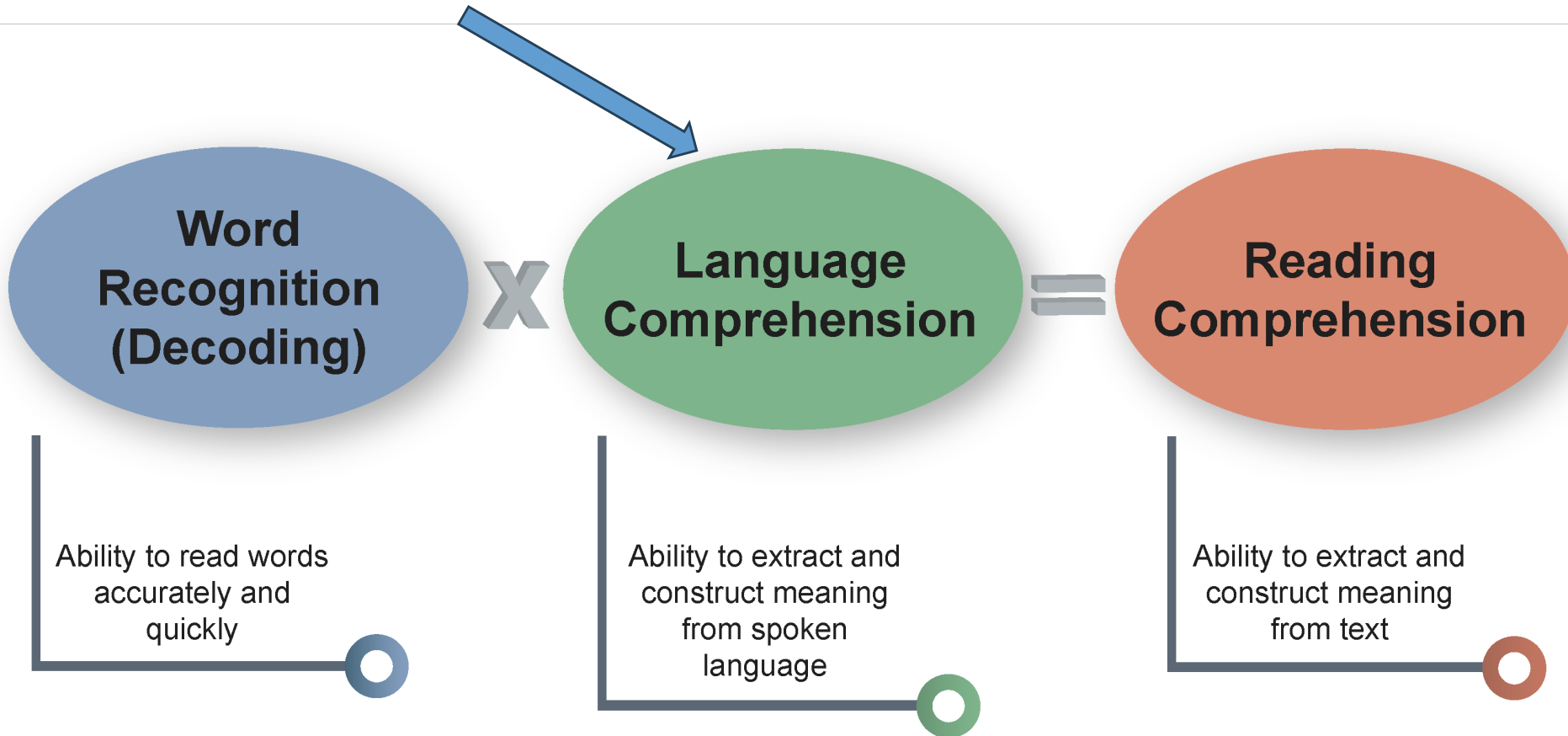
Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Hoover & Gough, 1990; Tunmer & Hover, 2019

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Language Comprehension Unpacked
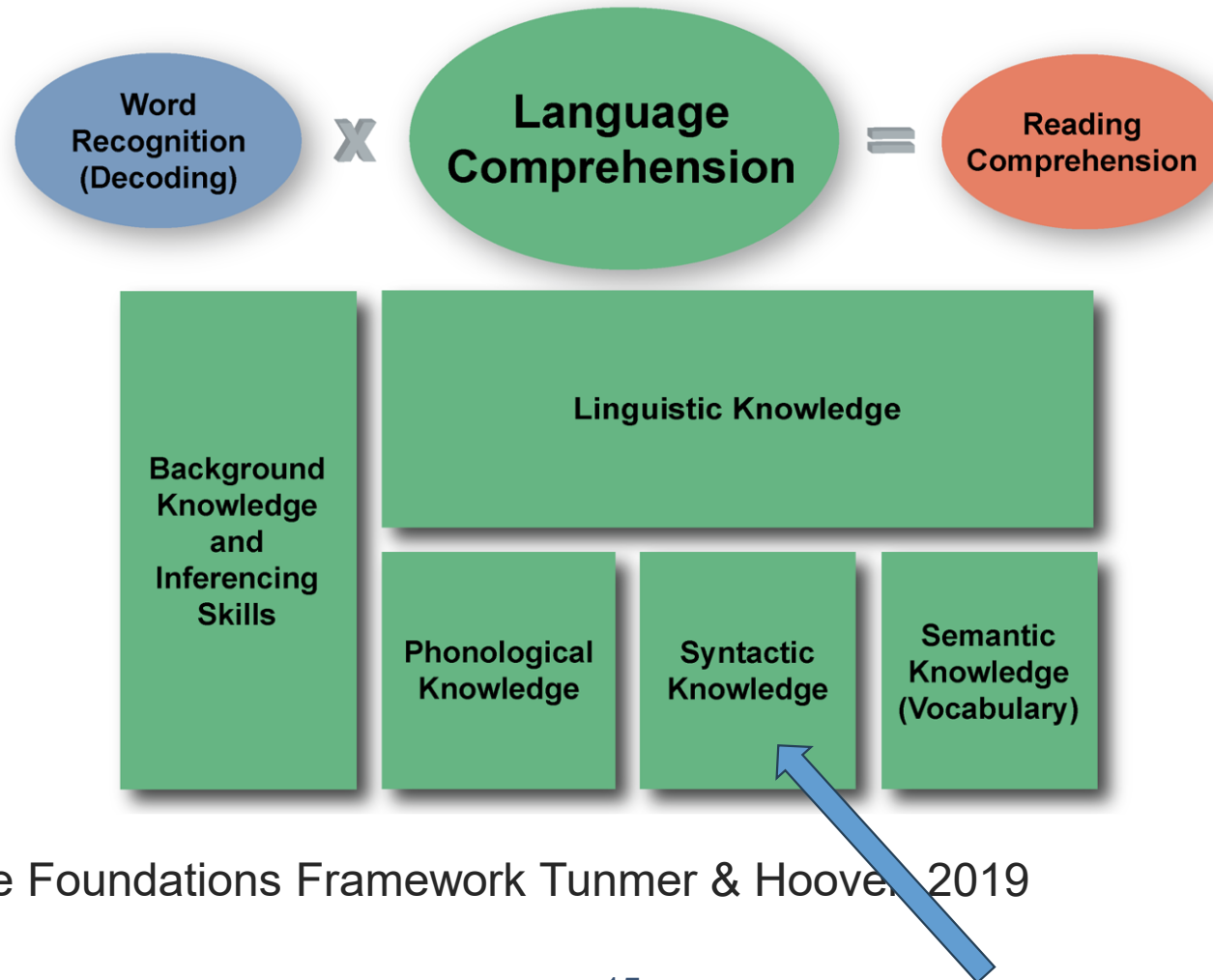
Adapted from Cognitive Foundations Framework Tunmer & Hoover, 2019

Development of Writing

The Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Writing
(Sedita, 2019)

Critical Thinking
- Generating ideas, gathering information
- Writing process: organizing, drafting, writing, revising

Syntax
- Grammar and syntactic awareness
- Sentence elaboration
- Punctuation

Text Structure
- Narrative, informational, opinion structures
- Paragraph structure
- Patterns of organization (description, sequence, cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution)
- Linking and transition words/phrases

Writing Craft
- Word choice
- Awareness of task, audience purpose
- Literary devices

Transcription
- Spelling
- Handwriting, keyboarding
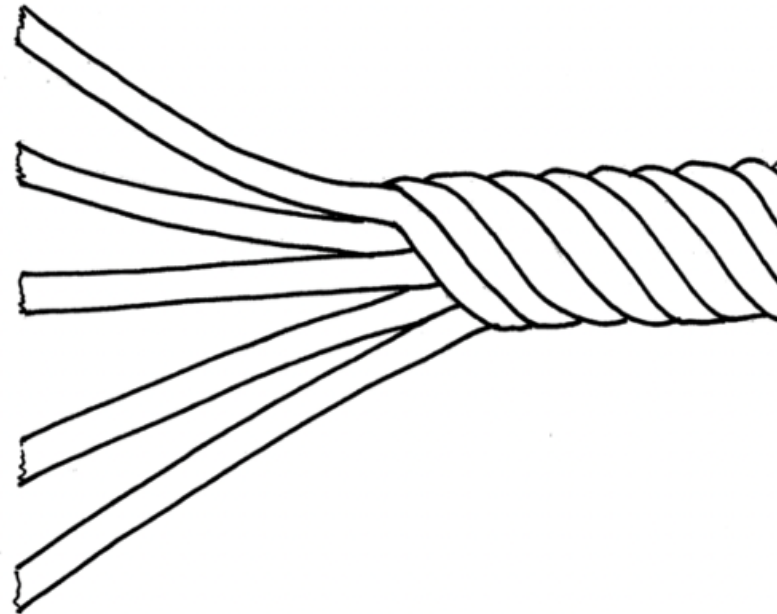
2.0 Syntax

What is syntax?

- The rules that dictate word order
- The system in a language that specifies how words, phrases, and clauses can be sequenced
- **Who** is doing **what**, **to whom**, and in **what way**?

Moats & Tolman, 2019

- Oral syntactic ability
- Reading syntactic ability
- Writing syntactic ability

Gillis, & Eberhardt, 2018

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Syntactic Awareness

- The ability to monitor the relationships among the words in a sentence in order to understand while reading or composing orally or in writing

Sedita, 2019

Word Order

- Zack painted the blue door.
- Zack painted the door blue.

Teaching Grammar

- In order to teach syntax, teachers need to be knowledgeable about grammar

- Grammar is a tool

- Focus on function first

  - How do the **naming part** (who) and the **action part** (do) in a sentence work together?

  - Later label as noun/subject and verb/predicate

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Examples

- <u>The girl</u> swims. <u>She</u> jumps in the water.

- <u>Today</u>, I walked the dog.

- <u>After lunch</u>, I walked the dog.

3.0 Comprehension

Interpretation of sentences is required if students are to comprehend whole texts.

Scott, 2009

Example: Grade 2 student

- "You have to zip up the tent," said Jaz. "**If you zip it**, the bugs do not get in."

- The student asked, "Why do they add words that don't make sense?!"

25

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How To Teach Syntax

- Pre-readers: Classifying pictures according to function
  - Combine a **naming part** (who/what) picture and an **action part** (do) picture to create a complete thought
- Early readers: Sort words according to function
- Readers: Sentence building – combine a **naming part** and an **action part** to create a complete sentence

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Basic Sentence Structure

- Who?
  - Subject

- Did What?
  - Predicate

naming part (subject)	action part (predicate)
A frog	**jumps.**

readinguniverse.org

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Three Basic Sentence Structures

- Simple
- Complex
- Compound

Three Basic Sentence Structures: Simple

- Simple: naming part and action part
  - One subject and one predicate
  - One complete thought (one independent clause)

- The children jumped.

Moats & Tolman, 2019

Three Basic Sentence Structures: Compound

- Compound: naming part and action part & naming part and action part
  - Two complete thoughts (two independent clauses)
  - Joined by a coordinating conjunction
    - FANBOYS
      - (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)

- The dog shook his toy, but the cat walked by without stopping.

Moats & Tolman, 2019

Three Basic Sentence Structures: Complex

- Complex: naming part and action part & naming part and action part

  - One complete thought and one incomplete thought (one independent clause and at least one dependent clause)

  - Joined by a subordinating conjunction

    - Because, before, when, while, after, as

- The children talked loudly after he left the room.

  - Complete thought: The children talked loudly

  - Incomplete thought: after he left the room

Moats & Tolman, 2019

4.0 Function Based Questions

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Masterpiece Sentences

Naming Part (Subject)	Action Part (Predicate)
Who (or what) did it?	What did they (he, she, it) do?
How many?	Who or what did they (he, she, it) do it to?
What kind?	When?
Which one?	Where?
	How?

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Masterpiece Sentences

Naming Part (Subject)	Action Part (Predicate)
Who (or what) did it? noun	What did they (he, she, it) do? verb
How many? adjective	Who or what did they (he, she, it) do it to? noun
What kind? adjective	When? preposition/phrase
Which one? prepositional phrase	Where? preposition/phrase
	How? adverb/adverbial phrase How much? quantity How often? daily/weekly

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5.0 Closing

Summary and Review

- Syntax instruction is taught during reading, writing and speaking.

- Comprehension at the sentence level is required for comprehension of connected text

- Identify function first; label later

- Use function based questions to expand sentences

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Next Up: Structured Literacy Series

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5. **Vocabulary and Morphology: Essential for Comprehension**

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