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The Clear Approach × The Science of Reading: Delivering Inclusive Early Literacy Instruction

Lisa Vodola

Florida Gulf Coast University, The United States

Abstract

While the Science of Reading provides critical insight into the foundational skills necessary for literacy development—such as phonological awareness, print concepts, phonics and word recognition, and fluency—it often leaves a gap in how to deliver these skills in developmentally appropriate, inclusive ways. The CLEAR Approach offers a solution. CLEAR—an acronym for Child-Centered, Learner-Led, Engaging, Active, and Rapport Building—is a flexible instructional framework that helps early childhood educators bridge the divide between research-based literacy outcomes and real-world classroom practice. Grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and aligned with principles of Universal Design for Learning and Differentiated Instruction, CLEAR guides teachers in embedding foundational literacy skills across small group lessons, classroom routines, transitions, and play-based experiences. This integration aligns with emerging research that calls for expanding the Science of Reading to include play and social learning as central to how children acquire early literacy. CLEAR supports multilingual learners, gifted students, and children with learning differences by preserving the joy and movement of early childhood education while ensuring instructional rigor. Implemented by over 50 educators across diverse settings, the framework functions as a curriculum-neutral planning tool for inclusive early literacy instruction. This presentation introduces the CLEAR Approach and illustrates how CLEAR can support the delivery of Science of Reading-aligned instruction in joyful, equitable, and globally relevant ways.

Keywords: Active Learning; Culturally Responsive Pedagogy; Differentiated Instruction; Guided Play; Multilingual Learners