



## **NCCAT LITERACY BADGE**

NCCAT offers a six-session series focused on research-to-practice exploration of the foundational skills in early literacy. To fully comprehend increasingly complex text, students must have a strong foundation in the skills of early literacy. These skills – framed by the science of reading and based on the "big ideas" of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension – work together to create proficient readers who are also life-long learners. The NCCAT Literacy Badge journey focuses on helping educators bring these evidence-based practices to life in their classrooms!

Following each day of professional development, participants who choose to earn their NCCAT Literacy Badge will apply their new learning in a range of real-life settings, from classroom instruction and interventions to academic and performance-based coaching. They will also complete a written assignment each time reflecting on the impact of their new learning and planned next steps.

Teachers may also choose to attend individual sessions to deepen understanding of the building blocks of beginning reading.

### **PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**

Phonological awareness – the progression of skills focused on the ability to recognize and work with sounds in spoken language – is the foundation of learning to read. This continuum is critical for learning to read any alphabetic writing system (Ehri, 2004; Rath, 2001; Troia, 2004). Research shows that difficulty with phonemic awareness and other phonological skills is one of the strongest predictors of poor reading and spelling development. The day-long session includes a study of current research on phonological awareness instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 1: Learning application will include teaching a phonological awareness lesson, such as blending and segmenting sounds in words.

### **PHONICS**

Phonics instruction builds the understanding that there is a connection between the sounds of spoken language, and the letters that represent those sounds in written language. This understanding of the systematic and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds directly impacts children’s ability to read words both in isolation and in connected text. According to Chall (1996), "systematic and early instruction in phonics leads to better reading: better accuracy of word recognition, decoding, spelling, and oral and silent reading comprehension." The day-long session includes a study of current research on phonics instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 2: Learning application will include teaching a phonics lesson, such as segmenting syllables to promote the reading of complex words like “fan-tas-tic.

### **FLUENCY**

Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, with expression and understanding. It serves as a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. “Reading fluency has long been acknowledged as an essential skill that readers must develop to facilitate comprehension and motivate engagement in the act of reading” (Hasbrouck, 2019). The day-long session includes a study of current research on fluency instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 3: Learning application will include teaching a fluency lesson and providing authentic practice through activities like “readers’ theater” and student-author performances.



## VOCABULARY

Vocabulary development refers to the words we must know and use for effective communication. This instruction can include expanding speaking, listening, reading, and writing vocabulary. Research is very clear on the importance of vocabulary to reading comprehension. In fact, “Vocabulary is the largest determinant of comprehension of language” (Biemiller 2015). The day-long session includes a study of current research on vocabulary instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 4: Learning application will include teaching a vocabulary lesson focused on providing students strategies for understanding unfamiliar words through the use of context clues.

## COMPREHENSION

“Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading” (Put Reading First, 2006). Gough and Tunmer (1986) noted, “reading comprehension is the act of understanding and interpreting the information within a text. It results from efficient decoding and the ability to understand language”. The day-long session includes a study of current research on comprehension instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 5: Learning: Application will include teaching a comprehension lesson introducing various text features such as subheadings, diagrams, and captions as tools to increase student knowledge.

## WRITING

Effective writing instruction directly impacts fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. According to the NCTE policy brief titled “Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum” (The Council Chronicle, 2011), “discipline-based instruction in reading and writing enhances student achievement in all subjects ... Without strategies for reading course material and opportunities to write thoughtfully about it, students have difficulty mastering concepts. These literacy practices are firmly linked with both thinking and learning”. The day-long session includes a study of current research on writing instruction, an exploration of effective instructional strategies, a review of intervention resources, and multiple “best practice” opportunities.

Literacy Badge Day 6: Learning application will include teaching a writing lesson through the use of fiction and non-fiction text as authentic prompts for student-authors.

## SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR NCCAT LITERACY BADGE

- Day 1:** October 10
- Day 2:** October 11
- Day 3:** November 5
- Day 4:** November 6
- Day 5:** December 2
- Day 6:** December 3

Final due date for all reflections and lesson plans: December 18.

