
Strengthen your core literacy instruction

And discover how a high-quality phonics
supplement can accelerate student progress

As of August 2024





Strengthen your core literacy instruction

Are you looking for a new literacy curriculum, and wondering about phonics instruction? Do you need to provide students with more explicit instruction in phonics to accelerate reading skills during the critical literacy years? Are you realizing your current literacy curriculum is leaving too many students in need of intervention? When it comes to education, one size has never fit all. It's time to discover a best-in-class, proven phonics program that supplements and strengthens any existing literacy curriculum you use now.

The science from the last two decades is clear—explicit and systematic phonics instruction leads to better outcomes, enabling more students to achieve reading success. A growing number of states across the country today have passed laws or implemented new policies related to evidence-based reading instruction. As of August 2024, an *Education Week* report lists 39 states and the District of Columbia.

Since 2005, 95 Percent Group has been a leader in putting the science of reading into practice in schools and districts across the country. [Dr. Susan L. Hall, EdD](#), cofounder of 95 Percent Group, was an innovative trailblazer in translating the science of reading into effective structured literacy tools and professional learning for educators. Today, 95 Percent Group continues to develop and advance the science of reading and structured literacy to empower teachers with the knowledge, resources, and support they need to develop strong readers.

Comprehensive *and* modular—you can have both in one program

Comprehensive or modular? That's the choice many decision makers think they have to make when choosing a literacy curriculum. In trying to be everything to everyone, comprehensive programs can become inflexible, with too much content to deliver in the school year. And even though the curriculum covers a broad range of literacy topics, it may lack the depth necessary for effective phonics instruction, which can lead to significant foundational skill gaps. There is a growing concern that core reading curricula for the elementary years have not improved reading scores in the US (The Condition of Education 2020). Reporters such as Emily Hanford (APM Reports) have shone a light specifically on the need for explicit, systematic, and sequential phonics instruction for every child.

95 Percent Group's approach is based in the science and adds a critical resource into your literacy toolkit: [95 Phonics Core Program®](#)—an explicit, systematic, evidence-based **supplement** for the reading block, compatible with any core curriculum. It offers a comprehensive, modular solution that enables teachers to deliver explicit, systematic, and cumulative Tier 1, core phonics instruction to their daily reading block. The program is strategically designed to reduce or prevent intervention needs before they arise. Throughout the entire K-5 sequence, 95 Phonics Core Program secures and consolidates foundational skills, and expands them to equip students for grade level text and beyond.

Designed by teachers for teachers, 95 Phonics Core Program allows for easy implementation with ready-to-go lessons and materials that promote teacher confidence without additional planning. A gradual release model gives educators the tools they need to support their students. Embedded Teacher's Editions with tips and instructional dialogue throughout the lessons support teachers in confidently learning by teaching.

What does a structured literacy approach for progress require?

Four decades of brain science have helped us understand: we are not wired for reading. The evidence from the science of reading is clear—explicit, systematic, sequential, and cumulative phonics instruction leads to better outcomes. Explicit means intentional and on purpose teaching of a specific set of skills. But explicit instruction alone is not enough. Systematic, sequential, and cumulative require using a scope and sequence of instruction that introduces prerequisite skills first before more advanced skills, carefully building in a continuum of instruction. Explicit, sequential, and cumulative literacy instruction leads children to a level of automatic decoding, fluent and expressive reading, and ultimately, deep comprehension of text.



With strong, evidence-aligned, core Tier 1 instruction, we should meet the needs of at least 80% of our students. This prevention-oriented approach ensures fewer students require intervention in Tiers 2 and 3. The truth is we can't intervene our way out of a Tier 1 problem. We aren't there yet, but we can get there. There is work to be done, and we must act—together—with urgency and conviction.”

LAURA STEWART

Chief Academic Officer, 95 Percent Group

Not all Tier 1 structured literacy programs are created alike... Now that you understand the critical elements of a structured literacy approach, let's take a look at the features of 95 Phonics Core Program and why it is unique and powerful.

“

One of the most effective tools that we're using in Fulton County Schools is 95 Phonics Core Program. That has been a game changer for our students and for our teachers. When I go into classrooms, I see students learning at levels that they haven't learned at in previous years. It's truly been transformational.”

MIKE LOONEY

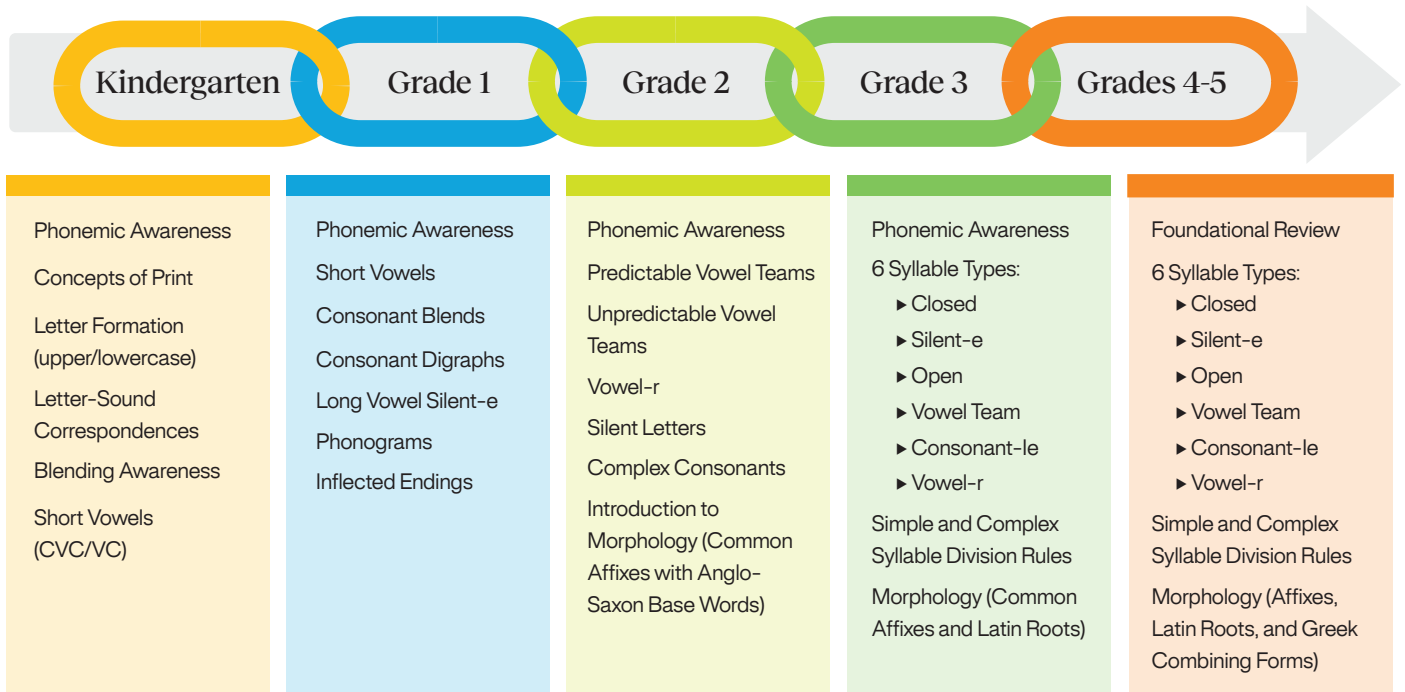
Superintendent, Fulton County School District, Georgia

95 Phonics Core Program[®]— an easy-to-implement Tier 1 phonics core supplement for K-5

Tier 1 instruction with 95 Phonics Core Program engages your core instruction with a structured literacy approach, leaving fewer children in need of intervention. Designed to work as a focused phonics supplement for your reading block, it aligns with and strengthens any literacy curriculum you're already using. Its explicit instructions require little to no teacher prep—empowering teachers to hit the ground running on day 1, learning by teaching.

A Tier 1 continuum of instruction

95 Phonics Core Program’s core cumulative phonics instruction is explicit, structured, and linked across grade levels to provide a review of the previous year’s skills and a preview of what’s to come in the following year, creating a seamless continuum of instruction that builds in complexity, while featuring common language and routines.



Structured literacy characteristics

95 Phonics Core Program’s instructional practices differ from the typical reading instruction provided by ELA curricula. A phonemic awareness and phonics continuum of skills is followed using structured literacy characteristics described in the following:

CHARACTERISTIC	EVIDENT IN LESSON FRAMEWORK	CHARACTERISTIC	EVIDENT IN LESSON FRAMEWORK
Explicit	I Do directly states and defines focus skill and student expectations.	Corrective Feedback	Teacher response is reactive to individual student errors.
Systematic	Intentional language and steps include consistent hand gestures and verbal cues; there is a gradual transfer of responsibility from teacher to student.	Differentiated Instruction	We Do and You Do sections provide two levels that enable teachers to differentiate instruction to meet students’ needs.
Sequential	Structure moves from simple to complex in key ways including lesson order, word choice, materials used, and teacher talk.	Scaffolded Instruction	Steps of the I Do, We Do, and You Do allow the teacher to gradually transfer responsibility for learning to the students.
Adequate Modeling	This most prominent feature provides precise language at each level of modeling.	Continual Assessment	This occurs through the informal observation and monitoring during instruction; the focus skill correlates to the 95 Phonics Screener for Intervention™

Student benefits

Ensuring students have the foundational literacy skills is a requirement for success. Failing to master these skills has serious repercussions throughout their education and into adult life. But we know that with a structured literacy approach, 95% or more of students can learn to read with high-quality, evidence-aligned instruction.

Lessons are framed around the gradual-release instruction model, often referred to as “I do, We do, You do”—direct instruction (I do), followed by guided instruction or practice (We do), and then independent practice (You do).

A gradual-release instructional model is important for practicing skills and building confidence. Guided practice lets students try out a new skill with close teacher monitoring and coaching, which also allows for error correction and redirection.

Laura Stewart, Chief Academic Officer at 95 Percent Group, explains, “We need to understand what we are learning in a very direct way with modeling or demonstration (teacher “I do”), then we need time to practice the learning with a coach at our side (“We do”) before we tackle the practice ourselves. Take any learned skill and this model works.”

“There is a lot of talk about the importance of motivation in reading, and I like to remember that the number one factor in motivation is success. Children cannot deeply enjoy that which they cannot do—and do well,” said Stewart. “Once they learn to read, they feel that rush of success. The light bulb is on and a new world opens to them. 95 Phonics Core Program is not only effective and efficient at developing strong readers but it also—and more importantly—helps them fully experience the joy of reading.”

Rynae McKinney, a first grade teacher in Edmonds School District, Washington, saw this firsthand. “Students’ attitudes shifted. They went from complaining that they were doing [phonics] again, to reminding me that we still had to get to our phonics lesson.”

Benefits for students include:

- ▶ Easy-to-follow instructional routines and dialogue help grow students’ love of reading
- ▶ Lays the groundwork for empowered independent thinkers with the five key foundational reading skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension
- ▶ Gradual release model lets students try out a new skill with close teacher monitoring and coaching
- ▶ Common routines and language enable smooth transitions across tiers and grades
- ▶ Adds critical intermediate grade skills of multisyllabic decoding and morphology, equipping students for grade level text and academic success across all subjects

Teacher benefits

Despite their best efforts, teachers today are confronting persistent skill gaps in their students. They know students need focused and explicit phonics instruction but they don't see where to find the time in their daily schedule to get up to speed themselves on structured literacy, figure out how to integrate it with their existing ELA curriculum, and help their students master the foundational skills they need for success.

Each grade-level, classroom-ready kit includes everything teachers need for one 30-minute foundational skills block each day. Prepared lessons and Digital Presentation Files make it easy to add a phonics supplement to the literacy curriculum and advance students' literacy.

Let's hear what a few educators using 95 Phonics Core Program have to say about their experience implementing 95 Phonics Core Program.

Panther Valley Elementary School, Pennsylvania

Here is first grade teacher Maria Wozniak: “I really liked it because there was little to no teacher prep. It was all there: the workbooks, the lessons—it’s easy to use and it’s very systematic. Everything builds on the previous lesson.”

Third grade teacher Amanda Kusko explained, “It was rough in the beginning of third grade. My students didn’t have the phonics skill set to do grade level work. But the 95 Percent Group curriculum is so structured and routine-based, they really picked up on it quickly...Now, especially since they have been using these materials for a year or so, they know what they’re doing.”

Read the full Panther Valley story [here](#).

James B. Parsons Elementary School, Illinois

James B. Parsons Elementary School is the largest of five K-5 elementary schools in Decatur, Illinois. Principal Holly Davis-Kitson shared the benefits she observed for teachers after they implemented 95 Phonics Core Program® as the in-class core instruction. Davis-Kitson has been principal since 2019. For the first time since becoming principal at Parsons, students across grades K-5 have met their growth goals for the middle of the year. “I think the teachers have grown just as much as the students,” Davis-Kitson said. “They understand teaching phonics more than they ever have, even veteran teachers. If you’ve never used a program with such specific instructional practices and language, then it’s a learning experience for teachers and students. Teacher education programs don’t always prepare you to teach phonics.”

Read the full Parsons story [here](#).



Panther Valley Elementary School



James B. Parsons Elementary School

Why schools choose 95 Phonics Core Program

Putting together a structured literacy program can be confusing and overwhelming. With so many free offerings available, it's tempting to try to build it yourself. Nikki Porter, principal at Stonewall Tell Elementary School in College Park, Georgia sums up one key reason it's essential to invest in the right structured literacy toolkit up front—double digit gains.

Fulton County School District in Atlanta, GA had many schools that weren't producing strong readers. After implementing 95 Phonics Core Program for Grades K–3, they started seeing the following results:

Teachers feeling empowered and gaining confidence with explicit, classroom-ready resources

Students feeling excited to learn and enjoying the lessons

Mastery of lessons—with one classroom going from 63% to 92% mastery after only five months of using the program



[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Every Child Reads: Fulton County Schools

“

I am seeing
double-digit gains
in K-5—*double digit.*”

NIKKI PORTER

Principal, Stonewall Tell Elementary School

With 95 Phonics Core Program's embedded professional learning, you learn by teaching

95 Phonics Core Program includes:

Teacher's Editions with tips and scripts embedded throughout the lessons to support educator pedagogy

Easy-to-follow instructional dialogue for teacher-directed instruction based on a structured literacy approach

Pre-written, guided opportunities for teacher modeling and group and independent practice to help students achieve mastery at their own pace

Student workbooks and manipulatives to provide built-in practice opportunities to reinforce skills

Ready-made Digital Presentation Files, formative assessments, implementation resources, and more to bring lessons to life with zero teacher prep



I really liked it because there was little to no teacher prep. It was all there: the workbooks, the lessons—it’s easy to use and it’s very systematic. Everything builds on the previous lesson.”

MARIA WOZNIAK

First grade teacher, Panther Valley Elementary School,
Pennsylvania

Robert Palazzo, principal at Panther Valley Elementary School, realized after about 18 months that the balanced literacy approach his district had invested in was failing students and their teachers. The curriculum they were using lacked phonics and kids’ reading skills were declining. Teachers were having difficulty communicating with parents and with each other about what students were learning and what progress they were making. Once Palazzo and the Panther Valley teachers began to learn about the science of reading, they implemented 95 Phonics Core Program for all students in K–3 classrooms as their core phonics curriculum. Teachers like Maria Wozniak who had been struggling, began to thrive.



Without a doubt, the greatest impact on student learning has been the 95 Phonics Core Program and the teacher content knowledge gained from the professional learning that supported the implementation and beyond.”

GINA LOONEY

District reading and RTI coordinator, Franklin Special School
District, Tennessee

Teachers at Franklin Special School District knew they needed something else. Each school was cobbling together their own curriculum, trying to fill the gap in phonics instruction that they all knew existed. Teachers knew they needed consistent phonemic awareness and phonics instruction for all students. One of the district elementary campuses had piloted 95 Phonics Core Program (new at the time) for Kindergarten and had a lot of success—so after looking closely at 95 Percent Group, the district implemented 95 Phonics Core Program for K-2 districtwide for explicit phonics instruction. The 2023-24 school year marks year three of the district-wide implementation of 95 Phonics Core Program. Teachers are teaching the program confidently, and their students are engaged in learning foundational phonics skills.

95 Phonics Core Program builds teacher knowledge. 95 Phonics Core Program provides educators with pre-written, guided opportunities for teacher modeling and group and independent practice to help students achieve mastery at their own pace. The program’s gradual-release model gives educators the tools they need to support students, every step of the way.

95 Phonics Core Program— Evidence matters

“ Our job at 95 Percent Group is to translate the research and evidence and make it actionable in instruction—and therefore impactful for our students and in our communities.”

LAURA STEWART

At 95 Percent Group, research is ongoing. Rachel Schechter, PhD, founder of third party research partner, Learning Experience Design (LXD), explains why ongoing research is critical. She explains, “With the needs of students constantly changing and products having iterative improvement cycles, new research needs to be done each year.” 95 Percent Group continues to partner on two to four new studies each year on current, newly developed, and newly acquired products.

Independent literacy evaluation is essential

Working with independent research firms is key—95 Percent Group invests in rigorous, third-party research by independent literacy evaluation firms to verify the effectiveness of products. Researchers have completed several large-scale research studies with more than 10,000 students nationally. All studies are designed based on guidance from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and meet the highest levels of evidence—strong, moderate, and promising.

Amy Boza, director of research at 95 Percent Group, explains why this is essential: “We partner with third-party research firms to add credibility to the research and limit bias. It’s critical that there are no doubts that the outcomes are clear and accurate. If we were to run the studies completely within our company, it would raise concerns about the accuracy and impact of the outcomes.”

Evidence-aligned, evidence based—what’s the difference?

One of the differentiating factors between the entire One 95 Literacy Ecosystem and other reading-instruction materials on the market is that 95 Percent Group’s products are both evidence-aligned and evidence-based.

EVIDENCE-ALIGNED

An uncompromising alignment to the vast, interdisciplinary body of research known as the science of reading

EVIDENCE-BASED

Proven efficacy of resources and methodology based upon rigorous, independent research conducted in the classroom over time

Research in the field: Georgia and Pennsylvania

In Fulton County, a large and diverse urban school district in Georgia, students in one second-grade class went from 63 percent reading proficiency at the beginning of the year to 92 percent proficiency in just five months of instruction with 95 Phonics Core Program®.

At Panther Valley Elementary, a small rural district in Pennsylvania, 20 percent of first graders assessed in the fall were decoding on grade level according to the 95 Phonics Screener for Intervention™. This number soared to 70 percent on grade level by spring, a 250 percent increase after five months of instruction with 95 Phonics Core Program.

Certifications and recognitions

The many certifications and awards received for 95 Phonics Core Program confirm careful and ongoing research at 95 Percent Group.

Evidence for ESSA verified

Evidence for ESSA is a research clearinghouse website created by the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University. They maintain a database that helps invested parties to easily identify which products and curricula have been tested for effectiveness and are proven to have significant positive outcomes for students.



95 Phonics Core Program® meets the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) standards of evidence—earning ESSA Level 1 “Strong” evidence.



95 Phonics Core Program® efficacy study

A year-long study of 95 Phonics Core Program conducted in Missouri demonstrated that students who used the program outperformed those in all grades K-2 who did not use the program. Results support ESSA Level 1 evidence for product effectiveness across these grade levels and earned the product the highest-level “Strong” rating from Evidence for ESSA.



Digital Promise certified

Digital Promise provides product certifications for products proven to have a Research-Based Design for Instructional Learning. Rachel Schechter of LXD Research confirms the rigorous standards that Digital Promise upholds in their testing: “There are more than 8,000 products used in K-12 schools, and fewer than 1 percent have earned this [Digital Promise] recognition.”



Evidence Advocacy Center partnership

The Evidence Advocacy Center (EAC) serves as a clearinghouse to connect states, districts, schools, higher education institutions, and parent advocates to trustworthy resources that are proven to have an impact. 95 Percent Group is honored to be a partner.

A few key data points from schools using 95 Phonics Core Program

3rd grade

250%

more third graders at grade level by spring following strong Tier 1 instruction with 95 Phonics Core Program, according to a study of elementary schools in Southside, TX.

108%

increase in the percentage of third graders on or above grade level in Acadience Reading scores in one year with 95 Phonics Core Program, based upon a study of elementary schools in Wicomico, MD.



4th and 5th grades

4th and 5th graders using 95 Phonics Core Program had mean score improvements from beginning of year to end of year, significant performance level changes, and substantial improvement on subdomains, at elementary schools in Red Clay, DE.

+30

point increase in 4th grade students' overall scale scores. Students' phonics subdomain average mean also grew **+44.8** points.

+27

point increase in overall 5th grade students' scale scores. Students' phonics subdomain average mean also grew **+31.2** points.

Get to know our efficacy studies

95 Percent Group has long invested in research to inform the development of our offerings and to demonstrate their efficacy to educators. Designed with guidance from ESSA, our efficacy studies meet the highest levels of evidence. To view a selection from our growing library of studies and to learn more, visit the 95 Percent Group website [here](#).



Download the research report

Download and read our report, [Research in Education](#), for an in-depth look at research efforts by 95 Percent Group, along with background on why Evidence for ESSA, Digital Promise, and ESSA levels matter, and the role of efficacy studies in building your literacy toolkit.

The 95 Phonics Core Program difference

95 Phonics Core Program provides evidence-based core phonics for literacy progress that integrates smoothly and easily with any literacy curriculum. Formative assessments, delivered to the whole class, determine if the students have mastered unit content and help educators target small group instruction based on student needs. Adding 95 Phonics Core Program to your literacy block reduces intervention needs, supporting effective structured literacy progress across the grades.

95 PCP for peace of mind

Key features that set 95 Phonics Core Program apart:

- ✓ Evidence-based, Tier 1 core phonics supplement for Grades K-5
- ✓ Easy to use—everything you need for 30-minute foundational skills block
- ✓ Ready-made Digital Presentation Files to bring lessons to life with zero teacher prep
- ✓ Compatible with any literacy curriculum
- ✓ Grade level scope and sequence
- ✓ Whole class formative assessments for each unit
- ✓ Embedded professional learning—learn as you teach

Gain a complete understanding of the 95 Phonics Core Program and see lesson components in action in our on-demand webinar, [Applying Reading Science to Transform Instruction](#).



Our Literacy Ecosystem offers consistency. Students get into the instructional routines and teachers learn the instructional language; the beauty of these routines is that they are the same across all of the products in core and intervention.”

LAURA STEWART

Chief Academic Officer, 95 Percent Group

An ecosystem approach for accelerated literacy improvement

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Consistency of academic language across all tiers.

FOCUSED INSTRUCTION

Scope and sequence of skills is the same; intensity of instruction differs.

ROUTINES

Consistency of routine allows for students to focus cognitive energy from process to learning.

EFFICIENCY OF TEACHING

Consistency of routine allows teachers to focus on student response.

QUALITY

Provides a suite of proven products from a trusted source.



One95TM Literacy Ecosystem

One95 Literacy EcosystemTM integrates evidence-based products and professional learning resources into one cohesive system that's proven to help students realize their reading potential. Within the One95 Literacy Ecosystem, students and teachers encounter the same instructional routines whether they are working in Tier 1, 2, or 3 instruction—creating a seamless transition from Tier 1 instruction, to Tier 2 or 3 intervention instruction.

One95 Literacy Ecosystem features



Solutions for every tier, grade, and student literacy need



Instruction aligned with MTSS/RTI frameworks



Research and insights on the science of reading



Courses, workshops, and more for professional development



Access to literacy experts

Learn more about the One95 Literacy Ecosystem [here](#).

Give 95 Phonics Core Program a try

Download [free](#) grade-level samples, product components, ongoing efficacy research, and more.



We're here to help

Are you reviewing, evaluating, and/or purchasing supplemental phonics programs? [Let's talk](#).





Trusted, proven
literacy solutions

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