



Helping Your Child Become a Successful Reader

THE STRONG READERS ACT: A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

The Oklahoma Strong Readers Act aims to strengthen literacy, ensure instructional support, and maintain communication with families.

Parents are a child's first teacher, and building literacy starts in the home even before children enter public school. Beginning in kindergarten, your child will be assessed to determine his or her reading skills. We want you to be familiar with Strong Readers and the support available to you and your child during the early grades, when reading development is critical to future academic success.

We hope the information in this guide is helpful to you. If you have questions about your child's reading ability, contact your child's teacher or school. For questions about the Strong Readers Act, please reach out to Deann Jones at Deann.Jones@sde.ok.gov.

WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL READER?

The fundamental goal of reading is to comprehend, or understand, what has been read. Reading comprehension means a student must be able to:

- Identify the letters on the page
- Translate those letters into words
- Understand what each of those words means
- Put the words together in a way that makes meaning
- Recall what was read in order to understand the message

Reading is a complex act that requires a number of skills working together.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY STUDENT IS MAKING APPROPRIATE PROGRESS?

Under the Strong Readers Act, schools must assess every student on grade-level reading skills, beginning in kindergarten. If a student does not meet established benchmarks, the school must work with the parent to create a plan for helping the student in any area that needs attention. This is called a Student Literacy Intervention Plan (SLIP), and it provides the following information:

- Your child's specific area of need
- The instructional services and supports provided for your child
- Strategies and online resources you can use to help your child succeed

HOW EVERYONE CAN SUPPORT READING SUCCESS

Reading success requires support from many different people. The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) and your child's school have tools to help each student. However, a student has a greater chance of becoming a successful reader with the help of the family and as a result of his or her own hard work. Each person or group can work to improve a student's reading success in the following ways:

Ways each person or group can support a student's reading success

Student	Family	School	OSDE
• Be at school on time each day. • Be engaged in class. • Read at least 20 minutes every day. • Read and discuss books that are interesting to you. • Write about your day and what you are reading. • Ask questions in class. • Discuss what you are learning with your family.	• Model reading at home by reading regularly. • Have children's books in your home. • Read with your child each night. • Talk to your child's teacher about strategies that support reading. • Weave reading activities into trips to restaurants, the grocery store, medical appointments, etc.	• Provide instruction on the Oklahoma Academic Standards with an evidence-based program. • Set aside sufficient time for literacy instruction. • Assess students' skills at the beginning, middle, and end of each year. • Inform parents of learning gaps and address them. • Provide interventions for students who need additional support. • Monitor students' progress toward reading goals.	• Provide regional literacy workshops, support, guidance, and other materials on literacy for teachers and administrators. • Provide districts with guidance on evidence-based literacy programs, as well as appropriate interventions for students who need additional support. • Provide guidance to schools on services and supports for effective reading instruction and strategies.

WHAT DOES "AT-RISK FOR THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLLEXIA" MEAN?

Students who are found to be at-risk for the characteristics of dyslexia are demonstrating difficulty with skills such as working with the sounds in a word (phonemes), reading words on a page (phonics), or spelling. Not all students who have difficulty with these skills have dyslexia; they may just need additional instruction. The school should provide extra support and targeted intervention to address your student's needs. A student does not need a diagnosis to receive instructional support on these skills. Check the family resources below to learn more information about how to support your student.

FAMILY RESOURCES

[Oklahoma State Department of Education: Strong Readers for Families](#)

[Reading Rockets Guide for Parents](#)

[Reading at Home \(Scholastic School Success Guides\)](#)

[Literacy for Parents & Families \(National Center on Improving Literacy\)](#)

[OSDE Family Information and Resources for Dyslexia](#)

[Oklahoma Dyslexia and Dysgraphia Handbook](#)