

Choosing Science of Reading Curriculum

A Homeschool Parent's Guide to Evaluating Literacy Programs & Resources

Evaluating a Homeschool Curriculum or Course

- **Rooted in Research:** References the National Reading Panel, Scarborough's Reading Rope, the Simple View of Reading, or Ehri's phases of word reading.
- **Structured & Sequential:** Lessons follow a logical scope and sequence, building from simple to complex sounds.
- **Explicit Phonics Focus:** Explicitly teaches parents how to instruct phonics, phonemic awareness, and decoding.
- **Practical Tools:** Includes scripted lessons, video demonstrations, and "open-and-go" resources.
- **Knowledgeable Support:** The creator holds credentials in structured literacy, reading science, such as UFLI Foundations.

Green Flags: Quality Indicators

- ✓ Aligns with structured literacy
- ✓ Teaches the "how" (explicit routines)
- ✓ References peer-reviewed research
- ✓ Includes placement & progress tracking
- ✓ Provides ongoing parent support
- ✓ Addresses all 5 reading pillars
- ✓ Offers practice with decodable books

Red Flags: Warning Signs

- ✗ Promotes "balanced literacy" or 3-cueing
- ✗ Relies on leveled readers early on
- ✗ Dismisses phonics as "drill and kill"
- ✗ No mention of phonemic awareness
- ✗ Lacks a clear scope and sequence
- ✗ Creator lacks reading science credentials
- ✗ Uses guessing strategies over decoding

Questions to Ask Before You Buy

"What is the approach to reading instruction?" Look for *structured literacy* and *explicit phonics*. Avoid programs that claim to use "a little of everything."

"How does this support me as the teacher?" Ensure it provides scripts, tips for when a child gets stuck, and clear explanations of English spelling rules.

"What assessments are included?" You want tools that check for mastery of specific sounds and skills, not just "running records."

"How do I know where to start?" A strong program offers a placement test to ensure your child isn't bored or overwhelmed.

Remember

You deserve a curriculum that empowers you as their teacher. The best homeschool resources provide you with systematic strategies you can implement tomorrow. If a program can't explain its methods with research to back it up—keep looking. Your investment today impacts your child's lifelong ability to learn.

Ready to Deepen Your Science of Reading Knowledge?

Explore structured literacy courses and resources at learningtolearnllc.com