

GATE+ Aligns with IES Recommendations for Building Foundational Reading Skills

Four evidence-based recommendations for teaching foundational reading skills in the early grades (K–Grade 3) are described in the following practice guide, available on the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) website:

[Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade \(2016; revised 2019\)](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/21)
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This guide offers evidence-based recommendations for improving foundational reading instruction and suggests specific instructional tasks to implement each recommendation.

We're pleased to report that the scripted, interactive phonemic awareness and phonics activities in our GATE+ program (Levels 0.8, 1.3, and 1.8) were developed based on the Science of Reading and meet all of the IES recommendations for teaching foundational reading skills in several ways. GATE+ is a comprehensive program designed to improve students' phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills using evidence-based practices. Here are the IES recommendations and how GATE+ aligns. Note that all GATE+ levels include 24 unique lessons, and each lesson contains all of the activities described below.

IES Recommendation 1: Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language, and vocabulary knowledge.

GATE+ Instructional Activities:

- **Prediction activity:** The teacher and students discuss the story title, key words and picture and write a prediction sentence together. This pre-reading activity prepares the students' minds for reading a nonfiction story that emphasizes the featured phonics pattern(s).
- **Key Words activity:** The teacher shares and discusses the story's key vocabulary words using student-friendly definitions. These definitions are important to understanding the story.
- **Cold Timing for One Minute activity:** Students read a nonfiction story for one minute, underlining words they don't know. The story is about an interesting topic and includes new facts and vocabulary.
- **Read Along With the Teacher activity:** The teacher models appropriate phrasing and expression as they read the story aloud with students several times, pausing to decode unfamiliar words.
- **Practice and Pass the Story activity:** As students practice repeatedly reading the story independently, they gradually master difficult words. The teacher listens to individual students read during this time, providing feedback on expression and accuracy.
- **Answer the Questions activity:** Students answer questions about the story. This step provides modeling and opportunities to teach and reinforce academic language through use of various question types. Vocabulary questions reinforce, extend, and evaluate students' understanding of key words.
- **Write a Sentence About the Story activity:** Students write about something they remember from the nonfiction story, giving them the opportunity to utilize the vocabulary words they have learned in the lesson.

IES Recommendation 2: Develop awareness of the segments of sounds in speech and how they link to letters.

GATE+ Instructional Activities:

- **Learn About and Listen for Vowel Sounds in Words activity:** This activity promotes phonemic awareness as students listen to the teacher say the sounds of a featured letter or letter combination, repeat the sound, and listen as the teacher says several words to decide if each word has the featured sound in it.

- Blend Sounds Into Words activity: Students listen as the teacher slowly blends letter sounds together to make a word, then the students say the word in unison.
- Segment Words Into Sounds activity: Students listen to the teacher say a word, then they make a dot in a sound box to represent each sound while repeating the word.
- Practice Letter Sounds With and Without Teacher Support activity: The teacher points to the featured letter or letter combination in the Lesson Flipbook or PowerPoint and tells students the name and sound. Students repeat the sound and practice saying the sound together and individually.
- Spelling activity: Students practice recognizing and encoding common sound-spelling patterns. The teacher dictates words containing previously learned sounds and irregular, high frequency words. Students write the words in their student booklets.

IES Recommendation 3: Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words.

GATE+ Instructional Activities:

- Decode Sound-Out Words With and Without Teacher Support activity: The teacher shows students decodable words and guides them through sounding out the words by blending the letter sounds in the words.
- Read Words Down and Across, Read Decodable Sentences, Read Along With the Teacher activities: Students practice reading decodable words in isolation and word lists, sentences, and stories to improve their automaticity and expression.
- Read the Spell-Out Words With Teacher Support activity: The teacher shows students high-frequency words using the Lesson Flipbook or PowerPoint and guides them through a process of identifying the regular and irregular parts of the word, reading the word, spelling the word, and reading the word again.
- Spelling activity: Students practice recognizing and encoding common sound-spelling patterns. The teacher dictates words containing previously learned sounds and irregular, high frequency words. Students write the words in their student booklets.
- Beginning in level 1.8, students learn to recognize common word parts by learning about suffixes in words, including -s, -es, -ing, -er, -ed, -y, and -ly.

IES Recommendation 4: Ensure that each student reads connected text every day to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

GATE+ Instructional Activities:

- Cold Timing for One Minute activity: Students read a story for one minute, underlining words they don't know. Over time, students become more proficient at identifying errors.
- Read Along With the Teacher activity: The teacher models appropriate phrasing and expression as they read the story aloud with students several times, pausing to decode unfamiliar words.
- Practice and Pass the Story activity: As students practice repeatedly reading the story independently, they gradually master difficult words. The teacher listens to individual students read during this time, providing feedback on expression and accuracy.

GATE+ builds essential phonemic awareness and phonics skills while also developing fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. It provides explicit, systematic phonics instruction that is easy for teachers and engaging for students. Aligned with all of the IES recommendations for teaching foundational reading skills in the early grades, this stellar program truly has it all. [Download a free sample](https://readnaturally.com/gate-plus) (https://readnaturally.com/gate-plus) and check it out!