

# Reading Components

## Alphabetics

Alphabetics is the process readers use to translate—or decode—printed words into meaningful, spoken words. It includes phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate basic sounds of spoken language), word analysis (the ability to connect written letters to sound they represent), and sight word recognition (the ability to read high frequency words with irregular letter-sound relationships).

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary—the words the reader knows and understands—is the best single predictor of comprehension. Learners need instruction and practice in both word breadth (the number and kinds of word meanings known) and depth (flexibility and precision of word-meaning knowledge) to improve reading.

## Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with efficiency and ease. It consists of three dimensions: accuracy (error rate), rate (speed or pace), and prosody (phrasing and expression). Fluency impacts comprehension by giving readers the ability to focus on the meaning not decoding the words on the page.

## Comprehension

Reading comprehension is both the process and product of understanding. It involves the interaction between the reader and the text while considering the purpose for reading and the context of the text. Factors which affect comprehension include prior knowledge and text type/structure. Learners need instruction and practice with a variety of strategies to make print understandable and useful.