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# INFORMED TEACHERS CHANGE LIVES

**Teachers are the most important factor in student success.**

Informed teachers can explain language to students, including sounds, spellings, and word meanings that might be confusing. They use lessons based on reading science and understand the process of learning to read and write.

Research proves it. Science matters.

—LOUISA MOATS, ED.D.



*LANGUAGE ESSENTIALS FOR TEACHERS  
OF READING AND SPELLING*

**Literacy Professional  
Learning**

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Why are **only 35%** of U.S. students reading proficiently or better?\*

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## Teachers Matter.

Research shows that only 35 percent of students are reading proficiently, but 95 percent of students CAN learn to read. And while teachers are the MOST essential factor in student success, only 49 percent of teaching institutions effectively prepare teachers for literacy instruction.

Teaching reading requires a deep understanding of the processes and science behind it. *LETRS* is the professional learning that empowers teachers.

# The most important factor to student success is the teacher.

They, not programs, teach students how to read. Yet a study of most teaching institutions found a huge deficit in the number of programs that actually prepare teachers with all five essential components of literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.\*\* Additionally, the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress, NAEP, study found 66 percent of U.S. fourth grade students are not proficient readers.

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## *LETRS* is based on more than two decades of research

Reading requires multiple parts of the brain learning to work together. Teaching reading requires a deep understanding of the science behind how we learn to read, why we spell the way we do, or how phonemic awareness and phonics lead to comprehension. Without this understanding, teachers are left feeling ill prepared. That's why *LETRS*® bridges decades of evidenced-based research into classroom success.

\*[nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/achievement?grade=4](https://nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/achievement?grade=4)

\*\*[nctq.org/publications/2020-Teacher-Prep-Review:-Program-Performance-in-Early-Reading-Instruction](https://nctq.org/publications/2020-Teacher-Prep-Review:-Program-Performance-in-Early-Reading-Instruction)

# Proven to Accelerate Teacher Knowledge

LETRS addresses four critical outcomes for effective literacy instruction: understanding the science of reading, converting research to practice, enhancing teacher effectiveness, and transforming instruction. By understanding the “why” behind science and evidence-based research, educators can effectively know how to aid students in learning to read. LETRS professional learning is relevant and applicable and designed to be the cornerstone of a multiyear, systemic literacy improvement initiative.



## SCIENCE OF READING

Leverages decades of research including the latest neuroscience to help educators identify the source of reading difficulties and how to teach more effectively.



## CONVERTS RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

Evidence-based research and strategies that explain the “why” behind comprehensive literacy instruction, providing explicit instruction about “how” to effectively teach for the best results.

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*“Going through LETRS, you sit there, moment-by-moment, thinking, ‘I should have known this.’ It’s the tool to change lives and change communities.”*

—Ebony Lee, Ph.D.  
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment  
Clayton County Public Schools, GA

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### **ENHANCES TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS**

Teacher effectiveness is more significant to student achievement than any other factor. When teachers know the “why” and “how” of reading, they can change lives.



### **TRANSFORMS INSTRUCTION**

Provides a common language and understanding of evidence-based reading practices. Promotes effective and consistent literacy instruction school- and district-wide. Helps prevent and remediate reading difficulties for all students.



# What Makes **LETRS** Unique?

*LETRS*® is a professional learning experience that bridges deep, meaningful research into practical classroom success. *LETRS* provides educators with the science of reading, depth of knowledge, and tools to teach language and literacy skills to every student.



## Flexible Implementation Models

*LETRS* provides practical support to teachers with tools that are available 24/7—online, print, and in-person consulting services—and ongoing support throughout the school year with strategies specific to instruction. *LETRS* meets educators where they are in terms of resources and options and can be used with any quality literacy program.

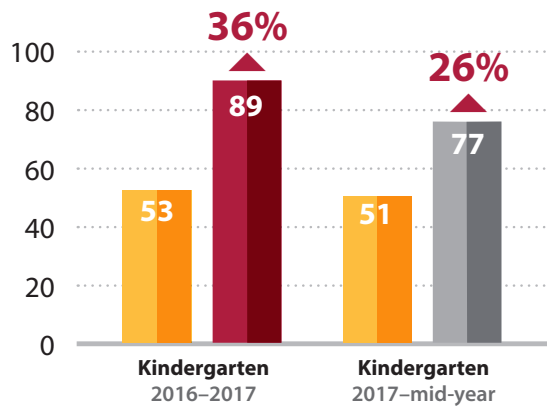




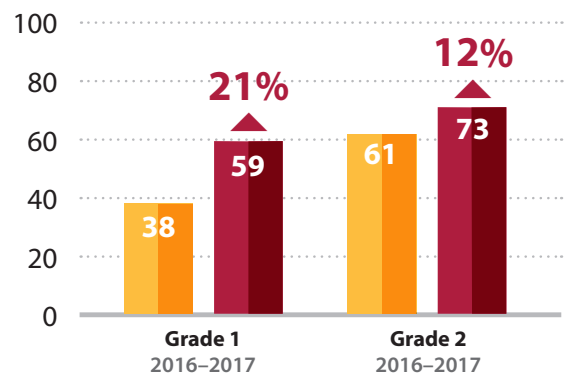
## Established on Evidence-Based Research with a Focus on Language

*LETRS* has more than a decade of demonstrated success in schools and districts across the U.S., and fills the gaps in language structure and language development that were not taught in teacher-preparation courses.

### Percent of Niles City, OH Students Whose Benchmark Performances Improved with *LETRS*



Fifty-three percent of the Niles City Schools kindergarten students were at or above benchmark at the start of the 2016-2017 school year. That figure improved to 89 percent by the end of the school year. Early data for the 2017-2018 school year showed significant improvement as well. Fifty-one percent were at or above benchmark at the start, while 77 percent were at or above benchmark at the midyear point.



At Niles City Schools, 38 percent of first grade students and 61 percent of second grade students were performing above benchmark during the same period. Once *LETRS* was implemented, the number of students performing above benchmark levels increased considerably by year end.



Beginning of Year



Midyear



End of Year



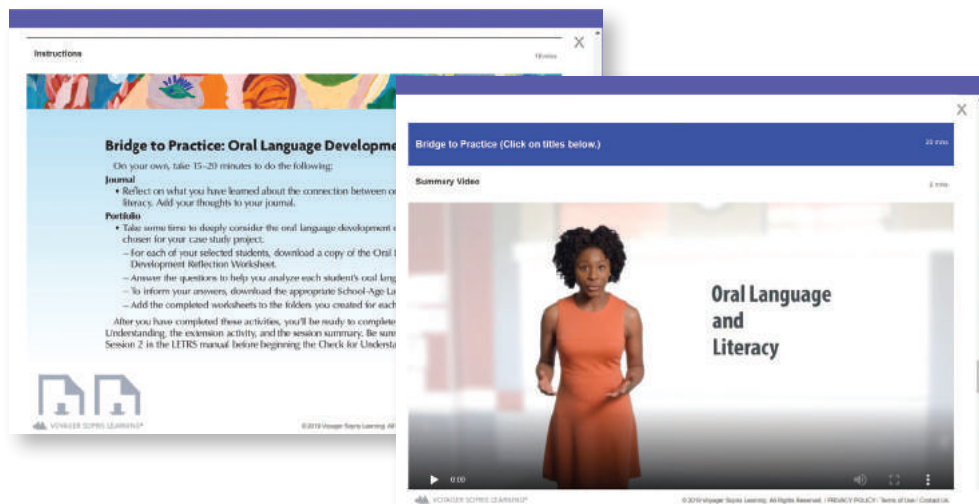
# What Makes **LETRS** Unique?



## **Integrated Bridge to Practice Exercises\*\***

Throughout *LETRS*, Bridge to Practice opportunities allow teachers to apply evidence-based concepts and best practices to daily classroom instruction.

- The online **Bridge to Practice** exercises are designed to bolster transference of knowledge to classroom practice.
- Explicit directions are provided as well as downloadable tools for support.

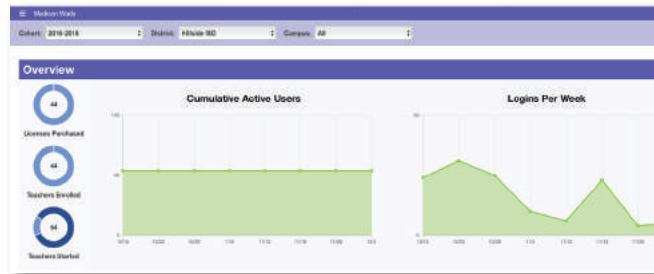






## Detailed Reporting for Accountability\*\*

LETRS gives participants and administrators the ability to measure participation and knowledge gains.



## Embedded Video Modeling of Instruction\*\*

Embedded video demonstrates how to deliver effective instruction that teachers understand and how to apply concepts to classroom practice.

\*\*Only available through the online platform.

The video player displays a classroom scene where a teacher is interacting with a group of students. Below the video, there is a reflection prompt and a multiple-choice question.

Reflect on how you just saw children using the context processor in a classroom activity.

- What kind of activity did they do?
- What are some ways you can have your students exercise the context processor?

1:08 / 2:03

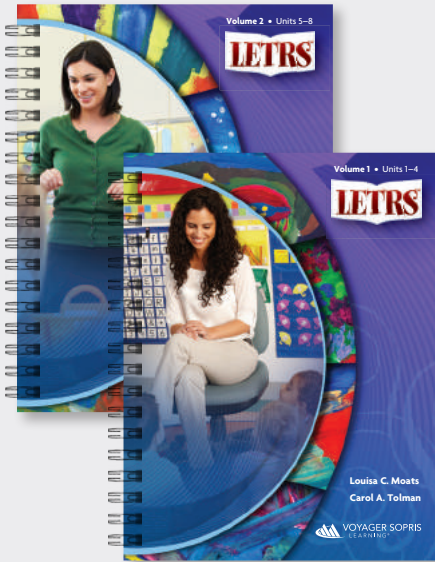
1. What did students learn about morphemes and syllables in this lesson? Select all that apply.

- a. Morphemes are meaningful chunks of a word.
- b. Most syllables in most words are morphemes.
- c. Sometimes a syllable in a word is a morpheme.
- d. Roots can combine with any prefixes and suffixes to form words.

0:50 / 4:41

# What Will Teachers Learn?

# UNITS



*LETRS* units address each essential component of reading instruction and the foundational concepts that link each component.

## Units 1–4

Theoretical models from reading science; phonology, basic and advanced phonics; screening and educational diagnostic assessment

## Units 5–8

Teaching vocabulary, language and reading comprehension, and writing

### Unit 1 The Challenge of Learning to Read

- Why reading is difficult
- The connection between language and literacy
- What the brain does when a person is reading
- The skills that support proficient reading
- How children learn to read and spell
- Major types of reading difficulties
- How to use assessment for prevention and early intervention
- Using assessment to differentiate instruction

### Unit 2 The Speech Sounds of English

- Phonology related to reading and spelling
- How phonological skills develop
- The importance of phonemic awareness
- The consonant and vowel phonemes of the English language
- Recognize and respond to errors of English learners and dialect speakers
- Recognize how allophonic variation in speech affects students' spelling
- How phonological skills should be taught, and which ones should be assessed

### Unit 3 Teaching Beginning Phonics, Word Recognition, and Spelling

- The role of the strands of the Reading Rope in word recognition
- The role of phonics in reading instruction
- Compare code-emphasis instruction with meaning-emphasis instruction
- Explore phoneme-grapheme correspondence system of English
- Classify phonics elements
- Understand some basic patterns of position-based spelling in English
- Instruction sequence: letter names and letter formation; key word for sound-symbol associations; teach correspondences explicitly; use sound-blending routines
- Word practice and word meaning routines
- How to teach spelling using dictation
- Decodable text and when it is important to use
- Using data to further student success

### Unit 4 Advanced Decoding, Spelling, and Word Recognition

- Advanced word study
- Position-based spelling correspondences and other orthographic conventions
- Phoneme-grapheme mapping
- The six syllable types and how they should be taught
- Distinguish syllables from morphemes
- Suffix rules
- Spelling screeners and how to interpret the results
- Best practices for teaching spelling
- Relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension
- Building word, sentence, and passage reading fluency
- Interpret phonological, phonics, spelling, and fluency data
- Aligning practices with scientific evidence

### Unit 5 The Mighty Word: Oral Language and Vocabulary

- The relationship among vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, oral language proficiency, and reading comprehension
- Mental map of a well-known word
- Words that should be taught directly
- Introducing new words
- Effective practice of new words
- Creating a language-rich classroom

### Unit 6 Digging for Meaning: Understanding Reading Comprehension

- The language and cognitive skills that support reading comprehension
- Distinguish comprehension products from comprehension processes
- The goal of comprehension instruction is to create a coherent mental model of the text
- Characteristics of students who struggle with language and reading comprehension
- The connection among vocabulary, background knowledge, and reading comprehension
- Process for teaching texts
- The importance of syntax and how to teach it
- The importance of text coherence and its relationship to mental coherence
- How text structure affects comprehension

### Unit 7 Text-Driven Comprehension Instruction

- The balance of foundational skills with language comprehension
- Which comprehension strategies are supported by research
- Effective strategies during and after reading
- Student-generated questions before, during, and after reading
- The importance of generating questions that deepen understanding of text
- Reread and revisit text for various purposes
- The process for planning an entire reading comprehension lesson for narrative and informational text
- Adapting instruction or special populations

### Unit 8 The Reading-Writing Connection

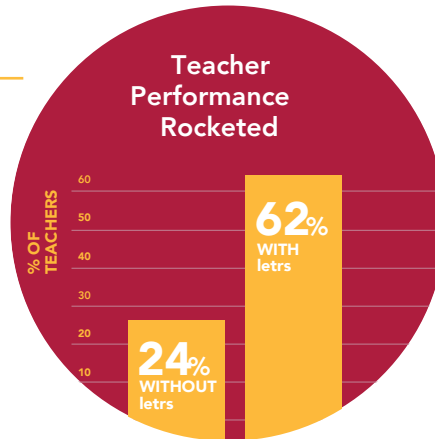
- Writing is important because it benefits reading
- Understand the foundational and language skills necessary for writing
- The phases of the writing process
- Letter formation and handwriting fluency
- Explicit instruction for spelling
- How students gain competence in building sentences
- Narrative writing development
- Informational and opinion writing development
- Methods for assessing student progress in writing

# LETRS Helped Transform Mississippi

Mississippi is one of many shining examples of how instruction rooted in the science of reading and backed by scientific research can transform outcomes. A statewide LETRS implementation catapulted Mississippi to No. 1. in the U.S. on the 2019 NAEP.

## Teachers Matter

With LETRS, 62 percent of Mississippi teachers rated above average or excellent in teacher performance.



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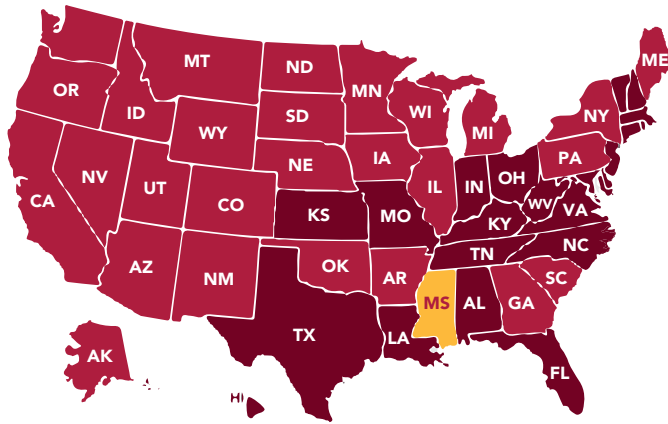
Had a score increase

34

had no significant change in score

17

had a score decrease



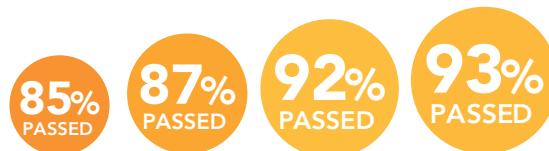
ALL STATES/JURISDICTIONS 2017-2019

## Mississippi Outperforms All

With LETRS, Mississippi is the only state to increase scores on the NAEP.

## Reading is Science

Mississippi's scores demonstrate a science-based approach maintains consistent, powerful improvement year over year.



STATEWIDE END-OF-THIRD GRADE READING PASSING RATES

mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting/Reports

# LETRS Drives Success

When general education and intervention teachers learn and apply the information contained in *LETRS*, such substantive professional learning has been shown to have powerful beneficial effects on student learning, including:

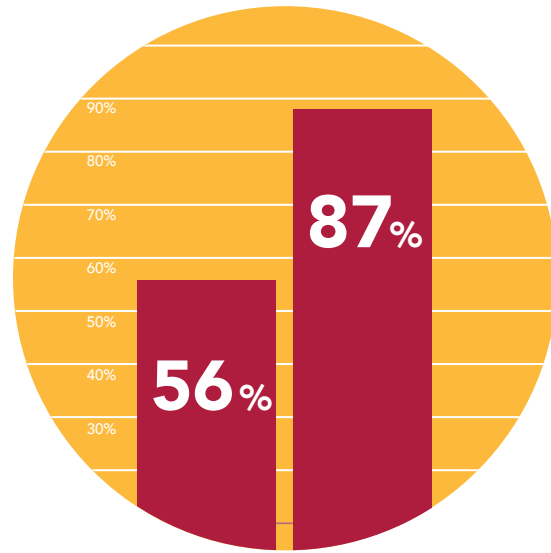
- An increase in overall achievement levels and fewer students experiencing reading difficulties
- Effective teachers who are more content and whose sense of efficacy and empowerment will replace burnout and low expectations

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## In Ohio

In Ohio, where Niles City Schools (NCS) implemented *LETRS*, the district's K–3 students reading at or above average increased from 56 percent to 87 percent within one school year.

In just one year, student literacy success at NCS improved dramatically, according to the district's universal screening measure, ***DIBELS Next® (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills Next)***, also a Voyager Sopris Learning® product.



STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE AVERAGE READING LEVEL





## Respected Authorship

### **Dr. Louisa C. Moats**

Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., is a nationally recognized authority on literacy education and is acclaimed as a researcher, speaker, consultant, and trainer. Dr. Moats received her doctorate in reading and human development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is widely published on reading instruction, the professional learning of teachers, and the relationship between language, reading, and spelling. Dr. Moats' awards include the prestigious Samuel Torrey Orton Award and June L. Orton Award from the International Dyslexia Association® for outstanding contributions to the field and the Eminent Researcher Award from Learning Difficulties Australia. Dr. Moats also received the Benita A. Blachman Award from The Reading League.



### **Dr. Carol A. Tolman**

Carol A. Tolman, Ed.D., has presented *LETRS* hundreds of times, in all states and districts, as the lead trainer of trainers. With unparalleled talent as a teacher of teachers and enabler of school change, Dr. Tolman also has more than 25 years of experience in public schools and the juvenile justice system. In addition to spearheading many successful, long-term literacy initiatives, Dr. Tolman organized and delivered curriculum for the Massachusetts Licensure Program and conducted a four-year project for the Maryland Department of Education supporting literacy knowledge for professors.

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*“Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure. While programs are very helpful tools, programs don’t teach, teachers do.”*

—Dr. Louisa Moats

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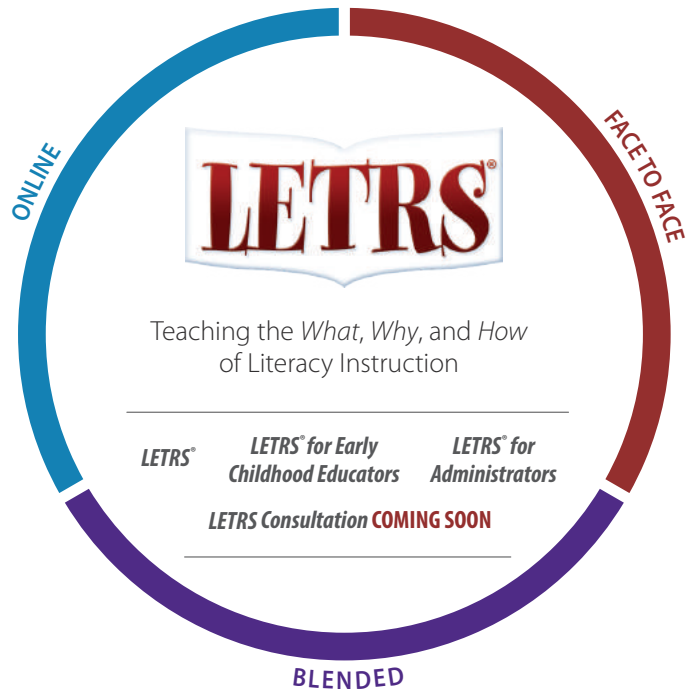


**Full biographies of all *LETRS* authors can be viewed online:**  
[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/leters-new](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/leters/leters-new)

# The **LETRS** Suite of Professional Learning

## The **LETRS** Suite of products helps literacy educators:

- Distinguish between the research base for best practices and other competing ideas not supported by scientific evidence
- Understand how language, reading, and writing are related to one another
- Make instructional decisions and program choices with reference to scientific research evidence, strategic use of assessments, and observations of students
- Deliver comprehensive, integrated, language, and literacy instruction as defined by standards and by research for a given grade, age, or ability level
- Facilitate early identification and intervention with reading problems, including dyslexia



# LETRS Changes Lives

LETRS supports professional learning through:

- A modern, blended approach with the availability of digital and print resources and professional learning practice to meet staff development needs.
- Face-to-face interactive sessions specific to each unit
- Optional LETRS Consulting support for teachers and administrators.

## Delivery Options

LETRS is offered in flexible implementation models to meet the specific needs of customers. We work with you early in the process to identify the delivery models and supports that produce the most impactful results.



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Face-to-Face/Virtual Workshops



Online Course



Print Participant Book



Face-to-Face/Virtual Workshops



Facilitators





## for Early Childhood Educators

### First Steps to Early Literacy

The more children know about language and literacy before they begin formal schooling, the better equipped they are to succeed in reading.

*LETRS® for Early Childhood Educators* provides vital, applicable information about the foundational skills young children need before learning to read and write.

*LETRS for Early Childhood Educators:*

- Empowers teachers to understand the “what,” “why,” and “how” of early literacy instruction
- Aligns with the recommendations of the 2008 National Early Literacy Panel on Developing Early Literacy
- Helps educators build deep understanding of oral language, phonological processing, and print knowledge



## for Administrators

### Champion Change

Administrators can be catalysts for facilitating change and implementing strong literacy instruction. *LETRS® for Administrators* is a professional learning experience that helps literacy leaders learn how to:

- Create highly efficient methods of analyzing student data
- Establish highly effective instructional blocks in literacy
- Examine resources for all tiers of instruction
- Provide an insightful overview of *LETRS* content to support teachers

Administrators are provided specific steps for facilitating change, developing a comprehensive assessment plan, managing resources, assembling a school leadership team, and making data-based decisions.



**FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS, VISIT:**

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-letrs/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/early-childhood-letrs/overview)



**FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS, VISIT:**

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs-for-administrators/overview](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs-for-administrators/overview)



# What Educators Say About **LETRS**

**“The results have  
been incredible.”**

—Alana Cohen  
District Curriculum Specialist Rapides Parish, LA

**“It gave us the  
springboard to change our  
instructional practices.”**

—Ann Marie Thigpen  
Superintendent of Niles City Schools, OH

**“LETRS was the missing  
piece, especially with the shift in  
education where so many teachers  
are coming from nontraditional  
backgrounds to teach.”**

—Kimberly Bennett  
Executive Assistant Superintendent Rapides Parish, LA

**“LETRS is the best training I  
have received in my career.”**

—Carrie Orcutt  
Instructional Coach Littleton, CO

# More **LETRS** Solutions

When extra help is needed to support your teachers as they apply *LETRS* professional learning and learning strategies, we offer easy-to-use, engaging, supplemental programs.

**COMING  
SOON**

## **LETRS Consultation Services**

*Educators Benefit From:*

A deeper understanding of *LETRS*; real-time, actionable, and customized consultative support; developing an understanding of how to analyze and diagnose student skill deficits.

## **LETRS-Aligned Programs**

Literacy solutions guided by *LETRS*' science of reading pedagogy, the Structured Literacy approach, and explicit teaching of sound-letter relationships for effective reading instruction.

[voyagersopris.com/letrs-aligned-programs](http://voyagersopris.com/letrs-aligned-programs)

## **Literacy Symposium**

An online professional learning event designed for all educators in preK to college interested in improving student success in reading and writing.

[voyagersopris.com/professional-development/literacy-symposium](http://voyagersopris.com/professional-development/literacy-symposium)

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*"Thank you for providing the most valuable training I've received in my entire educational career. I now have the knowledge, backed by research, to support my teachers as they create reading success for all students."*

—Gary Robinson, Principal, IN

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The nation's leading  
literacy professional  
learning is also online.

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for a demonstration today.

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