

# Literacy Alliance of Ontario

Mission - to see meaningful and equitable access to literacy for all students in Ontario.

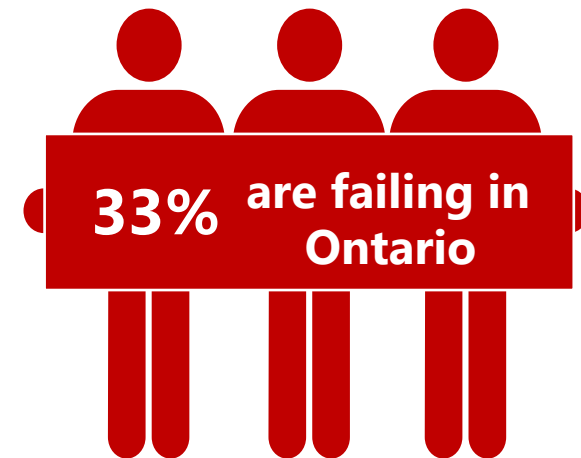


# Learning to Read

Findings from  
cognitive science



Outcomes in  
Ontario  
2018-2019  
Grade 3 EQAO



# Impacts of low literacy



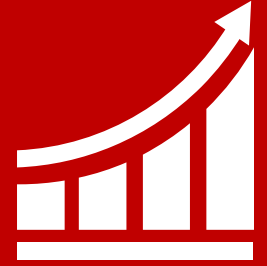
**Limited educational & life opportunities**



**Lower economic participation & lifetime earnings**



**Increased likelihood of poverty & homelessness**



**Higher risk of mental health issues & suicide**



**Reduced democratic participation**



**Reduced health outcomes**



**Increased likelihood of being the victim of abuse**



**Higher rates of involvement in crime & incarceration**

“The tragedy here is that most reading failure is unnecessary”

Dr. Louisa Moats, 2020



**With evidence-based instruction  
over 95% of kids *can* learn to read**

# Current Approach of the Ontario Curriculum

- Based in the “whole language” belief that learning to read is natural
- “three-cueing” approach to word identification as opposed to decoding
- No specific learning expectations related to foundational skills such as printing and spelling.
- No standard approach to early screening or ongoing assessment
- No standard approach to intervention, program availability and quality vary widely from school to school







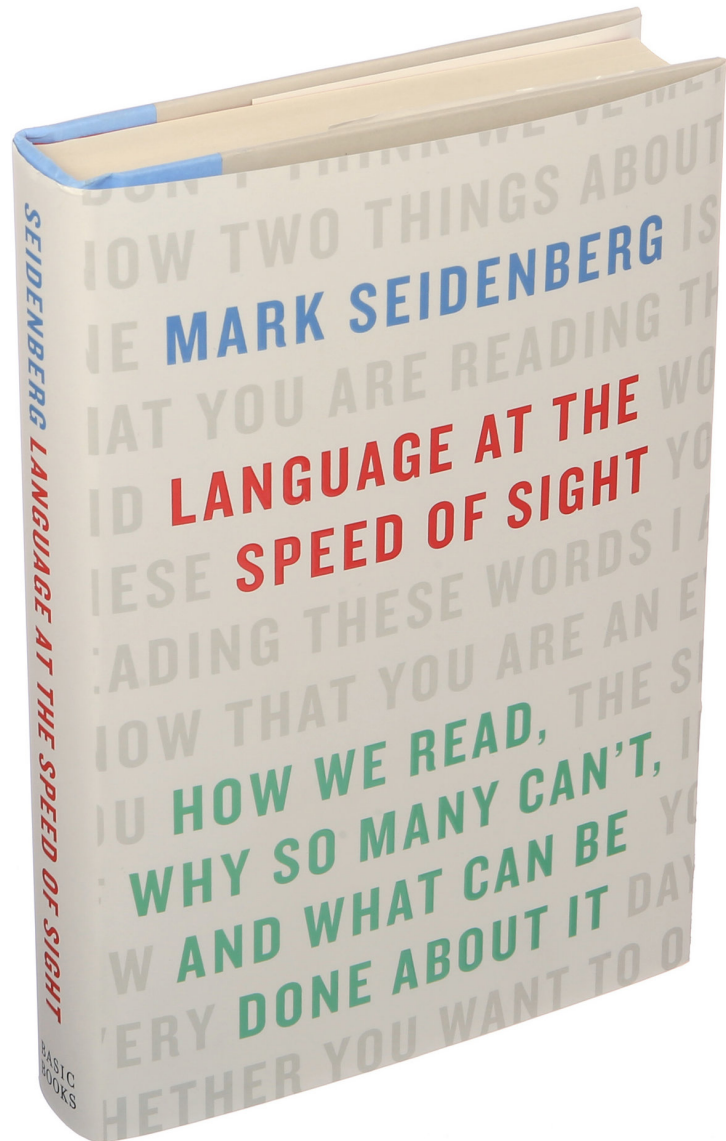
Why aren't we  
following best  
practices?

What's standing in  
our way?

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**“Very little of what we’ve learned about reading as scientists has had any impact on what happens in schools”**

Dr Mark Seidenberg  
Cognitive neuroscientist, 2017



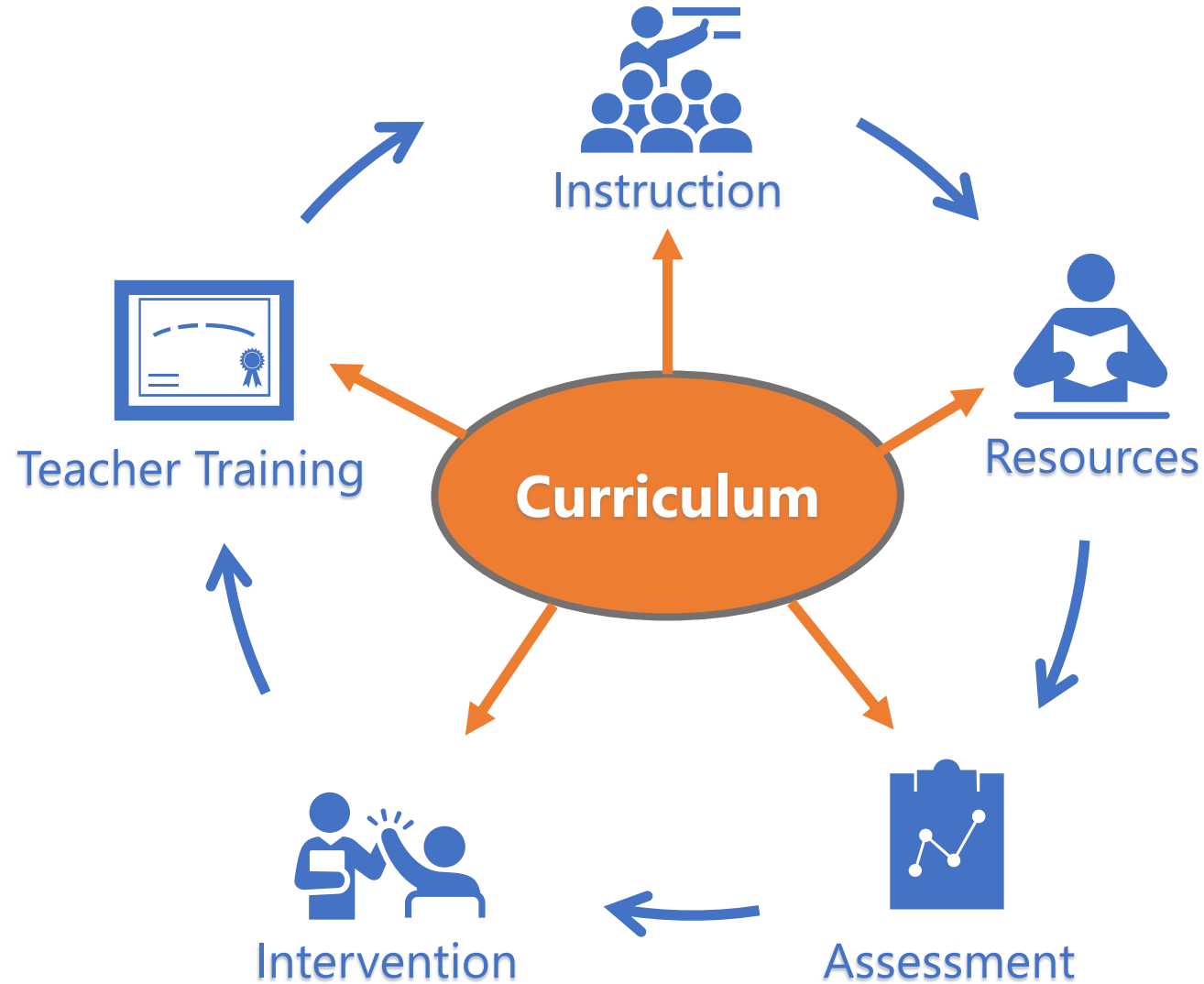
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How can we  
fix it?  
Where do we  
start?

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# Success starts with curriculum change



# We need a literacy curriculum that mandates:



Evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction for all students starting in kindergarten



Specific and measurable expectations for all foundational skills of reading, writing and spelling



Universal and standardized early screening and ongoing assessment to identify students at risk



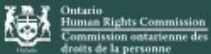
A standard framework for intervention for all students at risk for reading failure



## Right to Read Public Inquiry

For surveys, hearings and  
community meeting  
information visit  
**ohrc.on.ca**

Contact us at: [legal@ohrc.on.ca](mailto:legal@ohrc.on.ca)



*“Learning to read is not a frill, it is not a privilege. It is a basic and essential skill. **Learning to read is a human right.**”*

Renu Mandhane  
Chief Commissioner, OHRC, 2019



Thank you