

The *Reading First* program, a part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, provides assistance to state and local education agencies in applying scientifically based reading research—and reading instruction, materials, and assessments consistent with the research—to improve the reading achievement of K-3 students. The AFT's reading courses are aligned with that scientifically based reading research, and they meet the NCLB criteria for high-quality professional development.



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AFT'S READING PROGRAMS



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AFT Teachers

How do AFT's reading courses meet the guidelines of the NCLB Act of 2001?

The AFT believes that our ER&D reading courses will prove to be an invaluable tool to help teachers and paraprofessionals meet the guidelines of the Reading First program outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

The legislation on the *Reading First* program calls for:

- Professional development to ensure that all teachers have the skills they need to teach effectively research-based reading programs for students in kindergarten through third grade.
- Scientifically based instructional programs, materials and instruction including the five essential components of effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies.

Reading First funds are targeted to those districts and schools with the highest percentages of K-3 students reading below grade level and to districts and schools with large numbers of poor children.

The AFT offers two courses in reading instruction: *Beginning Reading Instruction* and *Reading Comprehension Instruction*. Both courses are based on the research consensus on effective reading instruction.



The AFT's reading courses focus on preparing teachers to teach all of the essential components of reading instruction.

Beginning Reading Instruction focuses on how children learn to read and the best ways to teach beginning reading from kindergarten to the end of second grade. The course presents a synthesis of the research consensus for beginning reading instruction. In addition, the most effective strategies for teaching beginning reading are provided with an emphasis on helping students develop phonemic awareness, knowledge of the alphabetic system, phonics/decoding skills, print awareness, fluency, and comprehension.

Reading Comprehension Instruction focuses on the research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong reading comprehension skills. The course provides participants with a synthesis of the research base on reading comprehension instruction and vocabulary development. Participants examine, discuss, and evaluate the appropriate application of a range of instructional strategies from explicit to implicit teaching of comprehension skills. Strategies are presented for increasing student comprehension of both narrative and expository texts—including content-area textbooks.