



## MISINFORMATION

The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) has only recently begun advocating for explicit, systematic instruction in phonics.

TCRWP's workshop model is not effective and does not work for diverse student populations.

TCRWP's approach is to surround kids with books and expect that they will learn to read "naturally."



## FACT

**TCRWP has *always* stressed the importance of explicit, systematic phonics for beginning readers.** Decades ago, *The Art of Teaching Reading*, Calkins' first publication on reading, called for explicit, sequenced phonics instruction plus dedicated time every day for children to deepen and extend their knowledge of phonics as they segment and sound out words to write. Since then, the team at TCRWP has developed a K-2 phonics curriculum that provides more than 2,000 pages of detailed, classroom-specific instruction. TCRWP also emphasizes that teachers must provide explicit instruction in comprehension, language development and writing.

**The TCRWP approach to literacy instruction has been proven effective by extensive third-party research and has been shown to work for diverse student populations.**

The American Institute of Research (AIR) collected nine years of data from 229 schools and found that schools implementing the TCRWP approach performed better on state ELA assessments than those who did not. These results were seen for students with disabilities and multilingual language learners (MLLs), as well as the general student population.

Further, according to 2019 New York City data, TCRWP schools not only outperformed non-affiliated schools, but also scored nearly 30% above city and state average ELA exams. This impact is not exclusive to New York City as we see positive outcomes in states throughout the country, including in highly diverse communities, with TCRWP's Units of Study.

**TCRWP does not now, and has never, promoted the concept of the "natural reader." To the contrary, every edition of the Units of Study contains hundreds of minilessons which epitomize explicit instruction.**

The Units of Study provide sequenced, explicit instruction in the skills of proficient reading, including supporting fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and phonics. Teachers learn to assess what each learner can do so that, with small groups and kid-friendly tools, they can accelerate that learner's progress in that dimension of reading growth.

TCRWP knows that at its best, education ignites a child's curiosity so that children become learners for life.



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TCRWP resources encourage kids to “guess” at words, not decode.

The new Units of Study is a “correction.”



## FACT

**TCRWP has always known that phonics is critical for decoding unknown words.** In the new Units of Study, decoding is given even greater focus.

For example, children are taught that readers rely on “slider power,” a kid-friendly term that encourages young readers to decode. Based on the science behind orthographic mapping, students put their fingers under an unfamiliar word and slide through the letters.

In the new Units and in the accompanying Jump Rope Readers, kids are given opportunities to apply their growing knowledge of phonics as they read decodable texts. Those texts are sequenced so, for example, in kindergarten, children first read texts with a handful of consonants and the short vowel a, slowly adding more and more sounds so that by the end of kindergarten they are reading words with short vowels, blends and digraphs. In this way, a phonics scope and sequence undergirds children’s early reading experiences.

**For TCRWP, it is business as usual to learn from others. As educators and advocates for children, Lucy Calkins and her TCRWP colleagues are in constant pursuit of the very best practices.** They are in classrooms daily listening to educators and students. As a point of principle, they believe in feedback. They revise because they believe in revision. Their thinking is ever evolving.

The new edition of Units of Study in Reading, K-2 is part of that evolution, grounded in the latest research and incorporating an expanded focus on systematic phonics instruction and the reading strategies critical for beginning readers, along with clear and direct methods for teachers to effectively apply evidence-based concepts to their instruction to ensure student success. An original series of decodables, the companion [Jump Rope Readers](#), allow students to apply the phonics they are learning in engaging, high-quality texts.

The field of literacy education needs to learn from research that occurs not only in classrooms but also in lab settings. These insights should be added to (and not replace) insights from decades of work in real classrooms.

GET THE  
FACTS