# Resource Guide: Differentiating Support for All Learners

The purpose of this Resource Guide is to outline the mindset needed to approach differentiating or scaffolding instruction for students. Specific information regarding differentiation or scaffolding will be heavily dependent on the text being used and the readers in the class. This Resource Guide should be used in conjunction with the other Resource

> "What these new standards are saying… is if you are teaching a fourth grade skill or exercise with the second grade texts, those aren't the fourth grade standards, those are the second grade standards."
>
> -Timothy Shanahan, https://youtu.be/zJAs1lfpwhA

Guides for Choosing an Appropriately Complex Text and Text Dependent Questions.

Scarborough's Rope, Scarborough (2002)
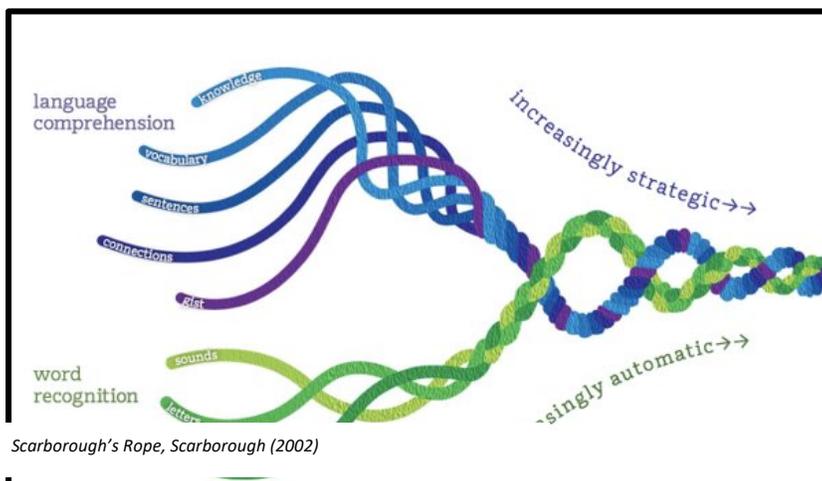
Scarborough's Rope shows us how the smaller details of the Science of Reading come together to create fluent and accurate readers. The top rope shows the most foundational skills woven with other skills to form the larger portions of the rope. Language comprehension begins with knowledge and the word recognition begins with sounds. The tightening of the rope happens as students build fluency with automaticity and comprehension becomes more strategic. Our instruction needs to include the basic items of the rope as well as practice aligned with automaticity and comprehension.

Areas of Reading Habits that may show a need for scaffolds in instruction:

- **Knowledge**
  Students who have sufficient knowledge about a topic will be better equipped to comprehend a text about that topic.
- **Word Recognition**
  Students who have well-developed decoding and fluency skills will be better able to read appropriately complex texts.
- **Cognitive Load**
  When students read fluently, the effort needed from their cognitive load is decreased and they are better able to focus on comprehending the text.

What should I keep in mind to help improve Reading Habits?

Knowledge:

- Ensure units of instruction are topic-based (multiple texts on the same topic) as this supports vocabulary acquisition and building knowledge.
- Incorporate opportunities for interaction with different types of text and media that will build knowledge throughout the unit of instruction

- Craft text-dependent questions to push student thinking to help build knowledge

Word Recognition:

- This support is only needed for students who do not have the ability to sound out or decode words within the text. Implementing differentiated scaffolds based on age and ability in relation to reading foundational skills will help fill gaps in word recognition.

Cognitive Load:

- Most students learn how to decode accurately but not at a sufficient rate that their cognitive load can shift from decoding to attending to comprehension. **These students need practice reading fluently, not decoding.**
- Allow for students to read and reread important parts of the texts in groups, partners, and independently to provide additional practice.

What scaffolds could I use to provide support for <u>all</u> learners in my classroom?

1. If students are struggling with decoding, they should be working with decodable books that offer support with the skills they are lacking. You should also be providing them with substantial amounts of phonics and fluency training. (This aligns most with students reading on a K/1st grade level.)
2. Vary the reading demands of students as they practice becoming fluent and accurate readers. Some texts should be easier, with fewer scaffolds needed and others more difficult where more scaffolds are needed. More challenging texts give students opportunities to negotiate the features of texts and can be barriers to comprehension, while easier texts give them the opportunity to consolidate that learning.
3. Engage and motivate your students by telling them how you are supporting them with instruction. Make sure they know that instead of giving them below grade level passages for younger students, you are giving them grade-level work. Explain this will be challenging but it will be more interesting! Kids like a challenge, especially if you are helping them succeed!
4. Support students with their ability to take on the cognitive load of comprehension. This can involve practice reading the text aloud once or twice before tackling comprehension work. If kids have read through the text once or twice, they will be in much better shape to work through comprehension questions on a harder text. Even though the emphasis of the fluency work would not be on comprehension, they'll figure out more of the ideas than you might presume and, most importantly in this context, they will have figured out enough of the decoding to have "raised their level" with that text by at least a grade level.
5. Before reading the text, preteach vocabulary that the author does **not** explain with context clues or explicitly define in the text. This will support the students' comprehension as their cognitive load is focusing on word meaning. (See the Resource Guide on Vocabulary Instruction for more details about vocabulary.)
6. When reading the text for comprehension, chunk it into smaller sections like a paragraph or page. Ask questions at the end of each section to ensure understanding. As students get better with this, you can increase the size of the chunks they are reading. (See the Resource Guide on Text Dependent Questions for more details about questions.)
7. Go through the text and identify particularly complicated sentences (long sentences, sentences with passive voice, sentences with multiple clauses). Ask questions about the ideas expressed in those sentences. If students can't answer them, take them back to the sentence in the text and show them how to break it down to make sense of it. (See the Resource Guide on Text Dependent Questions for more details about questions.)
8. Pay special attention to cohesion. Students can get lost in pronouns or synonyms. Push students to be explicit about who "he" is or what animal was being referred to as "the mammal." Again, this supports students' ability to use their cognitive load to tackle comprehension because they are not getting stuck on one word.

Resources
(Please Refer to Your District/School's Adopted Core High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM))

Additional Resources *(Evidence-Based Resources)*	Differentiation Resources			
	English Learner Resources: **(Resources to support ELs)**	**Special Education Resources**	**Extension Resources:** **(Resources to support higher-performing students)**	**MLSS Guidance and Intervention Resources**
What Works Clearinghouse **Best Evidence Encyclopedia** **Evidence for Every Students Succeeds Act** **Evidence in Education Lab**	World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Standards English Language Development Standards Spanish Language Development Standards			**NM Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS)**