Purpose

The Science of Reading (SoR) and the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) are complementary frameworks that support high-quality, equitable literacy instruction for all students.

The Science of Reading synthesizes decades of interdisciplinary research explaining how students learn to read and write. It emphasizes explicit, systematic, cumulative instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and written expression. The NEPF defines effective instructional practice and provides a structure for reflection, feedback, and continuous improvement.

This crosswalk clarifies how evidence-based Science of Reading practices align with the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards. It is intended to support educators, evaluators, and professional learning providers in implementing and observing literacy instruction that is research-aligned, instructionally coherent, and responsive to diverse learners in Nevada classrooms.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF Standard 1: New Learning Is Connected to Prior Learning and Experience

Indicator	Science of Reading–Aligned Instructional Practices
1. Activate all students' initial understandings of new concepts and skills.	• Begin instruction with a cumulative review of previously taught phonemic awareness, phonics, or language skills. • Activate relevant oral language, vocabulary, or background knowledge needed for comprehension of the text. • Preview key vocabulary and linguistic structures prior to reading. • Use brief diagnostic checks (e.g., oral responses, whiteboards) to confirm readiness for new instruction.
2. Make connections explicit between previous learning and new concepts and skills.	• Explicitly connect new phonics patterns or word structures to previously mastered patterns. • Demonstrate how decoding, spelling, and word meaning are interconnected. • Link comprehension strategies to previously taught text structures or skills. • Maintain cumulative anchor charts or sound walls that reflect skill progression.
3. Make clear the purpose and relevance of new learning.	• Clearly state daily learning targets tied to specific literacy subskills. • Explain how accurate decoding, fluency, and vocabulary knowledge support comprehension. • Connect literacy skills to authentic reading and writing purposes. • Reinforce how daily instruction contributes to long-term reading proficiency.
4. Provide all students opportunities to build on or challenge initial understandings.	• Use guided practice with decodable or controlled text to apply new skills. • Integrate cumulative review that blends new and previously taught patterns. • Provide opportunities for students to justify responses using textual evidence. • Offer extension or enrichment tasks for students demonstrating mastery.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF Standard 2: Learning Tasks Have High Cognitive Demand for Diverse Learners

Indicator	Science of Reading–Aligned Instructional Practices
1. Design tasks that employ all students' cognitive abilities and skills.	• Engage students in analysis of phoneme–grapheme relationships and word structure. • Require students to apply decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension skills in connected text. • Incorporate dictation and sentence construction to integrate reading and writing processes. • Expect evidence-based reasoning during comprehension discussions.
2. Design tasks that place appropriate demands on each student.	• Use diagnostic data to group students for targeted instruction. • Provide decodable texts for emerging readers and increasingly complex texts for fluent readers. • Scaffold tasks using visuals, manipulatives, and language supports without reducing rigor. • Adjust pacing and practice opportunities based on student need.
3. Design tasks that progressively develop all students' cognitive abilities and skills.	• Sequence instruction from phonemic awareness to word-level reading to connected text. • Introduce multisyllabic decoding after mastery of foundational skills. • Incorporate repeated reading and language-rich tasks to build fluency and comprehension. • Gradually increase linguistic and cognitive complexity over time.
4. Operate with a deep belief that all children can achieve.	• Communicate high expectations for all learners' reading growth. • Use progress monitoring data to celebrate improvement and persistence. • Ensure access to grade-level content with appropriate instructional supports. • Select culturally responsive texts that affirm students' identities and experiences.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF Standard 3: Students Engage in Meaning-Making Through Discourse and Other Strategies

Indicator	Science of Reading–Aligned Instructional Practices
1. Provide opportunities for extended, productive discourse.	• Facilitate text-based discussions that require evidence and precise language. • Model and prompt think-alouds to demonstrate comprehension strategies. • Engage students in retelling, summarizing, and explaining meaning orally. • Encourage students to explain decoding or vocabulary strategies they used.
2. Provide opportunities for students to create and interpret multiple representations.	• Use sound walls, phoneme–grapheme maps, and Elkonin boxes. • Create story maps, morphology charts, and concept webs. • Represent vocabulary and word meanings visually and linguistically. • Use manipulatives to sort sounds, syllables, and morphemes.
3. Assist all students to use existing knowledge and prior experience to make connections.	• Connect new vocabulary to known roots, affixes, or cognates. • Relate new texts to previously read texts or shared content knowledge. • Prompt comparisons across text structures, genres, or author techniques. • Support comprehension by linking text ideas to relevant background knowledge.
4. Structure classroom environment for collaboration and participation.	• Establish consistent routines for partner reading and discussion. • Model and reinforce respectful listening and academic discourse. • Use flexible grouping to support inclusive participation. • Normalize productive struggle and collaborative problem-solving in reading.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF Standard 4: Students Engage in Metacognitive Activity to Increase Understanding and Responsibility for Learning

Indicator	Science of Reading–Aligned Instructional Practices
1. Ensure that both teacher and students can articulate and demonstrate what, why, and how they are learning.	● Display learning targets aligned to specific reading subskills. ● Use "I can" statements connected to decoding, fluency, or comprehension goals. ● Explain why strategies such as accurate decoding or rereading support understanding. ● Share exemplar and non-exemplar work to clarify expectations.
2. Structure opportunities for self-monitored learning.	● Use fluency charts and goal trackers. ● Provide strategy checklists for decoding and comprehension. ● Incorporate reflection prompts after reading tasks. ● Include goal-setting during reading conferences.
3. Support all students to take actions based on self-monitoring.	● Teach explicit self-correction strategies. ● Allow independent practice with time for reflection and adjustment. ● Model analysis of errors and strategy selection. ● Guide students to adjust reading rate or strategy based on task demands.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF Standard 5: Assessment Is Integrated into Instruction

Indicator	Science of Reading–Aligned Instructional Practices
1. Plan ongoing learning opportunities based on evidence of current learning.	● Use phonics, fluency, and language assessments to plan instruction. ● Form small groups based on specific skill needs. ● Design review lessons targeting common error patterns. ● Monitor progress using frequent, brief assessments.
2. Align assessment opportunities with learning goals and criteria.	● Match decoding assessments to explicitly taught patterns. ● Use dictation to assess transfer from reading to spelling. ● Align comprehension assessments to taught text structures. ● Use oral reading rubrics tied to instructional objectives.
3. Structure opportunities to generate evidence of learning during lessons.	● Conduct oral checks during instruction. ● Use exit tickets and quick formative checks. ● Observe and record decoding and comprehension behaviors. ● Prompt students to explain their reasoning.
4. Adapt actions based on evidence generated in the lesson.	● Provide immediate corrective feedback. ● Adjust groupings and supports as needed. ● Reteach misunderstood skills promptly. ● Offer enrichment when mastery is demonstrated.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

Science of Reading × NEPF Scoring Crosswalk
For Monitoring and Evidence Review

Directions: During observation or evidence review, reviewers should:

1. Identify the relevant NEPF Instructional Practice Standard
2. Examine evidence of Science of Reading–aligned instruction
3. Determine the NEPF performance level that best matches the preponderance of evidence
4. Ensure ratings are consistent with evidence

STANDARD 1: NEW LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO PRIOR LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE

NEPF Rating Level	Monitoring Look-Fors (Science of Reading–Aligned Evidence)
Ineffective	Instruction does not reference prior literacy skills; phonics, vocabulary, or comprehension skills are taught in isolation; no evidence of cumulative review or connection to prior instruction.
Developing	Teacher references prior learning inconsistently; connections to previously taught phonics or vocabulary are general or implicit; limited evidence that students understand how new skills build on prior skills.
Effective	Teacher explicitly connects new literacy learning to previously taught phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, or comprehension skills; cumulative review is evident; students can articulate connections between old and new learning.
Highly Effective	Students independently apply prior literacy knowledge to new tasks; instruction reflects a clearly sequenced, cumulative literacy progression; students explain how prior skills support current reading tasks.

STANDARD 2: LEARNING TASKS HAVE HIGH COGNITIVE DEMAND FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

NEPF Rating Level	Monitoring Look-Fors (Science of Reading–Aligned Evidence)
Ineffective	Tasks rely on guessing, context-only strategies, or unsupported reading; differentiation lowers rigor; limited access to grade-level literacy content.
Developing	Tasks include some explicit literacy instruction but lack depth or coherence; differentiation is present but inconsistently aligned to student need or data.
Effective	Tasks require students to analyze phoneme–grapheme relationships, word structure, and meaning; instruction is differentiated based on data while maintaining rigor; decodable and complex texts are purposefully selected.
Highly Effective	Students demonstrate sustained cognitive engagement across decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; learners independently apply strategies across texts; differentiation is precise and responsive without reducing expectations.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

STANDARD 3: STUDENTS ENGAGE IN MEANING-MAKING THROUGH DISCOURSE AND OTHER STRATEGIES

NEPF Rating Level	Monitoring Look-Fors (Science of Reading–Aligned Evidence)
Ineffective	Student talk is minimal, off-task, or unrelated to text; discourse does not support comprehension or language development.
Developing	Some opportunities for discussion are present; responses are primarily recall-based; limited emphasis on explaining strategies or citing evidence.
Effective	Students engage in text-based discourse, citing evidence and using academic language; students explain decoding, vocabulary, or comprehension strategies; representations (e.g., sound walls, maps) support meaning-making.
Highly Effective	Students independently initiate discourse to clarify meaning; peers support one another using precise literacy language; multiple representations are used flexibly to deepen understanding.

STANDARD 4: STUDENTS ENGAGE IN METACOGNITIVE ACTIVITY TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEARNING

NEPF Rating Level	Monitoring Look-Fors (Science of Reading–Aligned Evidence)
Ineffective	Students are unable to articulate learning goals or strategies; no evidence of self-monitoring or reflection.
Developing	Teacher references strategies or goals, but students inconsistently reflect or monitor their reading behaviors.
Effective	Students can articulate what they are learning and why; students self-monitor decoding, fluency, or comprehension and adjust strategies with guidance; reflection is embedded in instruction.
Highly Effective	Students independently select, apply, and reflect on literacy strategies; metacognitive language is student-driven; goal-setting and adjustment are routine and internalized.

STANDARD 5: ASSESSMENT IS INTEGRATED INTO INSTRUCTION

NEPF Rating Level	Monitoring Look-Fors (Science of Reading–Aligned Evidence)
Ineffective	Assessments are disconnected from instruction; little to no evidence that data informs literacy instruction or grouping.
Developing	Some formative assessments are present; instructional adjustments are limited or delayed; alignment to taught literacy skills is inconsistent.
Effective	Teacher uses aligned phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension assessments to inform instruction; feedback is timely; grouping and pacing reflect assessment data.
Highly Effective	Assessment is seamlessly embedded; students understand assessment criteria and track progress; instructional decisions are immediate, precise, and student-informed.

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

Science of Reading × NEPF Scoring Crosswalk
Observer/Reviewer Checklist

Directions for Observers/ Reviewers: For each observation or evidence review, consider all available evidence in relation to the indicators below. Check all boxes that apply. Ratings should reflect the overall pattern of practice, rather than isolated moments.

STANDARD 1: NEW LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO PRIOR LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE

☐ Instruction includes explicit cumulative review of previously taught literacy skills
☐ New phonics, vocabulary, or comprehension skills are clearly linked to prior instruction
☐ Teacher makes purposeful connections between decoding, spelling, and meaning
☐ Learning targets identify specific literacy subskills
☐ Students can explain how prior learning supports current reading tasks
☐ Anchor charts, sound walls, or references reflect skill progression

Overall Evidence Level:
☐ Ineffective ☐ Developing ☐ Effective ☐ Highly Effective

STANDARD 2: LEARNING TASKS HAVE HIGH COGNITIVE DEMAND FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

☐ Tasks require analysis of sounds, word structure, or meaning
☐ Instruction integrates decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension
☐ Differentiation is based on diagnostic data, not assumptions
☐ Decodable and/or complex texts are intentionally selected
☐ Supports (visuals, scaffolds) maintain rigor
☐ Students apply literacy skills in authentic reading or writing tasks

Overall Evidence Level:
☐ Ineffective ☐ Developing ☐ Effective ☐ Highly Effective

STANDARD 3: STUDENTS ENGAGE IN MEANING-MAKING THROUGH DISCOURSE

☐ Students participate in text-based discussion
☐ Responses require evidence and precise language
☐ Students explain decoding, vocabulary, or comprehension strategies
☐ Oral language supports comprehension and language development
☐ Multiple representations (sound walls, maps, charts) support meaning
☐ Classroom routines support inclusive participation

Overall Evidence Level:
☐ Ineffective ☐ Developing ☐ Effective ☐ Highly Effective

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF STANDARD 4: STUDENTS ENGAGE IN METACOGNITIVE ACTIVITY

☐ Learning targets and strategies are clearly articulated
☐ Students self-monitor decoding, fluency, or comprehension
☐ Reflection is embedded in reading instruction
☐ Students can explain what strategy they used and why
☐ Goal-setting or progress tracking is evident
☐ Students adjust strategies with guidance or independently

Overall Evidence Level:
☐ Ineffective ☐ Developing ☐ Effective ☐ Highly Effective

NEPF STANDARD 5: ASSESSMENT IS INTEGRATED INTO INSTRUCTION

☐ Assessments align to explicitly taught literacy skills
☐ Formative checks are embedded during instruction
☐ Instructional grouping reflects assessment data
☐ Feedback is timely and corrective
☐ Evidence of reteaching or extension is present
☐ Students understand success criteria or track progress

Overall Evidence Level:
☐ Ineffective ☐ Developing ☐ Effective ☐ Highly Effective

REVIEWER NOTES / EVIDENCE SUMMARY

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

Science of Reading × NEPF Scoring Crosswalk

One-Page Scoring Key

Ineffective

- Literacy instruction is implicit, fragmented, or inconsistent
- Instruction relies on cueing, guessing, or context-only strategies
- No clear connection to prior literacy learning
- Tasks focus on activities rather than skill development
- Differentiation is absent or inappropriate
- Student discourse is minimal, off-task, or unrelated to text
- Assessment is absent, misaligned, or unused to inform instruction

Developing

- Literacy instruction is partially explicit but inconsistent
- Connections to prior learning are implied, not systematic
- Tasks address literacy skills but lack integration (e.g., phonics without comprehension)
- Differentiation is present but not tightly aligned to data
- Student discourse and reflection are teacher-directed
- Assessments inform instruction after the lesson, not during

Effective

- Instruction is explicit, systematic, and cumulative
- New literacy learning is clearly connected to prior skills
- Tasks integrate decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension
- Differentiation is data-driven and precise
- Students actively explain strategies and thinking
- Assessment is embedded and instructionally responsive

Highly Effective

- Instruction reflects a coherent, vertically aligned literacy progression
- Students independently apply prior literacy knowledge to new contexts
- Tasks require sustained cognitive engagement across literacy components
- Differentiation is anticipatory and responsive, with seamless adjustments
- Student discourse is student-driven, precise, and evidence-based
- Students monitor progress and adjust strategies independently
- Assessment is seamlessly embedded, and students understand success criteria

Key Distinctions

Ineffective → Developing: Presence of activities without instructional coherence
Developing → Effective: Coherence, intentionality, and instructional impact
Effective → Highly Effective: Student ownership, transfer, and independence

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

Bottom Line: Effective and Highly Effective practice demonstrates alignment between instruction, student behavior, and assessment evidence, consistent with the Science of Reading and NEPF expectations.

Science of Reading × NEPF Crosswalk
Coaching Feedback Tool

Directions: This tool is designed for instructional coaching conversations. Checkboxes help identify focus areas; written feedback should emphasize reflection, growth, and next instructional moves aligned to the Science of Reading.

STANDARD 1: NEW LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO PRIOR LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE

Evidence & Reflection	Growth Moves (Next Steps)
☐ Prior learning explicitly reviewed ☐ Cumulative phonics or language review evident ☐ Connections between decoding, spelling, and meaning ☐ Students explain how new learning builds on prior skills	☐ Add a brief cumulative review at lesson start ☐ Explicitly name how today's skill builds on earlier instruction ☐ Use sound walls or word ladders to show progression ☐ Prompt students to explain connections aloud
Other Strategies Observed/ Evidence Reviewed:	Other Suggestions to Support Student Learning:

NEPF STANDARD 2: LEARNING TASKS HAVE HIGH COGNITIVE DEMAND

Evidence & Reflection	Growth Moves (Next Steps)
☐ Tasks require analysis of sounds, words, or meaning ☐ Reading and writing integrated ☐ Texts matched to instructional purpose ☐ Differentiation based on student data	☐ Increase analysis vs. guessing or cueing ☐ Add dictation or sentence-level writing ☐ Adjust scaffolds without lowering rigor ☐ Refine groups using diagnostic data
Other Strategies Observed/ Evidence Reviewed:	Other Suggestions to Support Student Learning:

NEPF STANDARD 3: MEANING-MAKING THROUGH DISCOURSE

Evidence & Reflection	Growth Moves (Next Steps)
☐ Students explain thinking using text evidence ☐ Oral language supports comprehension ☐ Strategies are named and discussed ☐ Representations support meaning	☐ Increase student-to-student explanation ☐ Prompt precise academic language ☐ Use representations intentionally ☐ Shift questioning to student justification
Other Strategies Observed/ Evidence Reviewed:	Other Suggestions to Support Student Learning:

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

NEPF STANDARD 4: METACOGNITIVE ACTIVITY

Evidence & Reflection	Growth Moves (Next Steps)
☐ Learning targets clearly understood ☐ Students self-monitor reading ☐ Reflection tied to strategies ☐ Students articulate what worked	☐ Teach self-monitoring strategies explicitly ☐ Embed reflection moments ☐ Model think-alouds during errors ☐ Support goal-setting and revision
Other Strategies Observed/ Evidence Reviewed:	Other Suggestions to Support Student Learning:

NEPF STANDARD 5: ASSESSMENT INTEGRATED INTO INSTRUCTION

Evidence & Reflection	Growth Moves (Next Steps)
☐ Formative checks during lesson ☐ Instruction adjusted in real time ☐ Feedback names error and strategy ☐ Assessments match taught skills	☐ Increase in-the-moment checks ☐ Adjust grouping or pacing immediately ☐ Provide corrective, strategy-based feedback ☐ Align assessments tightly to instruction
Other Strategies Observed/ Evidence Reviewed:	Other Suggestions to Support Student Learning:

Coaching Reflection & Next Steps

Strengths to Build On	Agreed-Upon Next Instructional Step

Coach Name: _____
Educator: _____
Date: _____

Connecting the Science of Reading to the NEPF Instructional Practice Standards

Instructional Resources

National Reading Panel (2000): Teaching Children to Read

- A landmark meta-analysis summarizing decades of reading research. It identifies the five essential components of effective reading instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—and remains a foundational source for the Science of Reading.
  https://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/nrp

The Reading League: Science of Reading Hub

- Provides accessible, evidence-based explanations of the Science of Reading framework, along with teacher resources, professional learning modules, and implementation tools used nationwide.
  https://www.thereadingleague.org/what-is-the-science-of-reading/

Louisa Moats' LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling)

- A comprehensive professional development program that deepens teachers' knowledge of reading science and equips them with instructional strategies for explicit, systematic literacy teaching.
  https://www.voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs

University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) Foundations

- Offers research-backed, free structured literacy lesson resources, intervention frameworks, and phonics routines based on SoR principles—ideal for Tier 1–3 instruction and small-group interventions.
  https://ufli.education.ufl.edu/foundations/

Reading Rockets

- A national multimedia project offering classroom strategies, reading guides, videos, and research summaries to help teachers apply the Science of Reading effectively for all learners, including multilingual and struggling readers.
  https://www.readingrockets.org/

National Center on Improving Literacy (NCIL)

- A federally funded center providing evidence-based literacy tools, policy guidance, and resources for educators and administrators focused on early reading development and intervention.
  https://improvingliteracy.org/

WIDA Framework for Multilingual Learners

- Supports alignment between SoR and language development by offering resources to integrate academic language and literacy instruction for multilingual learners within the Science of Reading approach.
  https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/framework

Nevada Department of Education – NEPF Teacher Instructional Practice Rubric (2022)

- Defines the instructional standards and indicators used to evaluate and strengthen teaching practice statewide. Using NEPF as a reflection tool ensures that Science of Reading practices are implemented with fidelity and equity across classrooms.
  https://doe.nv.gov/Educator_Effectiveness/NEPF/Teacher_Standards_and_Indicators/