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Evidence-Based Reading Policy in the United States:

How Scientific Research Informs Instructional Practices

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Representing a dramatic shift in education thinking, converging evidence now supports a reliance on findings from rigorous scientific research to guide education policy initiatives in the United States.

Particularly for early reading instruction, scientific research has provided the framework for establishing the most effective measures for the identification, remediation, and even prevention of reading difficulties in school-age children. Recent advances in imaging technology, particularly the development of functional magnetic resonance imaging, provide evidence of the neurobiological mechanisms in reading and reading difficulties. These imaging studies show that the brain systems for reading are malleable and that the neural systems for reading in struggling readers may be facilitated by provision of an evidence-based, effective reading intervention. The new science of reading offers the promise for more precise identification and effective management of reading difficulties in children, adolescents, and adults.