

Target Instruction by Stage, not Age

How does reading typically develop? Jeanne Chall's stages of reading development maps a progression of development that children pass through on the road to skilled reading. While Chall recognized six stages of reading development, we've presented the first three stages (Stages 0 – 2) in the table below.

Understanding each stage will help teachers who instruct students in PreK through grade 3. As with any aspect of child development, progress through the stages can be varied and somewhat serpentine rather than uniform and linear. Regardless of the pace and path, the stages can guide the instructional process.

Chall's Stages of Reading Development

	Stage 0	Stage 1	Stage 2
Name	Pre/early reading	Alphabetic	Consolidation
Description	Pre-reading/pretend reading stage: Children learn to recognize and write the letters of the alphabet. Oral language, both receptive and expressive, is a major focus along with the development of phonological awareness.	Initial reading and decoding stage: Children learn that speech sounds map on to letters to make words and that these words can be read by sounding out each letter or letter's associated sound.	Confirmation and automaticity: Children consolidate their reading skills –decoding, sight word recognition, and comprehension of words and text – and read with increasing fluency.
Approximate Grade (age)	PreK-K (3-5)	K-2 (5-7)	2-3 (7-9)
Focus	Alphabetic Principle Oral Language	Decoding Encoding	Automaticity Prosody
Reading component(s)	Listening Comprehension, PA, Invented Writing		Reading Comp Written Expression
		Basic Phonics	Advanced Phonics
	Vocabulary and syntax throughout		
Text type focus that students read	Predictable	Decodable/hybrid	Familiar text, literature, informational text

P.S. Did you join Margie Gillis' 10/28 webinar,

"Every Child Reading: Linking Knowledge and Practice to Support School Systems"? View the [slides](#). Visit [Education Week](#) for the archived event.



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Our Mission is to EMPOWER TEACHERS to ensure that every child learns to read by third grade.

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