



Literacy and Intervention

SUPPORTING COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS



Intensive, Multisensory Reading Intervention with Proven Results

Grades Pre-K–8+



Meeting the Common Core State Standards with *S.P.I.R.E.*®

S.P.I.R.E.® is an Orton-Gillingham based reading program designed to be used with small groups of struggling readers. It focuses on phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, handwriting, and fluency, as well as comprehension and vocabulary. The order in which concepts are presented in *S.P.I.R.E.*'s scope and sequence is based on utility, with the most frequently appearing phonic concepts taught first: short vowels; digraphs *sh, ch, th, wh*; and welded consonants *-ng* and *-nk*.

S.P.I.R.E. is a skills-based program, not a grade-level program, which means that an individual struggling reader in a particular grade may be using a variety of *S.P.I.R.E.* levels. It is also *primarily* a phonics program, and in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the strongest focus on phonics is in Kindergarten–Grade 3. Therefore, in correlating *S.P.I.R.E.* to the CCSS, we chose a range of *S.P.I.R.E.* levels that are most likely to be used in each grade:

Kindergarten	<i>Sounds Sensible</i> , Levels 1–2
Grade 1	<i>Sounds Sensible</i> , Levels 1–2
Grade 2	Levels 1–3
Grade 3	Levels 2–4
Grade 4	Levels 3–5
Grade 5	Levels 4–6
Grade 6	Levels 5–7
Grade 7	Levels 6–8
Grade 8	Levels 6–8

All students, whether struggling or on grade level, must build on skills they have already mastered. As they approach the upper grades (6–12), struggling students continue to need more work with basic and foundational skills to bring them as close to grade-level proficiency as possible, and this is just what *S.P.I.R.E.* provides: *“The Standards set grade-specific standards but do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations.”*

Foundational Skills

Phonological Awareness and Phonics

Because of its primary focus on phonological awareness/phonics, as well as on spelling, *S.P.I.R.E.* satisfies the CCSS Reading Standards, particularly those regarding Foundational Skills 1–4 (K–5): *“Demonstrate understanding of...features of print;...spoken words, syllables, and sounds;...grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words; read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.”* While this standard describes concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other conventions, it also stresses differentiated instruction. *S.P.I.R.E.* is geared toward struggling readers, but it is designed so that differentiation for students with differing degrees of reading proficiency is easy. For example, there is one Introductory Lesson and three to five Reinforcing Lessons available for every concept in *S.P.I.R.E.* Students who master a concept quickly may only need one or two Reinforcing Lessons before they are ready to move on. The teacher also has the resources at hand to deliver additional instruction and practice to ensure concept mastery for students who need more support.

Fluency

S.P.I.R.E. is also ideal for building fluency. All connected text in *S.P.I.R.E.* is decodable, allowing students to apply sound-spelling correspondences successfully. As students practice letter patterns and words, they build automaticity, the first step toward fluency, to support comprehension.

Language Standards

Conventions of Standard English Grammar

S.P.I.R.E. also addresses many parts of Language Standards 1–2 for K–5: *“Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar...capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.”* These are primarily taught in Levels 1–4, where students learn capitalization, punctuation, print handwriting, and certain parts of speech. Students also write sentences dictated by the teacher, and then proofread them, correcting any errors. *S.P.I.R.E.* addresses some of the more sophisticated

grade 3–5 standards as well: *“Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.”*

Comprehension

While *S.P.I.R.E.* aligns most closely with the K–5 Foundational Skills, the program also addresses the Anchor Standards for Reading under K–5 Key Ideas and Details Standards 1, 2, and 3 (CCSS, p. 10). In the comprehension strand of *S.P.I.R.E.*, students analyze decodable texts and use graphic organizers to answer comprehension questions. These activities cover skills such as sequencing, cause-and-effect, drawing conclusions, compare and contrast, and main idea and details, as directed by the Anchor Standards:

1. *Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it...cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.*
2. *Determine the central ideas...summarize the key supporting details and ideas.*
3. *Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact...*

Vocabulary

Vocabulary acquisition is an integral part of the *S.P.I.R.E.* instruction. Potentially unfamiliar words are often discussed in the *Teacher’s Guides* during steps 1, 4,

5 (Building Background in Reinforcing Lessons), and 6 (Reading Comprehension in Reinforcing Lessons). In this way, *S.P.I.R.E.* meets the grades 3–5 Vocabulary standards: *“Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts...”*

Text Complexity

Finally, there is the critically important Standard 10: *Range, Quality, and Level of Text Complexity* that states that by the end of the given year, students should *“be able to read and comprehend literature/informational text in the (grade specific) complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed.”* While Standard 10 applies primarily to literary fiction and nonfiction, there is a strong purpose for decodable text in order to help students who are still struggling to read to begin to ascend the staircase of text complexity: *“The Reading standards place equal emphasis on the sophistication of what students read **and the skill with which they read.** Standard 10 defines a grade-by-grade ‘staircase’ of increasing text complexity that rises from beginning reading to the college and career readiness level.”* Students in need of intervention require the kind of scaffolding *S.P.I.R.E.* provides. This step-by-step approach meets students at their own level and leads them to where they need to go by strengthening the foundational skills they are lacking.