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The coloured continuum on *The Ladder of Reading & Writing* infographic represents the wide range of ease in rewiring the brain to perform tasks that humans are not born to do naturally.

The percentages within the coloured areas of the continuum are estimations, intended to help educators and parents build their general awareness as to approximately how many children are in these groups when we look at the population at large, with the understanding that there may be greater or fewer numbers of children in these groups in individual classrooms depending on other factors.

The purpose of the colours is particularly to support educators in understanding that effective instruction and support to both master reading and writing at the foundational stages and to keep building skills should be based on the readiness and ease of skill mastery of the individual student. Serving a student's individual needs requires not just knowing generally where they are on the continuum of ease but requires that classroom instruction be differentiated to provide appropriate instruction. The teaching of literacy cannot be a "one-size-fits-all". (See the research of Dr. Carol Connor and her colleagues listed under the heading "Differentiation" in Nancy Young's website link <https://nancyyoung.ca/general-reading-writing/>)

Note that the colours run together, recognizing there is no specific cut-off between the four areas of the continuum. It should also be noted that, even within the coloured areas of the continuum themselves, individual needs will vary.

Feedback supporting these approximate percentages was obtained through individual communication with researchers.

THE RANGE OF EASE IS ALSO ADDRESSED IN NANCY YOUNG'S DOCUMENT "CONTINUOUS DISTRIBUTION"

The following are some quotes REPRESENTATIVE of the research base underpinning the estimated percentages on *The Ladder of Reading & Writing*

From: Lyon, R. (2002). Testimonies to Congress. Center for the Development of Learning. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED475205.pdf>

"NICHD reading research programs, which, to date, have studied over 34,000 children and adults, have taught us that learning to read is a formidable challenge for approximately 60% of our nation's children, and for at least 20 to 30% of these children, reading is the most difficult task that they will have to master throughout their educational careers." (p. 41)



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“Some children learn to read and write with ease...only about 5% of our nation's children. It is suggested in the research literature that another 20 to 30% learn to read relatively easily once exposed to formal instruction, and it seems that youngsters in this group learn to read in any classroom, with any instructional emphasis...Unfortunately, it appears that for about 60% of our nation's children, learning to read is a much more formidable challenge, and for at least 20% to 30% of these youngsters, reading is one of the most difficult tasks that they will have to master throughout their schooling.” (P. 50)

The above quotes were part of Dr. Reid Lyon’s testimony for Congress, presenting the results of NICHD (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) reading research programs, longitudinal studies of over 34,000 children and adults.

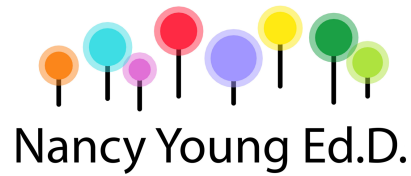
From: Vaughn, S. & Fletcher, J. (2020-21) Identifying and Teaching Students with Significant Reading Problems. American Educator. https://www.aft.org/ac/winter2020-2021/vaughn_fletcher

“The vast majority of students with low reading achievement have preventable problems: with explicit, evidence-based instruction, they would learn to read.”

“With minimal guidance and feedback, some students are on their way to recognizing the patterns of written words and inferring the ways in which our phonological system (sounds of language) map to our complex orthography (written system). But for other students—anywhere from 40 to 65 percent—the task of learning to read is much more challenging. If these students do not receive highly explicit instruction with additional opportunities for implicit learning, difficulties in learning to read proficiently are inevitable.”

From: Papadopoulos, T.C., Spanoudis, G., Ktisti, C. *et al.* Precocious readers: a cognitive or a linguistic advantage?. *Eur J Psychol Educ* **36**, 63–90 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-020-00470-9>

“Substantial across-child variability exists with regard to reading skill, particularly in the early years. It ranges from struggling and slow readers to proficient and fluent readers. This means that there is a significant proportion of children, often neglected as the focus of reading research, who learn to read accurately and efficiently even before the beginning of formal reading instruction.” (p. 64)



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From: Moats, L. (2007). Whole-language high jinks: how to tell when "scientifically-based reading instruction" isn't. Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

“Human reading ability is distributed on a continuum, like height and weight, and roughly 60 percent of children are “wired” from birth for reading. Regardless of who teaches them, what instructional methods are employed, or how well those methods are presented, these students are likely to learn to read at least at a modest level.” p. 11
