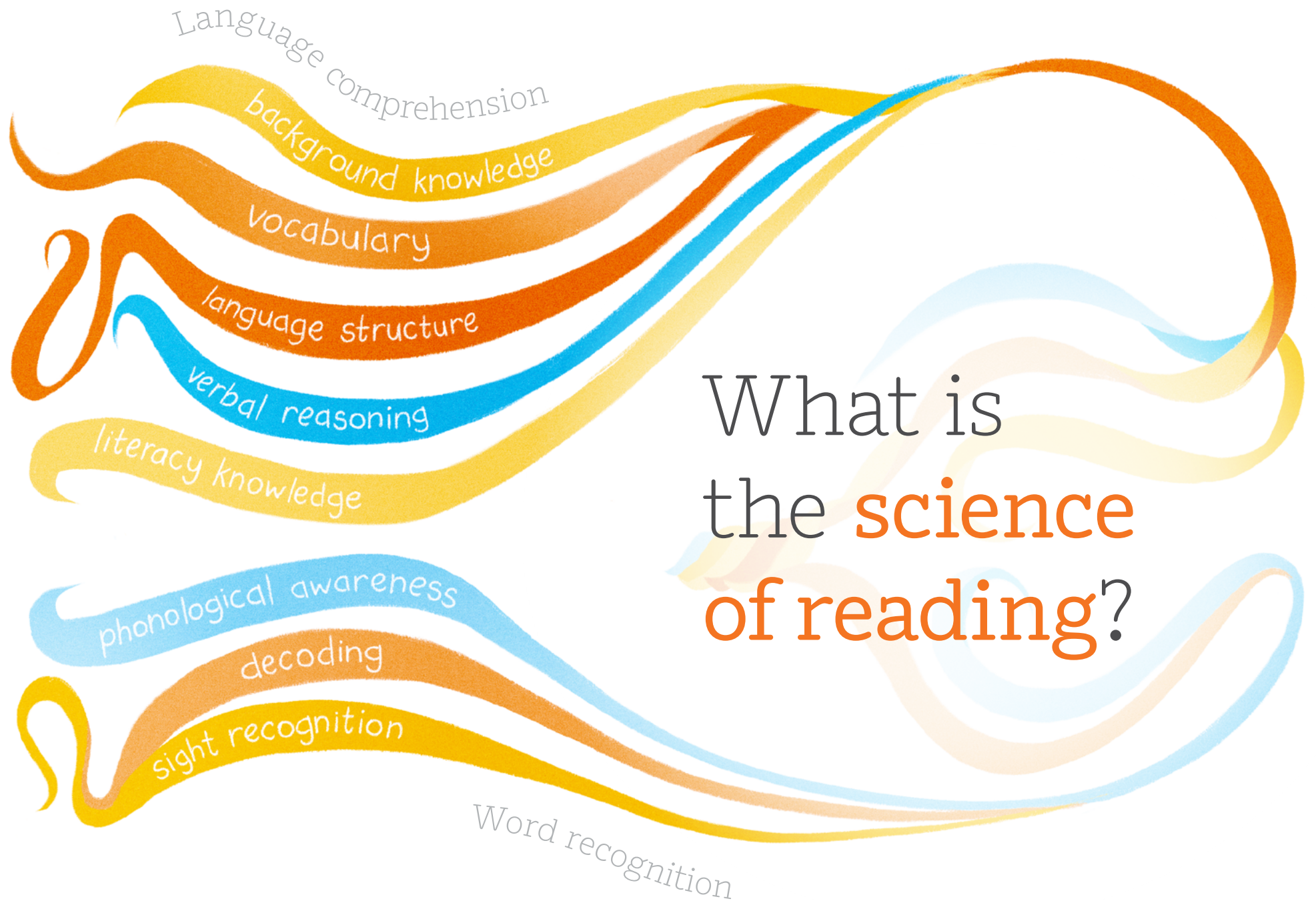


Amplify.

Science of reading: Making the shift

Surveying classroom instruction





What does classroom
instruction look like when
it's based on **science of
reading** practices?

This eBook provides
a **checklist** of key
instructional practices.



Look for instruction that
is explicit and engaging.

Language comprehension

background knowledge

phonological awareness

decoding

sight recognition

Word recognition

verbal reasoning

literacy knowledge

Look for instruction where students play with and manipulate sounds.



Phonological awareness

The skills of reading begin with an understanding of sounds in words, and many students experiencing reading difficulties do not have a phonological foundation.

What to ask:

Are there frequent opportunities for students to engage in sound and word play?

Is the instruction “sounds first” so that oral practice with sounds precedes practice with letters?

What to avoid:

- A “letter of the day” approach
- Instruction that starts with letters first

Look for explicit instruction in sound-spelling patterns that includes spelling (encoding).



Decoding

Learning to read does not develop naturally and all students benefit from explicit and systematic instruction.

What to ask:

Are all 44 sounds included in a clearly outlined scope and sequence?

Are decoding and encoding taught in tandem?

What to avoid:

- Incidental phonics instruction
- Instruction that stops after the basic sound-spelling patterns
- Instruction without engagement

Look for daily practice
with decodable text that
matches the scope and
sequence of instruction.



Sight recognition

Good readers automatically connect the sounds of language to print. Regular practice ensures development of neural pathways supporting this automaticity.

What to ask:

Do students receive explicit instruction in the code before practicing with connected text?

Are students taught to attend to all the sounds in each word?

What to avoid:

- The use of leveled texts
- Memorizing words using flash cards
- Encouraging students to guess at words



Look for instruction
that focuses on a topic
for 2–3 weeks.

Background knowledge

Background knowledge aids a reader in comprehension and can be developed through classroom instruction.

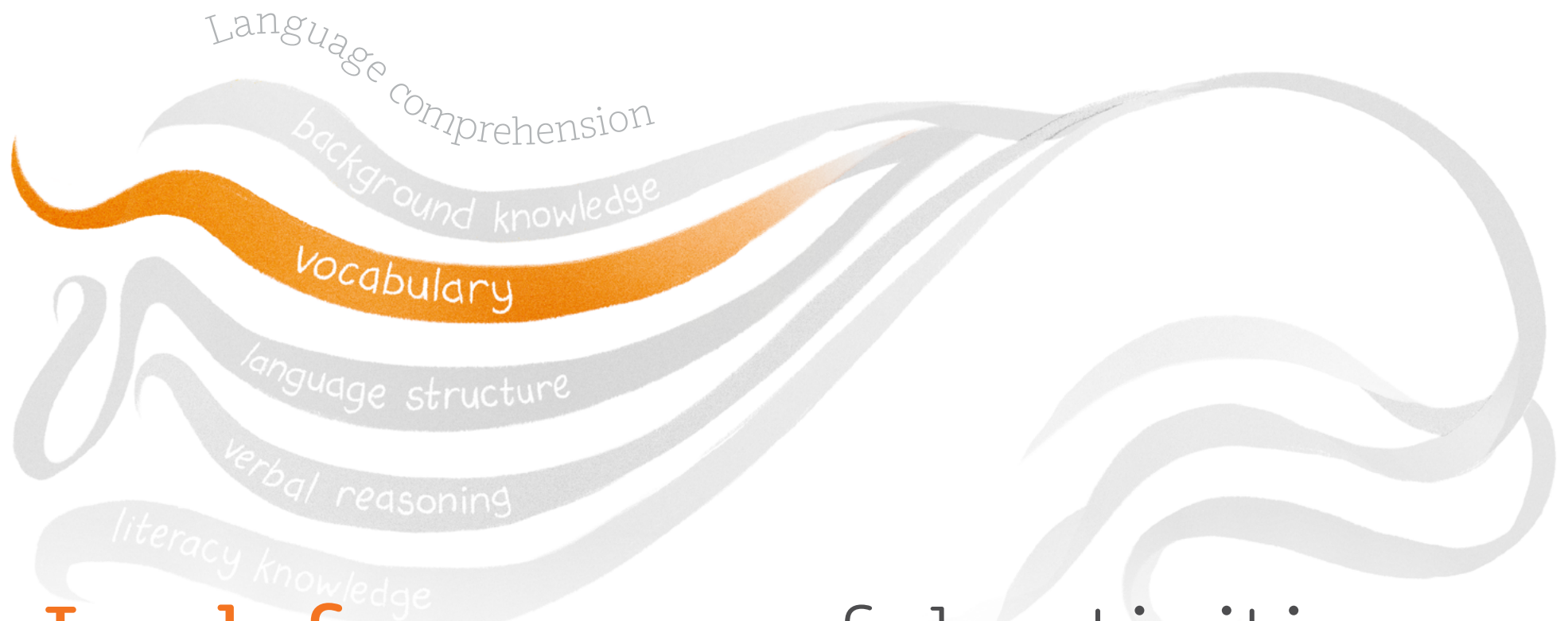
What to ask:

Are topics rich and relevant and do they include science, social studies, and the arts?

Are students interacting with the content during instruction through speaking, listening, and writing?

What to avoid:

- Instruction that switches topics frequently
- Topics or “themes” that are too broad or general to consistently connect knowledge and build domain-related vocabulary



Look for purposeful activities that help students understand how words are connected to topics.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge is highly correlated with, and a key predictor of, reading comprehension.

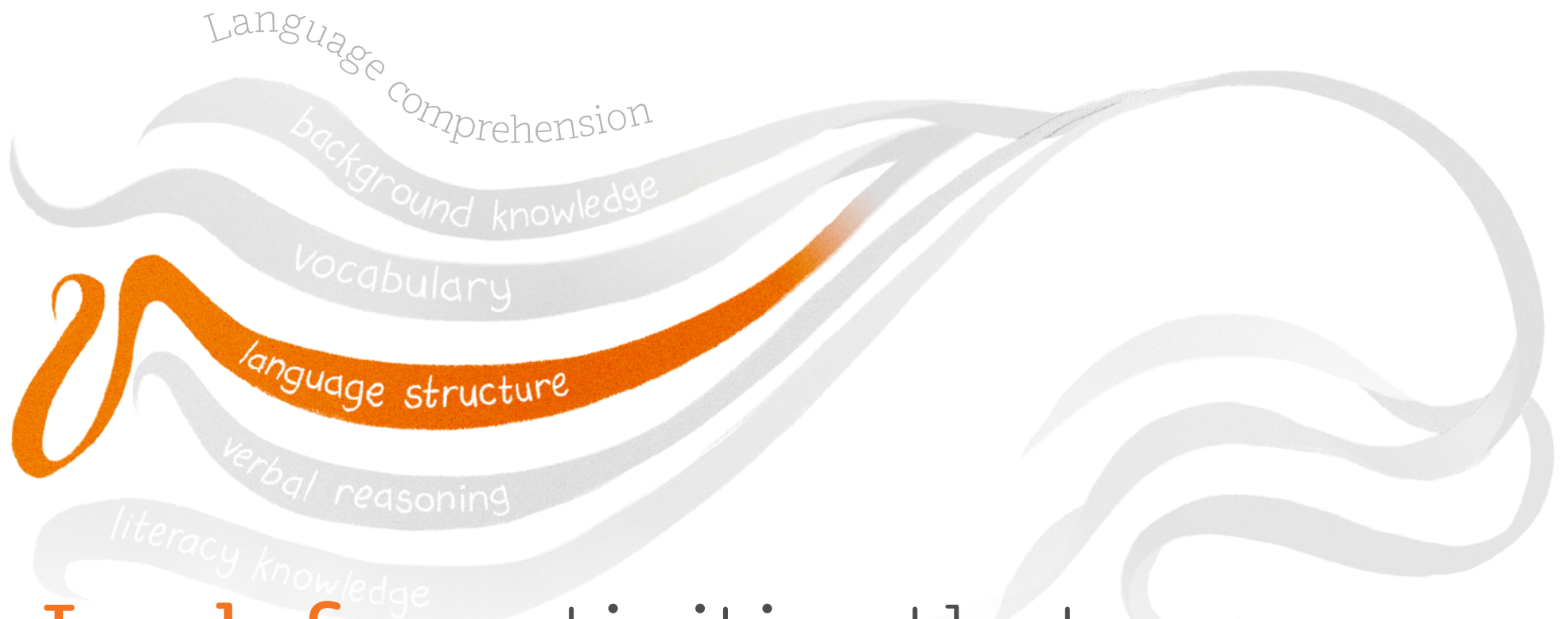
What to ask:

Are vocabulary words preselected and connected to topic and text?

Does instruction include student-friendly definitions and multiple exposures to selected words?

What to avoid:

- Memorizing of dictionary definitions
- Vocabulary words presented out of context
- Selecting vocabulary words that are easily understood in context



Look for activities that focus on understanding and constructing sentences.

Language structure

Sentence-level comprehension is important to overall text comprehension.

What to ask:

Are students analyzing sentences to understand text meaning?

Does instruction include grammar and syntax (sentence structure) in both reading and writing?

What to avoid:

- Focusing only on after-reading comprehension tasks
- Sentence diagramming without application



Look for instructional approaches that support and develop students' ability to make inferences from text.

Verbal reasoning

Skilled readers use both explicit information and inferences to extract meaning from text.

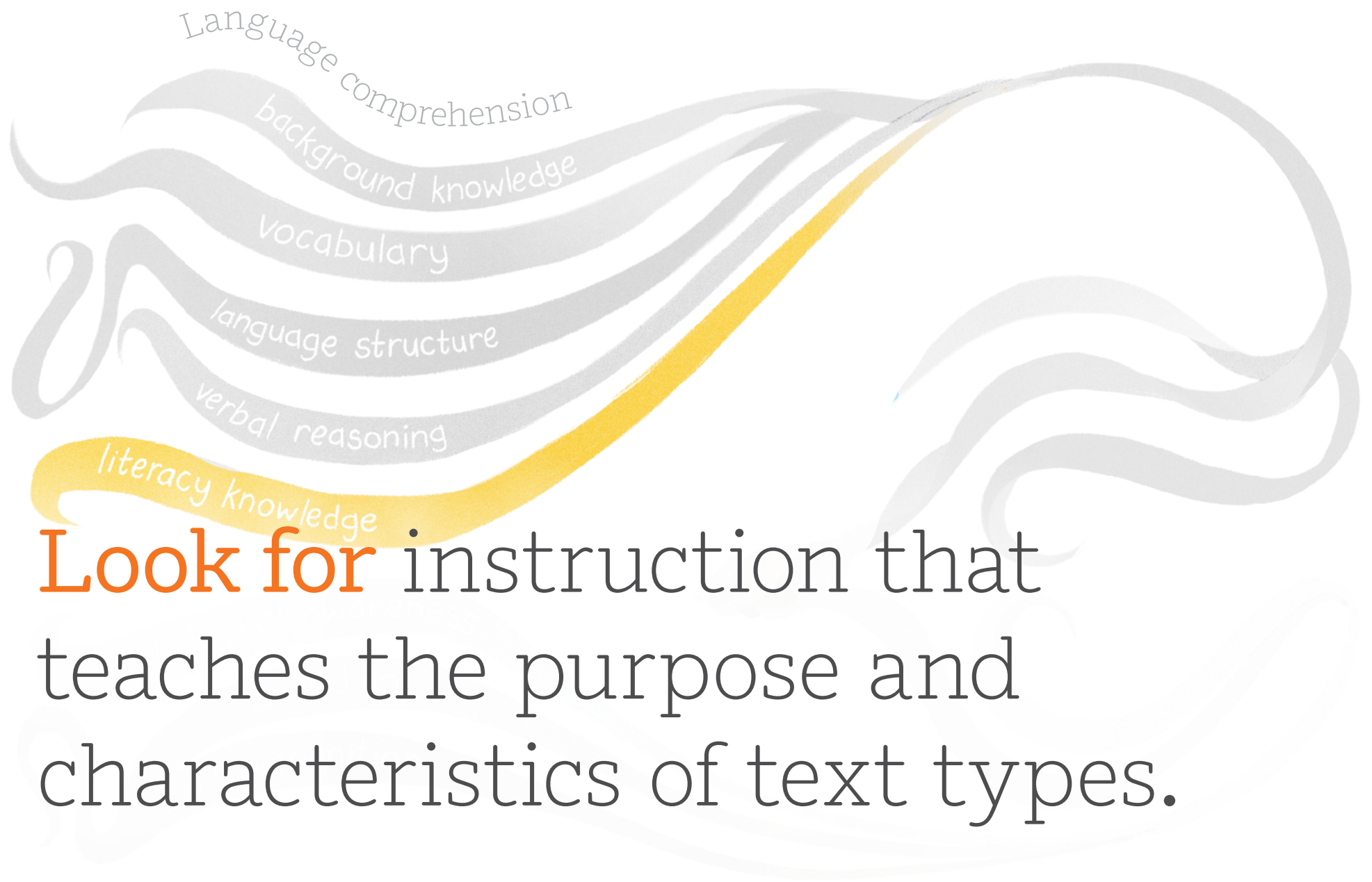
What to ask:

Is the content of the text at the forefront of instruction?

Are students analyzing the content with the use of questions, visual or textual clues, and graphic organizers?

What to avoid:

- Reading strategies taught in isolation
- Questions that do not require students to draw exclusively from the text



Look for instruction that teaches the purpose and characteristics of text types.

Literacy knowledge

An understanding of different text structures helps readers navigate and locate information as an aid to comprehension.

What to ask:

Does the instruction call attention to story structure?

Does instruction include informational text types such as chronological sequence, compare/contrast, and problem/solution?

What to avoid:

- Focusing on text types ONLY during writing instruction
- Lack of variety in text types

Your science of reading action plan.

Now that you know what to look for in a curriculum grounded in the science of reading, it's time to make a plan to apply it with key instructional practice you've learned.

Word recognition

Phonological awareness

Instruction where students play with and manipulate sounds

Decoding

Explicit instruction in sound-spelling patterns that includes spelling (encoding)

Sight recognition

Daily practice with decodable text that matches the scope and sequence of instruction

Language comprehension

Background knowledge

Instruction that focuses on a topic for 2–3 weeks

Vocabulary

Purposeful activities that help students understand how words are connected to topics

Language structures

Activities that focus on understanding and constructing sentences

Verbal reasoning

Instructional approaches that support and develop students' ability to make inferences from text

Literacy knowledge

Instruction that teaches the purpose and characteristics of text type

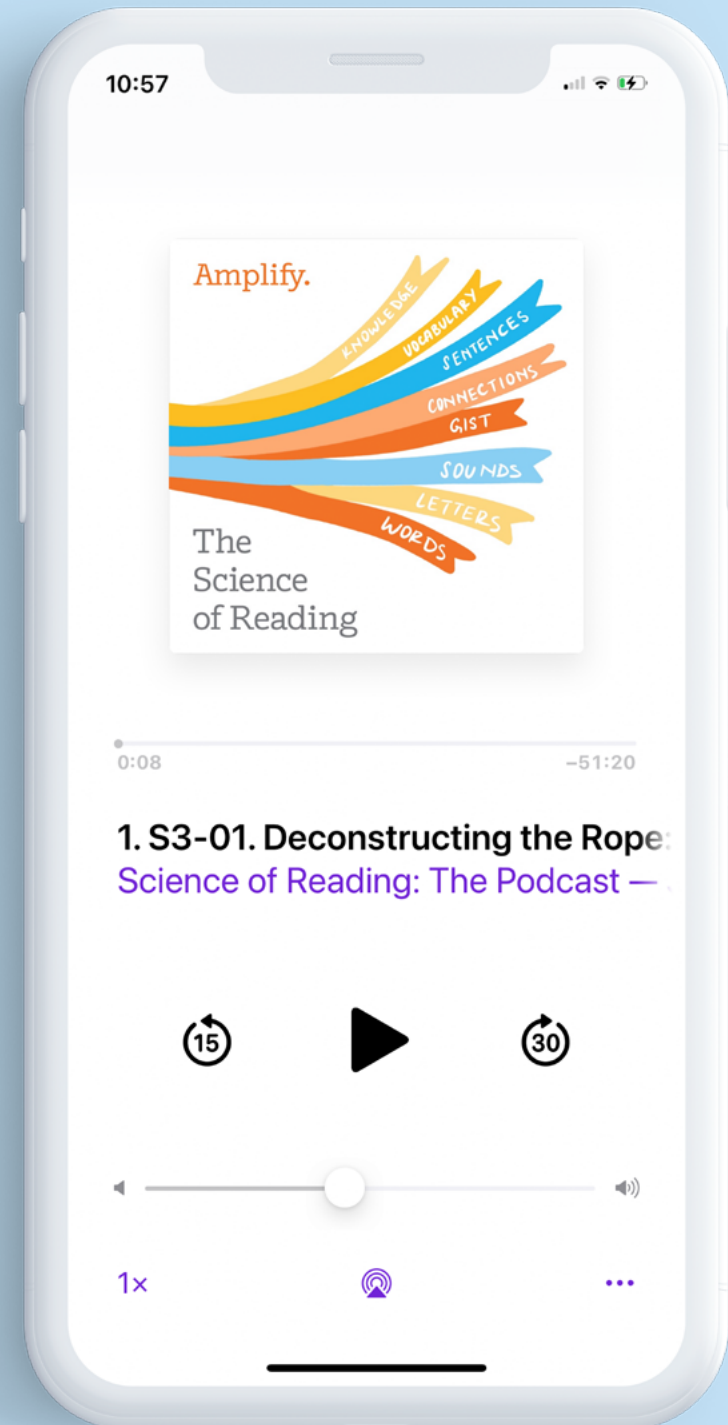
HOSTED BY SUSAN LAMBERT

Science of Reading: The Podcast

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from researchers and practitioners
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