

Email Reply to Sharongeraghty@yahoo.com

From enquiries.national@education.govt.nz

09 June 2023

Tēnā koe Sharon

Thank you for your email on 25 May 2023 about your concerns about the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) being described as Structured Literacy on Paddy Gower Has Issues' feature on literacy.

The University of Canterbury has advised us that BSLA is an example of a structured literacy approach. It is based on the science of reading and aligns with the key principles of structured literacy approaches. BSLA is set within a culturally responsive Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework that is aligned to the Ministry's Response to Intervention framework.

As we advised you in December 2022, the explicit, systematic teaching of critical phonological awareness skills and letter sound knowledge skills, with explicit links to the reading and spelling context, are key parts of BSLA. In addition, BSLA includes explicit teaching in vocabulary skills and in building children's listening comprehension and oral narrative skills.

BSLA includes content on how to use the Ready to Read Phonics Plus books. Ready to Read Phonics Plus support includes guidance for teachers on phonemic awareness, morphology, vocabulary, spelling, story discussion and story retell. As you can see from this list, important reading comprehension skills are covered but not more advanced-reading comprehension skills. This is because the focus is -on ākongā in New Entrants, Year 1 and Year 2.

Publications arising from the implementation of the Better Start Literacy Approach have been involved in peer review processes and many are publicly accessible online via <https://www.betterstartapproach.com/our-research>.

We appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns.

Ngā mihi

Enquiries National Team | Ministry of Education ^MC
education.govt.nz | Follow us on Twitter: [@educationgovtnz](https://twitter.com/educationgovtnz)