The Simple View of Reading

A theoretical framework that states that reading comprehension is the product of word reading and listening comprehension.

Simple View of Reading

Gough and Tunmer proposed the Simple View of Reading (SVoR) in 1986 to clarify the important role of decoding in the reading process. The Simple View proposes that reading comprehension, the ability to understand text, is the product of decoding printed text (word reading) and understanding language accessed through the process of decoding (listening comprehension).

Components of reading comprehension

Word reading requires skills in sight word reading of high frequency words and words committed to memory through the process of orthographic mapping; in decoding of phonetically regular words; and fluency in the decoding of words. These skills will not develop unless the student has solid foundations in phonological processing.

Listening comprehension, the ability to understand text if it is heard instead of read, draws on the same language processes used to comprehend language via text, but without the cognitive demands of having to decode text (Hogan, Adlof and Alonzo 2015).

Reading difficulties

Using the Simple View of Reading as a theoretical framework, students who are not developing adequate reading comprehension skills can be categorised into three main groups:

- significant word reading difficulties in the absence of listening comprehension problems;
- adequate word reading skills, but significant listening comprehension difficulties; and
- weaknesses across both word reading and listening comprehension.

Reader Profile

Further investigation of the component skills that underpin word reading and listening comprehension allow speech language pathologists, as part of an inclusive educational team, to develop a Reader Profile which pinpoints an individual student's strengths and challenges. This Profile can then be used to inform evidence-based interventions, instructional strategies and differentiated curriculum delivery.