



## Cultivating Knowledge, Building Language: Literacy Instruction for English Learners in Elementary School (The Research Informed Classroom)

By Nonie K. Lesaux, Julie Russ Harris

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*"What is the very best instruction for English learners? How do we capitalize on and further develop the linguistic knowledge and skill of this segment of society? Nonie Lesaux and Julie Harris are exceedingly well qualified to address these questions. On the cutting edge of EL instruction, their combination of research knowledge and practical experience makes for guidance that can be trusted, and implemented, in classrooms throughout the country." --Nell Duke, Series Editor, University of Michigan*

In today's linguistically diverse elementary classrooms, research suggests that a universal approach to building academic vocabulary and conceptual knowledge holds huge promise for closing the opportunity gaps among English learners. In *Cultivating Knowledge, Building Language*, **Nonie Lesaux** and **Julie Harris** present a knowledge-based approach to literacy instruction that supports young English learners' development of academic content and vocabulary knowledge and sets them up for reading success

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## **Editorial Review**

### **About the Author**

Nonie K. Lesaux, PhD, is the Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Professor of Education and Society at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Lesaux leads a research program guided by the goal of increasing opportunities to learn for students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Her research on reading development and instruction, and her work focused on using data to prevent reading difficulties, informs setting-level interventions, as well as public policy at the national and state level. The practical applications of this work are featured in numerous publications, including, *Making Assessment Matter*, a guide for instructional leaders, and a widely circulated state literacy report, *Turning the Page: Refocusing Massachusetts for Reading Success*, that forms the basis for a Third Grade Reading Proficiency bill passed in Massachusetts. Dr. Lesaux is a recipient of the William T. Grant Scholars Award and of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, the highest honor given by the United States government to young professionals beginning their independent research careers. Check out Nonie's "A Matter of Talk" presentation at Harvard School of Education's "8 for 8" event. 8 Harvard faculty members had 8 minutes each to present their bold ideas for impact. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJCn3cn-gGo>

Nell K. Duke, Ed.D., is a professor of language, literacy, and culture and faculty associate in the combined program in education and psychology at the University of Michigan. Duke received her Bachelor's degree from Swarthmore College and her Masters and Doctoral degrees from Harvard University. Duke's work focuses on early literacy development, particularly among children living in poverty. Her specific areas of expertise include development of informational reading and writing in young children, comprehension development and instruction in early schooling, and issues of equity in literacy education. She currently serves as Co-Principal Investigator on projects funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Science Foundation, and the Spencer Foundation. Duke is the recipient of the American Educational Research Association Early Career Award, the Literacy Research Association Early Career Achievement Award, the International Reading Association Dina Feitelson Research Award, the National Council of Teachers of English Promising Researcher Award, and the International Reading Association Outstanding Dissertation Award. Nell is author and co-author of numerous journal articles and book chapters as well as the books *Reading and Writing Informational Text in the Primary Grades: Research-Based Practices*; *Literacy and the Youngest Learner: Best Practices for Educators of Children from Birth to Five*; *Beyond Bedtime Stories: A Parent's Guide to Promoting Reading, Writing, and Other Literacy Skills From Birth to 5*; and her most recent book, *Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose in K - 8 Classrooms*. She is also editor of *The Research-Informed Classroom* book series, co-editor with Ellin Keene of the *Not This But That* book series, and co-editor of the book *Literacy Research Methodologies*. Duke teaches preservice, inservice and doctoral courses in literacy education, speaks and consults widely on literacy education, and is an active member of several literacy-related organizations. She has served as author and consultant on a number of educational programs, including Buzz About IT, iOpeners, National Geographic Science K-2 and the DLM Express. Duke also has a strong interest in improving the quality of educational research training in the U.S. Nell is currently overseeing IRA's Literacy Research Panel blog, which you can follow here: <http://www.reading.org/general/Publications/blog/LRP>

Julie Russ Harris, EdM, is the manager of the Language Diversity and Literacy Development Research Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. A former elementary school teacher and reading specialist in urban public schools, Harris's work continues to be guided by the goal of increasing the quality

of culturally diverse children's learning environments. Most recently, projects in her portfolio include the development of literacy curricula and interventions and the design and implementation of innovative professional development programs and materials. With her colleagues, Harris has authored several publications, including book chapters, journal articles, policy briefs, and the widely circulated state literacy report, *Turning the Page: Refocusing Massachusetts for Reading Success*, that forms the basis for a Third Grade Reading Proficiency bill passed in Massachusetts.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Ray Chung:**

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