



# Learning to be Literate: Insights from research for policy and practice

*Margaret M Clark*

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Winner of the prestigious UK Literacy Association Academic Book Award for 2015 in its original edition, this fully revised edition of *Learning to be Literate* uniquely analyses research into literacy from the 1960s through to 2015 with some surprising conclusions.

Margaret Clark explores the argument that young children growing up in a literate environment are forming hypotheses about the print around them, including environmental print, television, computer games and mobile phones. In a class where no child can yet read there is a wide range of understanding with regards to concepts of print and the critical features of written language. While to any literate adult, the relationship between spoken and written language may be obvious, young children have to be helped to discover it.

This persuasive argument demonstrates? the value of research in order to make informed policy decisions about children's literacy development. Accessible and succinct, Professor Clark's writing brings into sharp focus the processes involved in becoming literate. The effect on practice of many recent government policies she claims run counter to these insights. The key five thematic sections are backed up with case studies throughout and include:

- Insights from Literacy Research: 1960s to 1980s
- Young Literacy Learners: how we can help them
- Curriculum Developments and Literacy Policies, 1988 to 1997: a comparison between England and Scotland
- Synthetic Phonics and Literacy Learning: government policy in England 2006 to 2015
- Interpretations of Literacy in the Twenty-first Century

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