

STRIDE: Canada's Premier Structured Literacy Program

What Is STRIDE?

STRIDE is Halifax Learning Centre's structured literacy program, developed from more than 25 years of clinical experience delivering SpellRead, a phonological-based reading intervention validated by the Florida Center for Reading Research and What Works Clearinghouse, with thousands of students served. STRIDE is built on the foundational principles that contributed to SpellRead's success, and is informed by current structured literacy research and the evolving needs of today's classrooms.

Instruction across all three levels is explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic, the hallmarks of structured literacy, and is delivered at a pace set by student mastery rather than a fixed calendar so students move through lessons as quickly or as gradually as they need to.

Across all three levels, STRIDE lessons follow a consistent, fully scripted architecture: warm-up and cumulative review, explicit meaning/structure instruction, guided and independent practice, and application to reading, comprehension, and writing. This design keeps delivery reliable across teachers and settings, while still responding to each student's individual pace.

Program at a Glance

Level	Focus	Outcome
Level 1	Foundational decoding & automaticity: phonological awareness, systematic phonics, and fluency-building with decodable text.	Students read single-syllable and early multisyllabic words accurately and automatically, freeing working memory for meaning.
Level 2	Morphology & multisyllabic word study: prefixes, roots, and suffixes as a bridge to longer words; narrative comprehension and scaffolded written response.	Students decode and derive meaning from multisyllabic words and begin applying oral and written response skills.
Level 3	Advanced morphology & academic language: derivational suffixes, Latin/Greek roots, expository text structure, and independent written summary.	Students read, spell, and use academic vocabulary with growing independence, ready for grade-level academic text demands.

Level 1 — Foundational Decoding & Automaticity

Core goal	Establish accurate, automatic decoding so working memory is freed up for meaning rather than spent sounding out words.
Key content	Phonological awareness (oral-only, before any print), systematic sound-symbol correspondence, and fluency-building routines using decodable text.
Instructional design	Carefully sequenced, cumulative practice; explicit modelling; frequent review built around cognitive-load principles so new learning doesn't overwhelm working memory.
Delivery model	Every lesson follows a consistent, fully scripted architecture — warm-up and review, explicit instruction, guided and independent practice, application to reading. Pace is set by student mastery, not a fixed calendar.
Outcome	Students read single-syllable and early multisyllabic words accurately and automatically, setting up the transition to morphology-based word study in Level 2.

Level 2 — Morphology & Multisyllabic Word Study

Core goal	Introduce morphology (prefixes, roots, suffixes) as a bridge from single-syllable decoding to multisyllabic word reading and vocabulary growth.
Key content	A structured, cumulative sequence of inflectional and derivational morphology units, multisyllabic word lists, and a colour-coded morpheme card system that gives students a consistent visual model for word structure.
Comprehension	Explicit narrative text structure (character, setting, problem, key events, resolution); predicting, monitoring, and oral summarizing; literal questions moving to simple inferential questions with evidence prompts.
Writing	Sentence-combining and sentence expansion, plus scaffolded written response using sentence stems tied to the week's comprehension focus.
Instructional design	Morphology is woven in as connective tissue rather than a separate strand, with deliberate retrieval and cumulative review linking every new unit back to prior word parts.
Outcome	Students can decode and derive meaning from multisyllabic words and begin applying oral and written response skills to what they read.

Level 3 — Advanced Morphology & Academic Language

Core goal	Deepen morphological knowledge — particularly derivational suffixes and academic affixes — and extend comprehension and writing into expository (informational) text.
Key content	Advanced affix study, Latin roots and Greek combining forms, word maps for high-value anchor words, and continued multisyllabic decoding practice.
Comprehension	Narrative structure consolidated; expository structures (main idea and supporting details, cause/effect, compare/contrast) introduced. Continued predict/monitor/summarize with less scaffolding.
Writing	Summarizing shifts from oral to written; students move toward independent, multi-sentence and short-paragraph responses (topic sentence plus supporting detail sentences).
Instructional design	Cross-level retrieval links tie Level 3's more academic word forms back to concrete forms taught in Level 2. Morphology becomes generative — used productively in writing, not just recognized in reading.
Outcome	Students read, spell, and use academic vocabulary with growing independence and are prepared for the vocabulary and text demands of upper-grade academic content.

Why STRIDE?

- **Proven foundation, evidence-informed evolution:** STRIDE carries forward SpellRead's 25+ year, independently validated track record while adding an expanded morphology strand, a comprehension-and-writing layer, and updated progress-monitoring tools.
- **Explicit, systematic, cumulative design:** the scope and sequence moves from phoneme-level foundations through advanced Latin/Greek morphology, avoiding common curriculum red flags such as unsequenced multisyllabic instruction or workshop-style, incidental comprehension teaching.
- **Built-in progress monitoring:** a multi-measure assessment stack (phonological awareness screening, oral reading fluency, dictation, morpheme segmentation, and academic vocabulary) gives boards clear, ongoing visibility into student growth.
- **Flexible implementation:** delivered 1:1, in small groups, in clinic, or online, and mastery-paced to fit Tier 2/Tier 3 intervention models and MTSS frameworks without requiring a fixed class calendar.
- **A partner, not just a program:** Halifax Learning provides teacher training, coaching, and ongoing support alongside the curriculum itself, backed by ongoing research.