What is Literacy?

The actual definition of literacy is the ability to read and write. However, more importantly, literacy is the individual’s capacity to put those skills to work in shaping the course of his or her own life.
Why is Reading Important?

A child's reading skills directly correlate to their success in school and work. In addition, reading can trigger imaginative activity for the child, which in turn can contribute to the child's creative thinking and stimulate visual memory. Aside from developing creativity, one of the most important ways we use reading and writing is to communicate.
Research Identifies

FIVE early reading skills that are essential for the child

1. Phonemic Awareness
2. Phonics Essentials
3. Vocabulary Essentials
4. Reading Comprehension
5. Oral Reading Fluency
Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify phonemes, the vocal gestures from which words are constructed, when they are found in their natural context—spoken words. Children need phoneme awareness to learn to read because letters represent phonemes in words.
Phonics is a method for teaching reading and writing the English language by developing learners’ phonemic awareness. The goal of phonics is to enable beginning readers to decode new written words by sounding them out, or in phonics terms, *blending* the sound-spelling patterns.
A child’s vocabulary is a set of words within a language that are familiar to him or her. A vocabulary usually develops with age, and serves a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Reading often allows exposure to more words than by listening and therefore can expand a child’s vocabulary.
Reading comprehension is the ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning. An individual’s ability to comprehend text is influenced by their traits and skills. Word recognition, vocabulary, reading strategies and assessments are all part of the improvement process in reading comprehension.
Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly, and with expression. Fluency is comprised of a specific set of skills, which include word decoding and comprehension, that allows a child to rapidly decode text while maintaining a high level of comprehension.
Concluding

All 5 reading & literacy skills sets are essential stepping stones to starting a successful reading practices. Now that you know the fundamental meaning of each talking point, it is evident that they are all interconnected and cannot exist without each other. Once a child becomes familiar with each step individually, he or she will be one step closer to becoming a fluent reader.

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