

# READING SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION (POST GRADUATE)

This ILA Nationally Recognized with Distinction program is a stand-alone 24 credit hour fully online certification. This program is for applicants who currently hold a Masters or higher graduate degree. The Certification is designed for teacher practitioners who are interested in obtaining a Texas Reading Specialist Certification to strengthen their understanding of literacy for application in their classroom or other school settings. This program develops reflective practitioners with the knowledge and skills for effective reading/language arts instruction for Early Childhood through Secondary learners. Candidates will develop expertise as literacy specialists utilizing resources and methods, literacy assessments, and designing interventions to address varied learning needs of all students. Candidates will have the ability to become proactive instructional leaders and literacy advocates of students at all levels of literacy development. One hundred sixty (160) Practicum/Field experience hours with a diverse learner population are embedded in both programs.

Graduates of this program have the potential to enhance their literacy classroom practices and/or pursue roles such as literacy coach/specialists, literacy interventionists, and adjunct instructors of undergraduate-level literacy courses.

Candidates for the Texas Reading Specialist Certification must have a valid elementary or secondary Texas teaching certification, along with two years of successful teaching experience before taking the Reading Specialist exam (Two years can be concurrent with the program). One hundred and sixty hours of practicum/field experience with diverse learner populations are embedded in the program. Field experience hours must be completed at a Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved location.

Students must successfully complete coursework within the M.Ed. in Literacy Instruction program and 160 hours of documented field experience to be recommended to take the exam. Field hours are embedded in the course work. Candidates are required to secure their own TEA-approved location for practicum experiences.

TEA requires a graduate degree to be recommended for the Texas Reading Specialists certification; therefore, this stand-alone certification is only offered for those holding a graduate degree. All others should seek the M.Ed. in Literacy Instruction (<https://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2025-2026/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/education/school-of-teaching-and-learning/literacy-instruction-med/>) program.

If an applicant does not hold a graduate degree, lives out-of-state, teaches at a private school, or is not able to complete the field experience hours in a TEA location, the M.Ed. in Reading/Language Arts is nationally accredited by the International Literacy Association to develop all-level Reading Specialist dispositions. This route will strengthen their understanding of literacy for application in their classroom or other school settings. Such an applicant would seek the M.Ed. in Literacy Instruction (<https://catalog.shsu.edu/archives/2025-2026/graduate-and-professional/college-departments/education/school-of-teaching-and-learning/literacy-instruction-med/>) route.

Currently not eligible for financial aid assistance.

**Additional information:** Reference the Program Landing Page (<https://www.shsu.edu/programs/certification/reading-specialist/>) for additional information, such as cost, delivery format, contact information, or to schedule a visit.

## University Application Deadlines:

**Fall:** August 1st

**Spring:** December 15th

**Summer:** May 15th

1. Proof of holding a graduate degree
2. Graduate Application (<http://www.shsu.edu/admissions/apply-texas.html>)
3. Application fee (<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-studies/application-fee.html>)
4. Pay the \$35 Texas Education Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs Fee (<http://tinyurl.com/SHSU-EPP-Tech-Fee/>) (paid to the TEA as required by TAC 229.9.7 ([http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage/?sl=R&app=9&p\\_dir=&p\\_rloc=&p\\_tloc=&p\\_ploc=&pg=1&p\\_tac=&ti=19&pt=7&ch=229&rl=9%E2%88%9A](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage/?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=7&ch=229&rl=9%E2%88%9A))) if seeking Texas Reading Specialist certification
5. Official transcripts from Bachelor's and Master's degrees
  - a. Minimum GPA of a 3.0, either overall or in the last 60 credit hours, for both Bachelor's and Master's degrees. If you are interested in the program but have less than a 3.0 GPA, contact the program coordinator.
6. A copy of applicant's Texas teaching certificate
7. A teacher service record with at least one year of creditable teaching experience
8. Acceptable Professional Goals writing sample. This writing sample should be no more than two pages double-spaced and 12 pt font with proper essay format. The writing sample will be scored on the ability of the applicant to demonstrate awareness of context, audience, and purpose. Additionally, the writing sample should demonstrate the ability to use appropriate and relevant content, provide at least one credible source to support a point of view(s), and the ability to use written language to convey meaning with clarity.
  - a. What have your experiences with reading/language arts been thus far which has led you to pursue a graduate degree?
  - b. Select one belief about teaching literacy that you feel passionate about and explain why as well as how you came to this belief?

- c. Upon completion of the program, what are your goals for your earned Master of Education in Reading/Language Arts degree (If you are seeking Texas Reading Specialist Certification, include those goals as well.)?
9. Video Interview. Video link uploaded with the application. The oral communication sample will be scored on the ability of the applicant to use an organizational pattern to communicate points; use appropriate language; be aware of the intended audience; use a variety of delivery techniques to make the presentation tentative; use supporting materials such as showing examples, visuals, explanations, and/or other appropriate sources to establish support on the topic; and clearly has a central message to convey. Record a 3-4 minute video of yourself that answers the following questions.
- How many years have you been a classroom teacher?
  - What experiences do you have teaching reading and/or language arts and what led you to pursue graduate studies specializing in literacy?
  - What does it mean to be understanding, respectful, and inclusive of diverse populations?
  - Explain and offer an example of how you would use technology to create authentic [literacy] learning.
  - What are your expectations of this master's program, why should you be admitted into the program, and what do you intend to do once you have earned this degree?

For information regarding the recommendations, interview, and writing sample, please contact the COE Grad Hub at (936) 294-4857.

Applicants with completed files are reviewed for regular admission by graduate faculty in each program area and are selected by faculty based on information in the completed file.

The stand alone Reading Specialist Certification ( Post Graduate) requires the completion of 24 credit hours. It is designed for those holding a graduate degree and a valid Elementary or Secondary teaching certificate. The candidate must have two years successful teaching experience. The stand alone certification program originates in the Reading/Language Arts Master of Education in the School of Teaching and Learning.

The stand alone Reading Specialist Certification (Post Graduate) Requirements:

- Graduate degree or higher (if not then refer to MED in Reading/Language Arts)
- 24 Semester Credit Hours
- 160 hours of field experience (embedded into the program) in a Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved location
- Valid Texas Teaching certificate and official educator service record (submitted with application)
- At least 2 years teaching experience at completion of program

**Additional information:** Reference the Program Landing Page (<https://www.shsu.edu/programs/certification/reading-specialist/>) for additional information, such as cost, delivery format, contact information, or to schedule a visit.

| Code                                    | Title                                                                                                     | Hours     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Reading Specialist Certification</b> |                                                                                                           |           |
| <b>Specified Courses</b>                |                                                                                                           |           |
| BESL 5312                               | Second Language Literacy <sup>1</sup>                                                                     | 3         |
| READ 5304                               | Multisensory Language Learning <sup>1</sup>                                                               | 3         |
| READ 5306                               | Survey Of Reading                                                                                         | 3         |
| READ 5307                               | Literacy Assessment & Instructional Strategies Practicum I (with Elementary Populations ) <sup>2, 4</sup> | 3         |
| READ 5335                               | Cognition & Emergent Literacy                                                                             | 3         |
| READ 5340                               | Practicum of Literacy Asmt & Instrumental Strat II-Secd Pops <sup>2, 4</sup>                              | 3         |
| READ 6310                               | Administration and Supervision of Literacy Programs <sup>1</sup>                                          | 3         |
| READ 6320                               | Research and Literacy Leadership <sup>5</sup>                                                             | 3         |
| <b>Total Hours</b>                      |                                                                                                           | <b>24</b> |

<sup>1</sup> Includes 10-15 hours of field experience.

<sup>2</sup> Prerequisites: READ 5306.

<sup>4</sup> Includes 30-40 hours of field experience with secondary populations.

<sup>5</sup> Includes 30-35 field experience hours.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) marketable skills initiative is part of the state's 60x30TX plan and was designed to help students articulate their skills to employers. Marketable skills are those skills valued by employers and/or graduate programs that can be applied in a variety of work or education settings and may include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas.

The Reading Specialist Certification (Post Graduate) Certificate is designed to provide graduates with the following marketable skills:

- Research and theoretical knowledge of literacy
- Learn evidence-based practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and leadership
- Learn the need for a broader definition of literacy beyond reading to include writing, speaking, listening, and viewing