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# *Foreword*

**W**hile nearly all of us read easily and with comprehension, most do not realize that, inherently, reading is an abnormal act. When we are born, there are no hardwired neural tracts for reading: We are not genetically predisposed to read. How then does the brain accomplish such a sophisticated task? This is a paradox whose answer has long eluded the best efforts of scientific and educational researchers. This is now changing.

Although much remains to be discovered, the advent of brain imaging has begun to unlock the black box of the brain, and a scientific understanding of the reading process is evolving.

Using some of the most current findings from neuroscience research, Nevills has written a sequel to the book, *Building the Reading Brain: PreK–3* (Nevills & Wolfe, 2009). This new publication focuses on older learners and readers, how their reading proficiency develops, how their brains differ from those of young learners, and how their unique needs can best be met. In this volume, Nevills deftly melds theory and practice. Sections of the book labeled Serious Brain Matters are dedicated to assisting the reader in understanding the brain structures and functions that underpin the learning process. These sections provide teachers with the foundational information they need to teach their students about their brains and how they learn. Following each of these technical pieces, Nevills then provides teachers with guidelines on how to explain the information to their students in nontechnical language.

Further enhancing the practicality of this book are chapters that suggest brain-compatible teaching strategies and resources for all subject areas generally using the standard curriculum materials teachers have on hand. Especially interesting and useful is the discussion of new technology, how it impacts the brains of today's learners, and how teachers can infuse this technology into their classroom instruction.

It is often stated that in the early years of schooling the focus is on learning to read, and from that point on the focus is on reading to learn. Given that this is probably an accurate statement, we are fortunate to have a book that gives classroom teachers the understanding and tools they need to help all their students enjoy the success that comes from reading to learn.

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