RESOURCE DIRECTORY

HBIDA

HOUSTON BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION

2020

Articles, Resource Materials
Education Opportunities
Professional Service Resources
& much more for families
living with Dyslexia

Neuhaus Education Center

WE HELP DISTRICTS

WE HELP EDUCATORS

WE HELP FAMILIES

WE HELP ADULT LEARNERS

WE KNOW READING

Founded in 1980, Neuhaus Education Center is a 501(c)(3) educational foundation dedicated to **promoting reading success for all.** Neuhaus provides evidence-based training and support to teachers, supplies information and resources to families, and offers direct literacy services to adult learners.

In 2020, Neuhaus will celebrate **40 years of experience** in research, instruction and teacher training in the areas of dyslexia and related reading disabilities. We also have evidence-based, independently verified professional learning programs designed specifically for teachers of children from economically disadvantaged families.

Neuhaus meets the standards of the International Dyslexia Association and is accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council. Our professional staff members are certified by the Academic Language Therapy Association.

What We Offer Districts or Campuses:
- Customized, comprehensive and sustainable school transformation
- Diagnostic analysis and data review
- Teacher professional learning
- Leadership development
- Literacy coaching
- Family engagement

What We Offer Educators:
- Classes online, in-house, or on-site
- Complimentary web-based resources
- Dyslexia Specialist Program

What We Offer Families:
- Referrals to dyslexia interventionists
- Information about dyslexia and related disorders
- Twice-monthly information sessions

What We Offer Adult Learners:
- Reading and spelling classes for adults
- Neuhaus Academy – a web-based literacy program

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HBIDA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success" —HENRY FORD

I ATTENDED MY FIRST CONFERENCE FOR HBIDA OVER 5 YEARS AGO. I knew a couple acquaintances in this organization at the time, as I had just moved back to my hometown of Houston the year prior. Fighting against all of my introvert tendencies, I forced myself to attend the annual HBIDA Spring Conference held at the Hilton Hotel at the University of Houston, knowing there was surely more for me to learn about dyslexia and other learning differences but also wanting to connect with others in the field. The content at the conference was impressive, but it was the people I met that left a lasting impression. There were many experts presenting across all professional capacities and topics with a full ballroom of attendees present. Everyone present with a unifying mission of supporting those with dyslexia and learning differences. At the time, I knew very little about HBIDA. Founded in the 70s this organization had humble beginnings driven by a small group of talented and very dedicated Houstonians collaborating for a common goal and purpose. Now six years after my first interaction with HBIDA it is incredibly clear to me that the storied and 4 decade long history of HBIDA is the result of the amazing people involved. Board members, volunteers, conference attendees, sponsors, and supporters are what makes this organization work and continue to thrive 40 plus years from when it started.

In recognition of the importance of our volunteers and board members, HBIDA established the Carole Wills Volunteer Service Award in 2018. The Carole Wills service awards recognizes a current board member who has shown a commitment of service that goes above and beyond any expectations, very much aligned with Carole's gracious and constant support to this organization. HBIDA's Treasurer Karen Priputen received the award in 2018 and we are excited to share that Debbie Etheridge is the 2019 recipient of this award. Debbie's dedication to the mission of HBIDA is quite remarkable and I am personally thankful to work alongside her. There are two additional board members who have shown remarkable dedication over the last year. Marian Cisarik's dedicated efforts, along with the scholarship committee, have streamlined and improved the Nancy LaFevers Ambroze Scholarship application process supporting diagnostic testing for those with financial need. Also Monica Keogh, HBIDA's resource directory editor, and her publications committee have continued the very involved process of our annual directory with remarkable success.

2020 will see the launch of HBIDA's inaugural art contest for individuals with dyslexia, which ties in with our Spring Conference keynote Speaker Dr. Anthony Brandt highlighting the importance of creativity for those with dyslexia. Current goals for HBIDA include improving our processes as a non-profit organization, strategic planning, and expanding our outreach while celebrating the creativity of individuals with dyslexia. These goals can only be accomplished by continuing to work together until a dyslexia non-profit is no longer needed. Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success". To that end HBIDA is a success thanks to those who created this organization and the many who have invested their time and efforts over the years.

If you are new to HBIDA, welcome! If you are a longtime supporter, thank you! If you would like to be more involved in our organization, join us! I can assure you, you will not find a more dedicated group of volunteers and advocates working together to support those with learning differences like dyslexia. When I attended my first HBIDA conference 5 years ago, I left with a lasting impression of the people I met. Now in my second and final year as branch president I can definitively state that my first impression of HBIDA was an accurate one. The people who volunteer their limited free time for HBIDA are the heart of this organization and will always be our greatest asset. I would have never expected to become involved in this organization in a leadership capacity but I am grateful for the trust given to me, grateful for this experience working with so many talented Houstonians, and for the opportunity to support our collective mission.

We look forward to working with you – until everyone can read.

With gratitude,
ANSON J. KOSHY, M.D., M.B.E.
President

HOUSTON BRANCH OF THE
INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION

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DYSLEXIA BASICS

What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, or extra support services.

What causes dyslexia?

The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. Moreover, most people with dyslexia have been found to have problems with identifying the separate speech sounds within a word and/or learning how letters represent those sounds, a key factor in their reading difficulties. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully.

How widespread is dyslexia?

About 13–14% of the school population nationwide has a handicapping condition that qualifies them for special education. Current studies indicate that one half of all the students who qualify for special education are classified as having a learning disability (LD) (6–7%). About 85% of those students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing. Nevertheless, many more people—perhaps as many as 15–20% of the population as a whole—have some of the symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing, or mixing up similar words. Not all of these will qualify for special education, but they are likely to struggle with many aspects of academic learning and are likely to benefit from systematic, explicit, instruction in reading, writing, and language.

Dyslexia occurs in people of all backgrounds and intellectual levels. People with dyslexia can be very bright. They are often capable or even gifted in areas such as art, computer science, design, drama, electronics, math, mechanics, music, physics, sales, and sports.

In addition, dyslexia runs in families; parents with dyslexia are very likely to have children with dyslexia. For some people, their dyslexia is identified early in their lives, but for others, their dyslexia goes unidentified until they get older.

What are the effects of dyslexia?

The impact that dyslexia has is different for each person and depends on the severity of the condition and the effectiveness of instruction or remediation. The core difficulty is with word recognition and reading fluency, spelling, and writing. Some individuals with dyslexia manage to learn early reading and spelling tasks, especially with excellent instruction, but later experience their most debilitating problems when more complex language skills are required, such as grammar, understanding textbook material, and writing essays.

People with dyslexia can also have problems with spoken language, even after they have been exposed

to good language models in their homes and good language instruction in school. They may find it difficult to express themselves clearly, or to fully comprehend what others mean when they speak. Such language problems are often difficult to recognize, but they can lead to major problems in school, in the workplace, and in relating to other people. The effects of dyslexia reach well beyond the classroom.

Dyslexia can also affect a person's self-image. Students with dyslexia often end up feeling "dumb" and less capable than they actually are. After experiencing a great deal of stress due to academic problems, a student may become discouraged about continuing in school.

How is dyslexia diagnosed?

Before referring a student for a comprehensive evaluation, a school or district may choose to track a student's progress with a brief screening test and identify whether the student is progressing at a "benchmark" level that predicts success in reading. If a student is below that benchmark (which is equivalent to about the 40th percentile nationally), the school may immediately deliver intensive and individualized supplemental reading instruction before determining whether the student needs a comprehensive evaluation that would lead to a designation of special education eligibility. Some students simply need more structured and systematic instruction to get back on track; they do not have learning disabilities. For those students and even for those with dyslexia, putting the emphasis on preventive or early intervention makes sense. There is no benefit to the child if special instruction is delayed for months while waiting for an involved testing process to occur. These practices of teaching first, and then determining who needs diagnostic testing based on response to instruction, are encouraged by federal policies known as Response to Intervention (RTI). Parents should know, however, that at any point they have the right to request a comprehensive evaluation under the IDEA law, whether or not the student is receiving instruction under an RTI model.

A comprehensive evaluation typically includes intellectual and academic achievement testing, as well as an assessment of the critical underlying language skills that are closely linked to dyslexia. These include receptive (listening) and expressive language skills, phonological skills including phonemic awareness, and also a student's ability to rapidly name letters and numbers. A student's ability to read lists of words in isolation, as well as words in context, should also be assessed. If a profile emerges that is characteristic of readers with dyslexia, an individualized intervention plan should be developed, which should include appropriate accommodations, such as extended time. The testing can be conducted by trained school or outside specialists. (*See the Dyslexia Assessment Fact Sheet for more information.*)

What are the signs of dyslexia?

The problems displayed by individuals with dyslexia involve difficulties in acquiring and using written language. It is a myth that individuals with dyslexia "read backwards," although spelling can look quite jumbled at times because students have trouble remembering letter symbols for sounds and forming memories for words. Other problems experienced by people with dyslexia include the following:

- Learning to speak
- Learning letters and their sounds
- Organizing written and spoken language
- Memorizing number facts
- Reading quickly enough to comprehend
- Persisting with and comprehending longer reading assignments
- Spelling
- Learning a foreign language
- Correctly doing math operations

Not all students who have difficulties with these skills have dyslexia. Formal testing of reading, language, and writing skills is the only way to confirm a diagnosis of suspected dyslexia.

How is dyslexia treated?

Dyslexia is a lifelong condition. With proper help, many people with dyslexia can learn to read and write well. Early identification and treatment is the key to helping individuals with dyslexia achieve in school and in life. Most people with dyslexia need help from a teacher, tutor, or therapist specially trained in using a multisensory, structured language approach. It is important for these individuals to be taught by a systematic and explicit method that involves several senses (hearing, seeing, touching) at the same time. Many individuals with dyslexia need one-on-one help so that they can move forward at their own pace. In addition, students with dyslexia often need a great deal of structured practice and immediate, corrective feedback to develop automatic

Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn.

word recognition skills. For students with dyslexia, it is helpful if their outside academic therapists work closely with classroom teachers.

Schools can implement academic accommodations and modifications to help students with dyslexia succeed. For example, a student with dyslexia can be given extra time to complete tasks, help with taking notes, and work assignments that are modified appropriately. Teachers can give recorded tests or allow students with dyslexia to use alternative means of assessment. Students can benefit from listening to audiobooks and using text reading and word processing computer programs.

Students may also need help with emotional issues that sometimes arise as a consequence of difficulties in school. Mental health specialists can help students cope with their struggles.

What are the rights of a dyslexic person?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) define the rights of students with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities. These individuals are legally entitled to special services to help them overcome and accommodate their learning problems. Such services include education programs designed to meet the needs of these students. The Acts also protect people with dyslexia against unfair and illegal discrimination.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

Like any professional field, education has its own unique terminology. The following list provides some of the most common terms. These terms may vary across geographical areas and even within states. In one part of the country an instructor might be referred to as a therapist and in another a specialized tutor. Sometimes different words are used to refer to the same things, such as academic language therapy, educational therapy, and multisensory structured language instruction from a qualified tutor.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Academic language denotes that services offered to clients are educational and emphasize the teaching of reading, spelling, handwriting, and written expression. Therapy indicates that those services are intensive and therapeutic rather than tutorial.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE THERAPIST

Academic language therapists (or academic therapists) have learned specific instructional strategies for teaching students with dyslexia—a language-based learning disability that affects some combination of oral language skills (speaking and listening) and written language skills (reading, spelling, handwriting, and written expression).

CERTIFIED ACADEMIC LANGUAGE THERAPIST(CALT)

Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) certifies academic language therapists. Certified Academic Language Therapists(CALT) have completed accredited courses of study that provide extensive training and practicum experiences in multisensory structured language teaching. Academic Language Therapists have knowledge of the logic and structure of English language systems: phonology, phonics, orthography, morphology-etymology, semantics, and syntax. They know how to deliver structured language instruction using simultaneous multisensory teaching strategies. Academic Language TherapyTeaching begins with the basics and rebuilds the learning continuum step-by-step. Academic language therapy starts from ground zero so that no gaps remain in the student's understanding of language structure. Students learn systematic strategies for decoding (word identification), encoding (spelling), and letter formation. Students' successes and challenges during one lesson inform the planning of subsequent lessons. Academic language therapy is cumulative, systematic, structured instruction that is written and planned for a particular student, or group of students, and is delivered by an

HELPFUL TERMINOLOGY

educator with comprehensive training. Following the advice of Margaret Rawson, a pioneer in the field of dyslexia education, academic language therapists guide their students to progress "as fast as they can but as slow as they must."

Educational Therapist

An educational therapist provides individualized intervention, formal and informal assessment of academic skills, and case management for clients with a wide range of learning disabilities and learning issues. An educational therapist has training in multiple types of learning difficulties, with additional training in assessment and intervention strategies that address the social-emotional aspects that have an impact on learning. An educational therapist sets goals and develops an intervention plan that addresses not only academic difficulties, but also social-emotional aspects of lifelong learning through an eclectic combination of intervention strategies.

EDUCATIONAL THERAPY/PROFESSIONAL(ET/P)®

Professional membership in the Association of Educational Therapists (AET) is open to educational therapists who have a master's degree (or who have met the requirements of graduate level and/or upper division level courses), are engaged in educational therapy in private practice, public or private schools, private clinics, hospitals, or public agencies, and who have met the direct service delivery minimum of 1,500 hours and have completed their Board Certified Educational Therapist (BCET) Supervised Hours.

BOARD CERTIFIED EDUCATIONAL THERAPIST (BCET)

Board Certified ET membership is open to educational therapists who have a master's degree, have been ET/Professional members in good standing for at least one year, and have met additional requirements as specified by the AET Certification Board.

EDUCATIONAL THERAPY

Educational therapy considers the impact of school, family, and community in the client's learning, fosters communication with all significant members of the client's environment, and attends to socio-emotional goals as well as academic goals. With recognition that emotional, behavioral, and learning problems are often linked, an educational therapist works with all the significant people concerned with the student's learning; focus is not only on remediation but also on building underlying learning skills and helping clients become more self aware, self reliant, and efficient learners.

TUTOR

The term *tutor* is used in both general and specific ways to refer to volunteers and professionals with a broad range of skills and qualifications, so it is very important to ask and be clear about how the term is used with regard to the instruction your child receives. Tutors who lack the training described within IDA's *Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading* will lack the depth necessary to understand and address the needs of students with specific language-based learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. Some examples of the services you can expect from different types of tutors are outlined below. Most of us are familiar with the general use of the term tutor—an instructor hired to work with individual students or small groups. These tutors typically use traditional teaching methods to help with completing homework or projects in specific subject or curriculum areas that are causing them problems. Tutors may also be skilled at teaching time management, task completion, and study skills. These tutors provide important instructional assistance to students in helping them reach their academic goals; however, they may not be subject to standards or professional qualifications for a tutor and their background may not include comprehensive training in language learning disabilities, assessment, case management, and the structure of language. Qualified multisensory structured language professionals sometimes refer to themselves as instructors or tutors, such as Certified Orton-Gillingham Instructor Wilson Certified Tutors. These individuals have completed extensive accredited coursework and practicum experiences in multisensory structured language teaching. They have in-depth knowledge of the structure of English language and deliver language instruction using simultaneous multisensory teaching strategies. They are highly trained instructors who can deliver effective instruction to individuals with specific language-based learning disabilities, such as dyslexia.

TUTORING

Tutoring may help students meet the demands of grade level expectations in a variety of required subjects, including basic study skills.

REFERENCE
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Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

by TIMOTHY SHANAHAN

Why Children Should Be Taught to Read with More CHALLENGING Texts

A major instructional tenet of the past 70 years has been that students will make progress in reading only if they are taught with relatively easy texts—texts at their so-called "instructional levels." This theory has been embraced by both reading educators and special educators and is widely honored in U.S. classrooms and in remedial interventions. The argument has been that learning will be disrupted if teachers try to teach using texts that elicit too many word-reading errors or that students may not fully understand from the start. However, this nearly universal assumption turns out to be completely unsupported by evidence.

Of course, the idea of placing students in texts in ways that would facilitate their learning to read has always been plagued by technical inadequacies (Klare, 1974–1975; Nilsson, 2013), though these problems evidently have not been enough to dissuade teachers trying to match children to text. For instance, even the most scientifically rigorous readability formulae have difficulty distinguishing text levels, such as determining whether a text is best for second- or third-grade readers. That's why the most widely used readability schemes estimate grade placements in bands (e.g., grades 2–3, 4–5, 6–8) and why, even with this, there is so much overlap in the grades the texts are assigned to; many texts may be assigned to two or more of these ranges.

Likewise, the measures used to estimate a child's reading levels have been dubious, as well. There have been controversies over what counts as errors and the ability of teachers to accurately make these judgments on the fly as they listen to children read. Basically, these text and student measures are able to provide no more than rough guestimates, neither being precise nor reliable enough for accurate individual decision making, and neither having been validated for the purpose of matching children to books in a way that would facilitate learning. There have been many articles exploring these measurement problems (Pikulski & Shanahan, 1982; Zamanian & Heydari, 2012). This article, instead, will consider the validity of the "instructional level" construct. That is, if we match texts to students in the ways that have been recommended, is learning actually facilitated?

Early Responses to Student Struggles with Texts

Throughout the first half of the 20th Century, retaining students at lower grade levels was seen as the solution to the age-old problem of students being unable to read their textbooks adequately. The way to protect against too great a mismatch between student and book was to prevent students from progressing up the grades (and, up the textbook levels) unless their growth in reading justified the advancement. Of course, it would have been possible to simply use texts that were, for example, at a third-grade level in a fifth-grade class. Educators at the time must have been discomfited by this alternative, as there are no contemporary references to that idea as far as I can tell. The result of this practice of retention, according to various teacher memoirs of the time, was that increasingly older and larger students were using texts that were far below their maturity or interests, a situation that, not surprisingly, led to serious disciplinary problems and disaffection.

> The result of the practice of retention, according to various teacher memoirs of the time, was that increasingly older and larger students were using texts that were far below their maturity or interests, a situation that led to serious disciplinary problems and disaffection.

During this period, psychologists were exploring the possibility of measuring the readability or comprehensibility of texts. Philosophers had long opined on the idea that texts varied in their depth or complexity, but until the 1920s and '30s there was no objective or scientific way of teasing out these differences. That began to change with the development of readability formulae that allowed texts to be placed on a continuum of difficulty roughly corresponding to grade levels.

This innovation in the measurement of text difficulty opened the possibility of matching students to text scientifically. By the late 1930s, educators began to speculate that it would be possible to match text difficulties not just to grade levels, but to individual students' reading levels. The idea that this practice could facilitate learning grew in popularity, though there was not yet any forcefully articulated theory or technology that could bring this notion to fruition.

Instructional Level Theory

That changed in 1946 with the publication of Emmett Betts' *Foundations of Reading Instruction*, which was to become the major reading-education textbook for teachers in that era. Betts not only argued that learning was facilitated by placing students at their reading levels, but he also described it as a research based approach and provided a set of operational criteria that could be used to match students with appropriate texts. As Betts stated, "Maximum development may be expected when the learner is challenged but not frustrated" (Betts, 1946, p. 448). Over time this idea gained adherents, and after the publication of Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell's *Guided Reading* in 1996, what is known as "leveled reading" became the dominant approach in U.S. classrooms (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Betts claimed that readers have three levels of performance, all linked to how closely the demands of a particular text correspond to their skills. The independent level referred to texts that readers would find easy enough to read and learn from on their own, with no teacher assistance needed. Texts at an instructional level would be a bit harder, requiring some teacher guidance if the student was to learn from them. And frustration level texts were those presumed to be too challenging from which to learn even with the support of a good teacher. (Against the background of a period in which Freud was king, avoiding frustration was a high priority for psychic health.)

Betts further asserted that these reading levels could be determined by examining students' accuracy in recognizing words and their degree of comprehension. He claimed that students learned best from texts in which their oral reading accuracy was in the range of 95 to 98% and their reading comprehension (on a cold read

with no teacher assistance) was 75 to 89%. Betts cited as his source for these criteria the dissertation of one of his doctoral students, Patsy Aloysius Killgallon (1942).

How did Killgallon go about this research? One might assume Killgallon matched students with various texts and found that more learning occurred when students were working with texts at their instructional levels. Surprisingly, that was not at all what the study considered. Killgallon's dissertation, which has remained unpublished except for some brief excerpts (Shanahan, 1983), started from the premise that for students to learn from a text, they had to be able to read it with 75 to 89% comprehension. The source of this premise is unknown; when interviewed years later Betts and Killgallon could no longer remember from whence this criterion had come (Beldin, 1970). The study merely found that children who read with less than 95% accuracy usually failed to accomplish the required 75 to 89% comprehension outcome; which is the source of the widely used standard for accuracy. Killgallon did not explore the impact of different reading "levels" on learning but simply correlated the number of oral reading errors with a target comprehension level, based on results from a small number of fourth graders.

> **Killgallon did not explore the impact of different reading "levels" on learning but simply correlated the number of oral reading errors with a target comprehension level, based on results from a small number of fourth graders.**

Research into Matching Texts to Students' Reading Levels

Throughout the 1950s, "instructional level" was widely recognized as more theory than proven fact. An early empirical attempt to determine the effects of instructional level placements on children's learning was carried out by J. Louis Cooper in 1952. This ambitious study pre- and post-tested more than 800 students in grades 2 to 6 from eight different schools, using two reading achievement tests to determine each student's instructional level. Cooper then monitored the texts that students were actually taught in, hoping to determine which student-book matches resulted in the greatest learning (Cooper, 1952).

Unfortunately, in practice student ability was totally confounded with book placement; that is, teachers

placed the best readers (who also had the highest IQ scores) in books at their independent levels and assigned the lowest readers to what were, for them, the most difficult books relative to their abilities. Essentially, Cooper found that the children who made the biggest learning gains were the ones who could, from the start, already read their instructional books perfectly (in other words, there would be nothing to learn in these books). He himself concluded that this was meaningless. Nevertheless, this study illustrates why teachers might conclude that particularly easy book placements would lead to the most learning: The best readers are most likely to be placed in relatively easy texts and to make the best learning progress, too. This relationship is obviously not a causal one, but the pattern may encourage an assumption of causation.

Since that first failed attempt at validation of the instructional level construct, there have been several additional attempts to evaluate whether such text placements facilitate learning. But even replications of the original Killgallon study, which merely linked oral reading performance and text comprehension, have not been particularly reassuring. For example, Powell replicated the Killgallon study and concluded that students could often comprehend text well despite evidencing many more oral reading errors than Betts' criteria prescribed. That would suggest that Betts' benchmarks were placing students in texts that were too easy. And, correlational studies have not been encouraging either, reporting that frustration-level book placements were more associated with learning than instructional level ones (Powell & Dunkeld, 1971).

The randomized controlled trial is the gold standard for validating the effectiveness of an instructional practice, and in those kinds of studies instructional-level theory has fared poorly, as well. For example, in a study of second graders, children's instructional levels were identified using Betts' criteria, with children randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups (Morgan, Wilcox, & Eldredge, 2000). One group worked at their instructional level and two others were placed in texts that were either two or four grade levels above their instructional levels. Student learning was then monitored across the school year to determine if these placements provided any learning advantages. Both frustration-level groups outperformed the students who were taught at their instructional levels. This study has been replicated with third graders as well (Brown,

Mohr, Wilcox, & Barrett, 2017). Other experimental studies—conducted with learning disabled students with Individualized Education Programs (O'Connor, Swanson, & Geraghty, 2010), and with second, third and sixth graders (Homan, Hines, & 18 Perspectives on Language and Literacy Fall 2019 International Dyslexia Association Why Children Should Be Taught to Read with More Challenging Texts continued from page 17 www.DyslexiaIDA.org Perspectives on Language and Literacy Fall 2019 19 Kromrey, 1993; Kuhn et al., 2006)—have either concluded that the instructional level offered no advantage or that it actually resulted in lesser amounts of student learning.

> **Reading is the ability to make sense of text**, and that means being able to negotiate any barriers to understanding that texts may include.

Learning from More Challenging Texts

Why such consistently negative results? Reading is the ability to make sense of text, and that means being able to negotiate any barriers to understanding that texts may include. Accordingly, if students are working with texts that they can already read quite well—a description that certainly applies to instructional level texts—there is little opportunity for learning since the students can already negotiate the vocabulary and other features of that text. Students taught from a steady diet of relatively easy texts may make some progress, but not as much as would be possible with more complex texts, since the easier texts would provide fewer opportunities for dealing with sophisticated vocabulary, morphology, complex syntax, subtle cohesive links, complicated structures, and richer and deeper content.

Of course, reading comprehension entails the use of prior knowledge, the knowledge that readers already have prior to reading with a particular text. The more a reader already knows about the information presented in a text, the better the comprehension is likely to be. Instructional level placements, since they emphasize relatively high initial reading comprehension, discourage the use of texts that present much information that students do not already know. This both reduces the opportunity to learn new content and also limits what students can be taught effectively

about how best to make sense of texts that present much unfamiliar information.

Still, it would be foolish to conclude that facilitation of learning requires no more than that we place students in more demanding texts. That is a necessary condition, but possibly not a sufficient one. Several of the experimental studies already cited that placed students in markedly harder text for instruction also engaged the students in extensive fluency work—reading the texts multiple times orally with guidance. In other words, though the students may have initially had difficulty reading these instructional texts, by the time they finished, their performance levels with these texts had advanced markedly.

But fluency practice is just one of many scaffolds or supports that teachers can provide to students to help them to gain understanding of complex texts. One frequent barrier to text comprehension is that readers may lack the background information or content knowledge that would allow them to gain full understanding of a text. Authors make assumptions about what their readers will know about a topic or event, but these assumptions do not always match with the actual knowledge that readers may bring to the text. Schools could avoid the possibility of this kind of mismatch by providing students with texts that relate to knowledge they have previously acquired through the curriculum. Sometimes young readers have relevant background knowledge, but they fail to apply it when they read. Scaffolding in such situations entails encouraging students to think about the related knowledge before and during the reading. However, students need to learn to make sense of texts even when they do not have a lot of specific background knowledge, and teachers can introduce them to strategies that can help in those situations, too—for instance, drawing on analogous situations they are familiar with, or seeking additional information from outside the text.

Additionally, scaffolds may help students with unfamiliar vocabulary and support them in making sense of the linguistic or conceptual demands of a text. Strengthening students' abilities to parse sentences, make accurate cohesive links, and analyze the organizational plan or structure of a text can boost comprehension. Instruction in comprehension strategies such as summarizing, self-questioning, monitoring, or visualizing can help, too, as long as the strategies are attached to understanding the specific content of a text and not pursued as ends in themselves.

Any text feature or characteristic used by an author to communicate information can stymie some readers and, thus, can become the focus of potentially useful instructional scaffolding or support. Of course, the actual supports provided by a teacher in a given instance will depend upon the specifics of the text and whether those features are actually disrupting a student's comprehension. Table 1 provides a partial list of some of the possible categories of scaffolds and supports that can be provided to readers to allow them to gain a more complete understanding of a text.

TABLE 1.
Categories of Scaffolds or Supports that Teachers Can Provide to Readers

- Decoding/fluency supports
- Enhancements of prior knowledge
- Vocabulary supports
- Syntax guidance
- Coherence links
- Genre guidance
- Text structure/organization supports
- Author's tone supports
- Literary device assistance (e.g., metaphors, symbols,allusions)
- Text features assistance (e.g., italics, bolding, bullets)
- Data-presentation device (e.g., tables, charts) assistance
- Comprehension strategy guidance
- Motivational encouragement

The Role of Instructional Support

From the research conducted so far, it is impossible to recommend a particular degree of text difficulty with which students should be dealing within instruction. Obviously, the harder a text is for a student, the more there is to learn, which is a positive thing. But it is also clear that the harder a text is relative to the current reading abilities of the students asked to read it, the greater the instructional support needed for success. The appropriateness of text challenge levels is probably less a matter of "how hard is the book for the student" and more an equation that would consider both this gap between student and text and the degree of support that teachers are willing and able to provide. The harder the book is for the student, the greater the instructional support needed for success.

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In one study, the successful students ended up with what we have traditionally called an instructional level (Ehri, Dreyer, Flugman, & Gross, 2007). That is, students were taught from frustration level books, but by the time they finished working with one, they could read it with 98% accuracy and very high comprehension (these were first-graders so the major challenges were with the decoding). There is not enough research of this kind to mandate such an instructional approach, but I find it provocative. With this approach, both teachers and students could easily see the difference between where the students started with a text and how they ended up, something almost impossible to discern when students are placed in relatively easy materials. As they gain greater knowledge of the content and vocabulary that they are reading about, work through the confusing or complicated linguistic or textual demands, and develop fluency with the particular decoding requirements of the text, students should be able to read that text with high proficiency, at which point it would be time to move on to another text.

Another concern is whether it makes sense to place beginning readers in difficult texts. Various theories suggest that it might be wiser to start beginners out more gradually, lest they become overwhelmed. I suspect the issue is not so much the degree of challenge as what aspect of the text is challenging. Beginning readers struggle mostly with issues of decoding, and the texts used to teach them are often constructed to provide decoding support in a plethora of ways. The options include decodable texts, which ensure that a high percentage of the words can be decoded using the skills mastered to that point; texts with controlled vocabulary, providing children with a severely limited but gradually increasing collection of words; and texts with orthographies and printing techniques that give young readers cues to pronunciation, through pronunciation keys such as those provided in dictionaries or the assignment of different colors to the

letters associated with particular letter sounds. For beginners, more challenging text would usually use vocabulary with less repetition and a greater multiplicity of spelling patterns, which may slow these beginners' development of proficiency.

Accordingly, no state has established text complexity standards for kindergarten or first-grade readers, and no instructional programs, to my knowledge, have ramped up text difficulties at these levels. I think this caution is prudent. Make sure that children have solid foundational skills in decoding—say through a high first-grade or a beginning second-grade level— before increasing the complexity of the texts used to teach reading. Several studies have shown that second grade is not too early for students to deal with more complex text successfully, a level by which those basic decoding skills should be well in hand.

The caution given here for young readers also would make sense for older readers who still decode like kindergartners or first graders. Don't worry about taking students beyond "instructional level" texts until they are able to decode as well as a successful first-grader. I am sometimes told that this is still too early for learning-disabled readers because it might lead them to guess at rather than decode words in the harder texts. However, one study showed that learning-disabled children in grades 3 through 5 who read at a beginning grade 2 level or lower gain no advantages from being limited to books at their instructional level (O'Connor, Swanson, & Geraghty, 2010). Restricting students to easier materials usually means preventing them from dealing with content at their age- or maturity-levels and may serve to isolate these children from their social peers. These students are also aware that they are being relegated to the "dumb books," with serious consequences for their self-esteem. And while the theory is that students will gradually make their way up the ladder of text complexity by reading voluminously at their own levels, the fact is that many children who begin at lower levels remain permanently behind. Without access to the more sophisticated concepts and complex vocabulary that their peers are being exposed to, they have no opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills that could enable them to catch up.

A final concern oft expressed by teachers and parents is that teaching students from supposed frustration-level texts will be harmful to their motivation. Even the designation "frustration level" suggests that the damage might be less to learning and more to engagement. It is certainly possible that students would be discouraged by consistent placements in texts they will struggle to read. However, there are countervailing possibilities as well. For instance, research finds challenge itself to be motivational (Killeen, 1994). Also, studies have failed to link text complexity with lowered motivation or misbehavior (Fulmer & Tulis, 2013; Gambrell, Wilson, & Gantt, 1981), and it is evident that even good readers frequently choose harder texts when reading independently (Donovan, Smolkin, & Lomax, 2000). The motivational field of reading consists not just of the text, but also the explanations, instruction, support, and scaffolding provided by teachers—and most importantly, the provision of the knowledge required to understand the text. These may be sufficient to offset any sense of being overwhelmed that might occur if students were reading on their own.

> It is certainly possible that students would be discouraged by consistent placements in texts they will struggle to read. However, there are countervailing possibilities as well. For instance, research finds challenge itself to be motivational.

Balancing Challenges with Supports

Contrary to long-standing assumptions, research has not supported the idea that there is a particular level of text with which students should be taught. Learning to read means learning to overcome the barriers and to exploit the possibilities of written language, and texts that students cannot already read well provide the greatest opportunity for helping them achieve that goal. But while it is reasonable to teach students with challenging texts, it is also essential that they develop proficiency with and derive knowledge from each text they work with. For that to happen, teachers need to provide students with scaffolding and support by—among other things—building the knowledge, vocabulary, and facility with features such as syntax and structure that are required to glean meaning from text.

by JOAN SEDITA

The Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Writing

T he literature and discourse related to literacy instruction tends to focus on reading, even though writing is just as important for student literacy achievement. In addition, significant attention is paid to the multi-component nature of skilled reading, while writing tends to be referred to as a single, monolithic skill.

Much has been written about the multiplicity of skills involved in reading, beginning with the "five components" model that became popular after the 2000 report of the National Reading Panel (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension). Levels of language skills are often referred to in terms of how they contribute to skilled reading (i.e., *phonology*, *orthography*, *morphology*, *syntax*, *semantics*, *discourse*). School assessment plans typically organize formal and informal measures around the discreet reading skills that they measure (e.g., phonemic awareness, word or passage oral reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, sentence or passage reading comprehension). Some published

reading programs focus on specific reading components by design (e.g., phonological awareness programs for young children, phonics programs for the primary grades) and core reading programs identify how discreet reading skills are addressed in daily or weekly lessons.

On the other hand, when attention is paid to writing instruction, teachers are not sure what that should include. Many educators who are knowledgeable about effective reading instruction are stymied when asked to: (1) identify the components of skilled writing, (2) explain how levels of language contribute to skilled writing, (3) identify a set of writing assessments, or (4) suggest a comprehensive curriculum for teaching writing.

With a nod towards Hollis Scarborough's "Reading Rope", I'd like to suggest a model that identifies the multiple components that are necessary for skilled writing. In 2001, Scarborough published a graphic that depicts multiple components of language comprehension (i.e., background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, literacy knowledge) and word recognition (i.e., phonological awareness, decoding, sight recognition) as strands in a rope. As students develop skills in these components they become increasingly strategic and automatic in their application, leading to fluent reading comprehension.

A similar "rope" metaphor can be used to depict the many strands that contribute to fluent, skilled writing, as shown in the graphic below. It should be noted that instruction for many skills that support writing also support reading comprehension.

The Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Writing

(SEDITA, 2019)

Critical Thinking
- Generating ideas, gathering information
- Writing process: organizing, drafting, writing, revising

Syntax
- Grammar and syntactic awareness
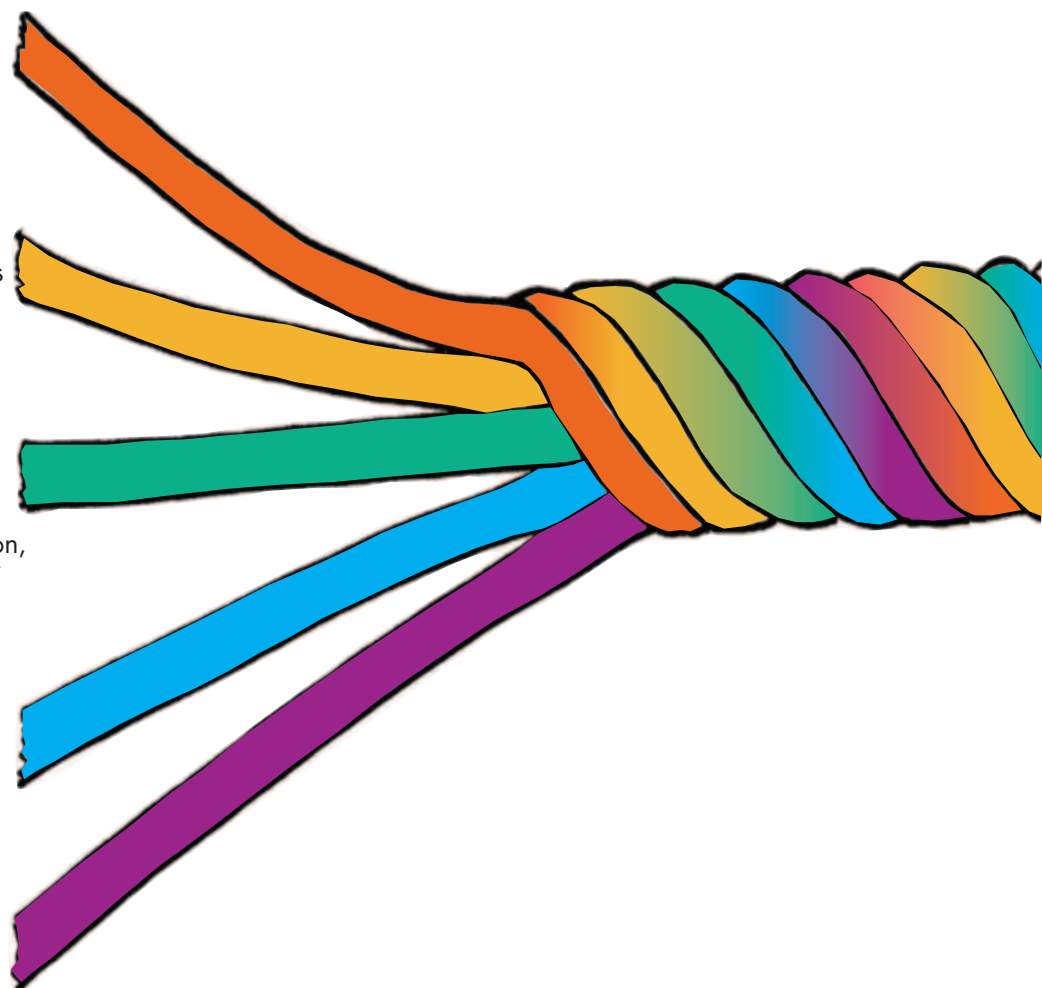- Sentence elaboration
- Punctuation

Text Structure
- Narrative, informational, opinion structures
- Paragraph structure
- Patterns of organization (description, sequence, cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution)

Writing Craft
- Word choice
- Awareness of task, audience, purpose
- Literary devices

Transcription
- Spelling
- Handwriting, keyboarding

The Critical Thinking Strand

This strand draws significantly on critical thinking and executive function skills, as well as the ability to develop background knowledge about a writing topic. It also requires an awareness of the *writing process* (i.e., organizing, drafting, writing, revising). Students engage in critical thinking as they think about what they want to communicate through their writing. If they are composing an informational or opinion piece, they may need to tap into comprehension skills to gather information from sources. Students benefit from explicit instruction for brainstorming strategies and skills for gathering information from written and multi-media sources, such as note taking. They also need to learn planning strategies for organizing their thoughts, including the use of prewriting graphic organizers. Students need to be metacognitive and purposeful about working recursively through the stages of the writing process, and they benefit from explicit instruction in revising and editing strategies.

The Text Structure Strand

Text structure is unique to written language, and awareness of several levels of text structure supports both writing and reading comprehension. Students benefit from explicit instruction in several levels of text structure:

- Narrative, informational, and opinion text structure: Knowledge of the different organization structures for these three types of writing, including the use of introductions, body development, and conclusions.

- Paragraph structure: The understanding that written paragraphs are used to "chunk" text into manageable units that are organized around a central idea and supporting details.

- Patterns of organization: The understanding that sentences and paragraphs can be organized to convey a specific purpose including description, sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem and solution.

- Linking and transition words or phrases: The ability to use words or phrases to link sentences, paragraphs or sections of text. This includes knowledge of transitions associated with specific patterns of organization.

The Writing Craft Strand

This strand addresses skills and strategies often referred to as "writers' craft" or "writers' moves". Students benefit from explicit instruction in the following:

- Word choice: The purposeful use of specific vocabulary, word placement and dialogue to convey meaning and create an effect on the reader.
- Awareness of task, audience, purpose: Being mindful of these elements in order to influence decisions about word choice, tone, length and style of a writing piece.
- Literary devices: Understanding and use of common literary elements (e.g., plot, setting, narrative, characters, theme) and literary techniques (e.g., imagery, personification, figurative language, alliteration, allegory, irony).

The Syntax Strand

Individual sentences communicate ideas that add up to make meaning. Efficient processing of sentence structure is necessary for listening and reading comprehension, as well as for communicating information and ideas in writing. *Syntax* is the study and understanding of grammar – the system and arrangement of words, phrases and clauses that make up a sentence. Students develop syntactic awareness as they learn the correct use and relationship of words in sentences. This begins with exposure to proper English by listening to people talk and reading or listening to written text. Students benefit from explicit instruction focused on building sentence skills, including activities such as sentence elaboration and sentence combining.

The Transcription Strand

This strand addresses spelling and handwriting (or keyboarding) skills. They are basic skills that are needed to "transcribe" the words a writer wants to put into writing. Just as developing fluency with decoding skills enables students to focus on making meaning while reading, the sooner students become automatic and fluent with spelling and handwriting, the sooner they will be able to focus their attention on the other strands of the writing rope. Students benefit from explicit instruction in the primary grades for spelling during phonics instruction, and handwriting or keyboarding.

Low Levels of Writing Proficiency

Much attention has been placed on the 2019 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading assessment results showing that the average reading scores in the U.S. were lower for both fourth- and eighth-grade students compared to 2017, with only 35% of fourth graders and 34% of eighth graders scoring at or above proficient. However, the most recent NAEP writing assessment results (2011) should be even more concerning: only 24% of students at both grades 8 and 12 performed at the proficient level. In reporting these NAEP scores, it was noted, "It is clear that the ability to use written language to communicate with others – and the corresponding need for effective writing instruction and assessment – is more relevant than ever." Yet there is not nearly the degree of focus placed on writing as there is on reading.

In Conclusion

I have been a literacy educator for over 40 years, with most of that time spent teaching students how to read and write, and teachers how to apply evidence-based practices for teaching reading and writing. I am heartened by the expanded national and local discussions taking place about the instructional implications of the science of reading. However, a similar emphasis must be placed on writing. My hope is that the "writing rope" will help educators understand the components of skilled writing and promote a more robust discussion about writing instruction.
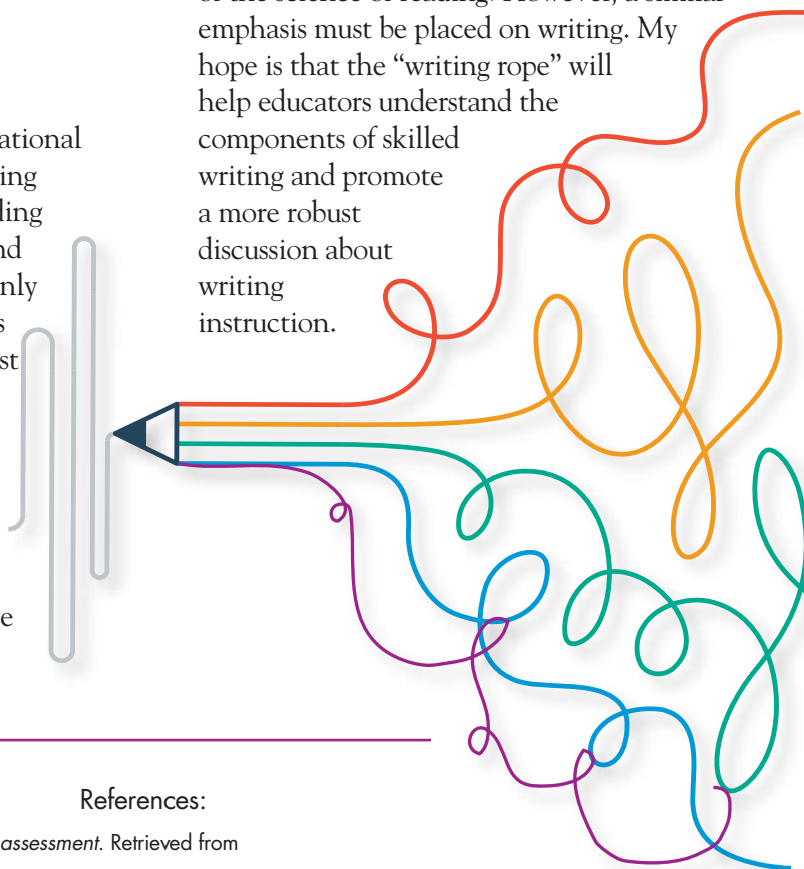
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by WILLIAM VAN CLEAVE

Best Practices in Vocabulary Instruction: What Words Matter & How To Teach Them

Framing the Discussion: Teachers, Students, & the Three-Tier Model

Maya Angelou famously said, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." When it comes to vocabulary instruction, knowing better involves understanding how vocabulary works as a part of student learning. Doing better involves eliminating ineffective practices and including beneficial ones. When a teacher makes the shift from dated, ineffective practices to effective practices based on what we know about vocabulary, it is often enlightening, but it can be challenging and even painful as well.

Vocabulary is unquestionably an essential literacy skill. Where things can get tricky is in deciding on the best way to go about building our students' vocabulary. Part of the challenge is that our students are different. They come from different economic and educational backgrounds, cultures, and geographical regions. Some are learning English as a second language. Some have learning disabilities. They enter our schools with different strengths and weaknesses, which makes it challenging to know what words to teach and how best to teach them.

The International Dyslexia Association's definition of dyslexia includes the sentence, "Secondary consequences may include problems with reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that may impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge" (I.D.A., 2002). It should come as no surprise that students who do not read with

the frequency and skill of their classmates often grapple with reading comprehension and vocabulary development.

In the mid-1980s Isabel Beck and her colleagues developed their three-tier vocabulary model, which fortunately continues to frame much of the educational discussion about vocabulary today. In Beck et al's model, **Tier One** words are everyday words that any child would know, words like *tree, dog,* and *table*. Though some Tier One words are difficult to read or spell, students learn their meanings without instruction*. **Tier Two** words are precise, interesting words used frequently in written communication but not often in oral communication. These cross-disciplinary words, words such as *facilitate, interpretation,* and *evaluative*, are particularly useful to teach since students have the potential to read and write them in a variety of settings. Their value comes in the number of opportunities students have to use them. **Tier Three** words in Beck et al's three-tier model are limited to one field or area. These domain-specific words can be interesting, but they have a low frequency of use. Words such as *theocracy, photosynthesis,* and *phalanx* are Tier Three words. Learning them helps students with a specific area of study, but students will not have the opportunity to use them repeatedly in their cross-disciplinary reading and writing.

THREE TIER VOCABULARY MODEL
Concept from Beck & McKeown (1987)

TIER THREE
Domain Specific
(Low Frequency of Use)
theocracy, photosynthesis, trapezoid

TIER TWO
Precise, Interesting, Sophisticated Words
(Common in Text; Uncommon in Everyday Language)
consequently, preceding, fundamental

TIER ONE
Basic Words
(Easily Explained & Understood)
lunch, warm, dog

Word Selection

Though academic vocabulary lists (Tier Two) abound, they are typically lengthy and overwhelming. One of the most challenging aspects of vocabulary development is choosing which words to teach. Even so, the process of choosing words can be illuminating to teachers because it forces them to think specifically about what makes (or does not make) a word valuable for instruction. In essence, the instructor develops her filters for word selection through practice with word selection.

### So Many Words, So Little Time:
How Many Words – How Many Times:

- Younger students should work with 6-10 words per week (Beck et al, 2013). Though these students are and should be developing their reading skills using decodable text, the words in this kind of reading are not rich enough for vocabulary development. Instead, teachers of these younger students should choose words from read-alouds. Older students should aim for 10 words per week, and most of their words will come from reading (Beck et al, 2013).

- Students need multiple exposures to the words they are studying. Too often in classrooms, teachers introduce a long list of words on Monday, tell their students to study during the week, and provide a Friday matching quiz meant to assess whether their students have "learned" the words in question. This approach does not provide the number of exposures necessary to have students deeply learn new words.

Developing Our Filters:
Good Words for Instruction:

- Academic vocabulary (Tier Two) words typically make the best words to teach. They can be related to words and experiences outside the text, and they apply to multiple content areas so that students who learn them will have lots of chances to use them. *Observation, consistent,* and *variable* are examples of these high-impact words.

- Good words often involve polysemy, or multiple meanings. Exploring these polysemous words and how their different meanings relate can be powerful. Consider *key* (to open a lock or idea or concept); *flurry* (of commotion or of wind or snow); and *good* (man or painter). If a student understands a word deeply enough, when she encounters a new meaning or use, she can relate
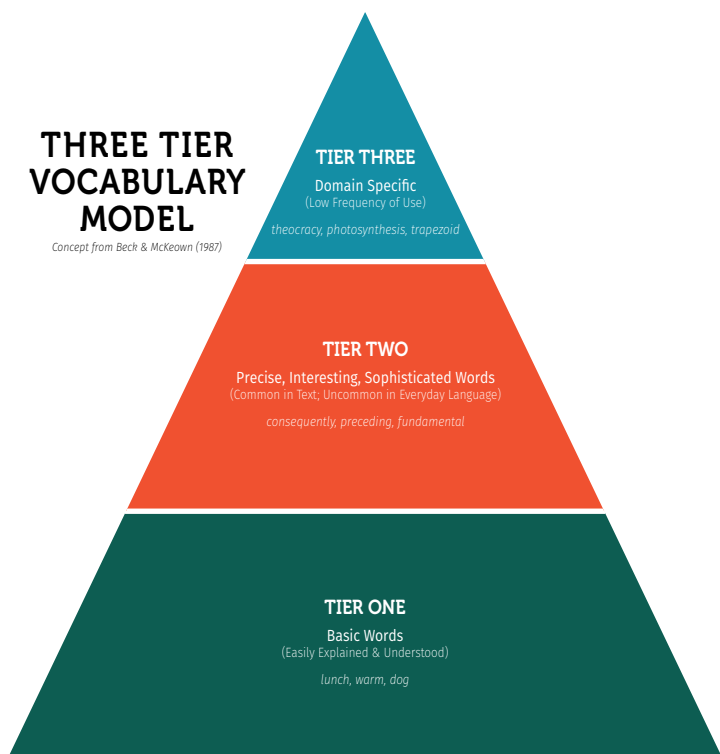
it to her existing knowledge. This is typically difficult for struggling readers unless they study the word deeply.

- Oftentimes, it makes sense to study a word because it introduces an interesting base or affix to students. Using the word as a window into a word family can be powerful. For example, students might study *egress*, which is comprised of <e-> (out) and <gress> (step or go). The <e-> appears in other words, including *elongate*, *evaporate*, *eject*, and *emit*. The <gress> also appears in many words, including *digressed*, *congress*, *regressing*, *aggressive*, and *progression*. Morphology, or the study of meaning parts, is a powerful tool in vocabulary instruction though time and space do not permit a further exploration here.

- Some words are essential in order for students to understand a text or area of study. These are sometimes Tier Three words; they do not have a high impact in terms of overall vocabulary, but they are nonetheless important for that particular lesson or concept. *Photosynthesis*, taught in a unit

covering plants and how they make food, is imperative for understanding, but it does not appear in other subject areas.

- Ideally, words should be (a) connected to content students are studying and (b) "typical" enough that some more advanced students probably already know them. While the latter may seem counterintuitive, if some of the strongest students know a word, it is the kind of word other students will have use for. Choose interesting words, but do not choose a word just because you are sure no one will know it.

Recommendations & Suggestions

The best teachers of vocabulary are excited about the power of words. They show their enthusiasm in their interactions with students. They like having discussions about the impact of a word like *timid* over a word like *shy*; what it means to be *anxious* versus just *tense*; and the way *saunter*, *stroll*, and *meander* affect our understanding of a character's *ambulation*. They recognize the power

Setting the Stage for Change:
What "Old School" Vocabulary Instruction Looks Like

Unfortunately, many teachers around the country continue to "teach" vocabulary using an outdated model of what instruction should look like. Traditional, archaic vocabulary instruction often looks something like this:

Traditional/Archaic Weekly Vocabulary Instruction Plan

Monday	Teacher provides a list of words and reads over them with her students.
Tuesday (or for homework)	Students look up and copy dictionary definitions into a notebook, onto index cards, or into Quizlet.
Wednesday (or for homework)	Students study/review their vocabulary terms, either independently or with a classmate.
Thursday (or for homework)	Students memorize words and their definitions in preparation for the quiz.
Friday	Teacher gives a quiz, typically matching, fill-in-the-blanks with word bank, or multiple choice.

Research has debunked the effectiveness of such an approach, but too many teachers lack the knowledge of what vocabulary instruction should look like and how to make the changes necessary in their own teaching to impact the students they most want to reach.

of *elaborate* over *expand*, of *concentrate* over *pay attention*. They want students to *ponder* rather than *think* about or even *consider*. They are unafraid of sophisticated words though they explain them when they use them. Students learn about the power of words when they interact with these teachers.

That said, here are some specific suggestions about vocabulary instruction. Though the slant here is to instruction in a school setting, many of these suggestions can be adapted for use at home as well:

- **Provide students with multiple exposures to the words that matter**. Introduce, review, and assess by all means. But also have students experiment with words interactively. Their work can be bell ringers, exit tickets, or integrated into a larger lesson. Provide students with so many opportunities to use and uncover the nuances of the vocabulary they are studying that they cannot help but know assigned words—and know them deeply. Recently in a small school in rural Montana, I saw a teacher who has made vocabulary one focus of her work with middle and high school ELA students. She has organized a small bulletin board by her class-room door into sections by grade level so that she will keep the words in mind. Each section has six or seven words. She frequently stands at that board, working with the students to review the words or use them to explain something about the text they are reading in class. Each day she asks her students to use the words in a different way, and few of the activities take more than five minutes. Short, frequent opportunities to interact with the words help students remember and deepen their under-standing of how those words might be used. Her students understand the words they study, and they generally enjoy this wordplay.

- **Embed the words you teach into other aspects of your time with students.** If you're working with the word *calamity* and your student reacts melodramatically to stubbing his toe, ask, "Now, Edward, was that really a calamity?" (Unless he's REALLY angry!) If Marcy has a good thought about Wilbur's interaction with Charlotte, use one of the week's words to mention that she is being particu-larly *insightful* today. If *fret* is on your list for the week, admonish your students not to *fret* too much about tomorrow's test.

- **Alter the definition of the word.** Asking students to memorize by rote the definitions of words for the Friday assessment does not help with understanding words deeply and knowing when and how to use them. Consider the word *erode*. I might define it as "break down" but then review it during the week using words like "crumble," "grind down," "wear down," "disintegrate," and "eat away." Altering a word's definition over the course of the week as you work with it helps students cement their understanding of and flexibility with the word.

- **Surround the words you teach with associated words.** Instead of teaching a word's meaning in isolation, help them understand how it works with others. If we again consider the word *erode*, words such as *acid, gully, top soil, water,* and *flooding* come to mind. None of these words means erode, but all have strong associations with it. They are the kinds of words you might see in a passage about eroding or erosion. Helping students create connections be-tween some of these words and erode will help them to anchor their contextual knowledge of the word—a powerful way of knowing. When they read text about eroding, they will not only recognize some of these words but also know how erode relates with them. They will add the word erode to their brain's vocabulary "web."

- **Develop recognize activities between teaching and recalling.** When I began teaching in the field of dyslexia, one of my first and best teachers was Shirley Kokesh, a mentor to this day. She was the first to

help me understand that teachers often miss a vital step in helping students learn new information. Most teachers introduce new material in some fashion—they **teach**. Arguably, all teachers assess that knowledge, through verbal (e.g., What is the definition of monarchy?) and written (i.e., some kind of quiz or test) assessment—they expect students to **recall**. A vital step in helping students learn material is to help them link up new terms with their meanings—**recognize**. For example, a teacher might put five terms in front of her students.

(1) pacify (2) introspective (3) ominous
(4) frenetic (5) elasticity

Then, as she says a definition in student-friendly language, students would raise the number of fingers to correspond with the appropriate word. So, if the teacher said, "calm or soothe," students would raise one finger, indicating pacify. If she said, "creepy, scary, kind of like the *Jaws* theme," they should raise three fingers to indicate ominous, and so on. With an activity like this one, students are expected to link the term with knowledge they remember learning about it. Helping students make this **recognizing** connection between **teaching** and **recalling** cements their knowledge of the terms and can be done with most any content.

- **Create a record-keeping tool for vocabulary.** This could be a designated section of a student's notebook, a separate vocabulary notebook, or some sort of computer file. Such a tool tells students that vocabulary is valuable. It also allows them to return to an entry, not just to review their understanding of the term but also to expand upon it. Take, for example, the word *pioneer*. Hopefully, a middle school social studies teacher would first explain that a pioneer is one who is first into a region. Then, once the foundation is established, he would explain about the *pioneers* who went west. He would associate them with covered wagons, the Oregon Trail, manifest destiny, the Louisiana Purchase, and the Gold Rush. When students study the sixties, they might return to their entry and add in a reference to *pioneers* in space. Life science students would return to the *pioneer* entry, writing in their understanding of *pioneer* plants, those which colonize areas where no plants existed before. Through this exploration, they deepen their understanding of the word *pioneer* over time, as is the case with our knowledge of all words.

- **Create sentence frames so that students can succeed in sentence generation.** For example, instead of asking students to use the word *maliciously* in a sentence, give them the frame, "Claudius acted maliciously when he..." This structure allows students to show a relationship between *Hamlet's* Claudius and the word *maliciously*; it gives them the opportunity to show their knowledge in application; and it keeps them from creating forced, awkward, and often incorrect sentences.

Assumptions to Avoid

- **Myth 1: Dictionaries make good teachers.** Though no research indicates that students increase their vocabulary through looking up words in a dictionary, this arduous task continues to be widely practiced. Dictionaries are reference tools useful for clarifying confusions and exploring morphology and etymology. A struggling student lacks the skills to make sense of a definition containing words that are often at least as difficult as the word that sent them to the dictionary in the first place. Even if they are able to understand a dictionary definition, it does not help them clarify the nuances of word usage or the potential polysemy. Further, it doesn't *teach* them the meaning they have looked up. Dictionaries make poor teachers.

- **Myth 2: Using context builds vocabulary in struggling readers/writers.** While some words' meanings can be discerned through context, this is often not the case. Worse, struggling readers often lack the inference skills and working memory to notice that the way an author is using a particular word is not its first, most obvious meaning.

- **Myth 3: Incidental coverage has a major impact on the vocabulary of student readers/writers.** Time and time again, I hear from teachers that they cover words incidentally, as words come up during class. Most teachers do this less often than they believe. Worse, the students who struggle most with vocabulary—the ones who we theoretically most want to teach—will not internalize an understanding of words covered only incidentally as they come up. Most students need multiple exposures to words, and those exposures need to be deep ones.

- **Myth 4: Using vocabulary words as spelling words has value.** Too often, teachers are asked to include spelling in their curriculum but lack the training or materials to make that instruction effective. Spelling words should be grouped by pattern (phonological, orthographic, or morphological), and they should be words that students are already using in their writing, words they need to know how to spell. Vocabulary words do not typically share commonalities in structure, and students are just beginning to incorporate those words into their thinking; as a result, they make poor spelling words.

- **Myth 5: Wide reading will "fix" student vocabulary issues.** It is not enough to read. Students need to read deeply, to read on a variety of topics, and to read difficult enough text in order to benefit. A student who reads books significantly below his grade level will work fledgling decoding and fluency skills, but is unlikely to improve his vocabulary significantly.

- **Myth 6: Using words in sentences teaches students to apply those words.** Beck et al observed that 63% of student sentences were "odd" and 60% were completely unacceptable. Students typically lack the flexibility and depth of understanding to use words effectively in sentences. Sentence writing using vocabulary words may *reflect* an ability to use what they have learned, but it does not serve as a way of *teaching* that application.

Good vocabulary instruction takes both diligence and time; it takes a willingness to dive deeply into words and explore them with students. The journey can and should be an exciting one!

Note: English language learners sometimes struggle with Tier One words as they expand their English vocabulary, but these students remain the exception that proves the rule.

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by LOUISA MOATS

Teaching

SPELLING

An Opportunity to Unveil the Logic of Language

Let's begin with a simple test of your spelling knowledge. Which one of these is a correct spelling: *acommodate, accomodate, accommodate*? Which one of these is a correct spelling: committment, comitment, commitment? Which one of these is the name for the last course of a meal: *desert, dessert*? Which one of these is the name for a memory device: *pneumonic, neumonic, mnemonic*?

In each case, the last choice is correct. Note that you can read all of these words. Spelling them may be more problematic. Why? And what does spelling have to do with reading and language? The answers to these questions are important, as they provide the rationale for embracing Structured Literacy (SL) practices in spelling instruction and moving spelling instruction to a more central place in the language arts lesson.

SPELLING DEPENDS ON KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE

Although spelling a word does require exact knowledge of its letters, learning those letters is not a rote memory skill, whereby images are imprinted on the brain. Researchers who study the nature of word memories (Adlof & Perfetti, 2014;

> Reading words is easier than spelling them because words can be recognized on the basis of partial or degraded word memories, whereas spelling requires complete and accurate word memories. That is why students with dyslexia may eventually learn to read many words that they cannot spell.

Treiman, 2017) have identified four interrelated aspects of word knowledge: 1) phonological form (the word's pronunciation and phonemic makeup), 2) orthographic form or spelling, 3) semantics or word meaning, and 4) morpho-syntax, or the word's morphological structure and grammatical role.

All of these aspects of word memory are aspects of language processing. Good spellers have what are called high quality lexical representations or fully specified mental images of words that include all four dimensions of language knowledge. Similarly, poor spellers experience incomplete, inaccurate, or under-specified mental images because their processing of the word in any or all of these respects is less than optimal.

TABLE 1. Linguistic Features of the Word Commitment

Aspect of Language	Word Features	(Perhaps Unconscious) Knowledge
syntax	noun	The suffix *-ment* marks a noun.
morphology	three morphemes: com-mit-ment	*Com* is a Latin prefix meaning *with*; *mit* is a Latin root meaning *send*. These morphemes occur in many other English words and are spelled consistently.
semantic	A promise, obligation, responsibility. The act of restricting or confining a person.	Word has several meanings depending on context.

Abbreviation—SL: Structured Literacy

Reading words is easier than spelling them because words can be recognized on the basis of partial or degraded word memories, whereas spelling requires complete and accurate word memories. That is why students with dyslexia may eventually learn to read many words that they cannot spell. Spelling supports reading: If students do learn to spell words, their recognition of those words for reading becomes more accurate and automatic (Oulette, Martin-Chang, & Rossi, 2017).

How are word memories formed? Let's take a word from our spelling test, *commitment*. What has a good speller learned about this word, either explicitly or implicitly? A lot! See Table 1.

BUILDING ORTHOGRAPHIC MEMORY

The visual memory involved in spelling, then, is specific to learning orthography, and is deeply wired into our language learning systems. It is hinged to a child's awareness of phonemes— the parking spots for the letters and letter groups that represent phonemes in alphabetic writing systems. Gradually, spelling memory develops with a child's knowledge of word structure, words' meaningful parts, and a word's role in sentence formation. Children's developing knowledge of these language layers can be observed from the very beginning of literacy development (Bourassa & Treiman, 2014; Treiman, 2017).

BEGINNING TO SPELL: PHONEME AWARENESS, LETTER SOUNDS, AND LETTER NAMES

Phoneme awareness is the critical underpinning for the early stages of learning to spell and helps remediate the problems of poor spellers at any age (Kilpatrick, 2015). A direct and explicit approach gradually teaches the identity of all 25 consonant and all 18 vowel phonemes, which is not the same as teaching the 26 letters of the alphabet (Moats, in press; Moats & Tolman, 2019).

Identifying a speech sound means hearing it in isolation, saying it with attention to mouth formation or articulation, learning a key word that begins with that phoneme, and contrasting it with others with which it may be confused. Activities typically associated with phoneme awareness, such as segmenting phonemes in words, should be preceded by this more basic instruction. Understanding, for example, that /k/ is made in the back of the mouth without a voice and that it is not the same as /g/ is prerequisite for knowing that back is not bag.

Phoneme segmentation and manipulation ability, or lack thereof, distinguishes good and poor spellers at all ages (Cassar, Treiman, Moats, Pollo, & Kessler, 2005). Children may strengthen their phonemic awareness by placing a chip into a box for each speech sound in a word, saying each sound as the chip is moved, or stretching out a finger for each sound that is articulated.

"sing" | /s/ | /ĭ/ | /ng/
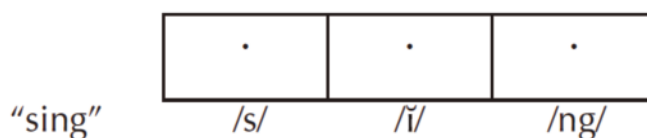
As they are learning the letter sounds, children also need to learn the letter names. Many letter names contain the phoneme that they represent. Others,

such as *w*, *y*, and *h*, do not and are more difficult. The problem with teaching letter forms, letter sounds, and letter names together in a traditional multi-sensory association routine is that quite a few speech sounds are not represented by single letters of the alphabet (/th/, /sh/, /ng/, /ch/, /oi/, /au/, etc.). Those must be known and practiced, too; so teaching letter forms and phoneme-grapheme correspondences are two parallel strands in beginners' lessons.

Teaching letter forms and phoneme-grapheme correspondences are two parallel strands in beginners' lessons.

LEARNING PHONEME-GRAPHEME CORRESPONDENCES

Explicit phoneme-grapheme mapping (Ehri, 2014; Grace, 2007; Moats & Tolman, 2019) requires the learner to match the letters/letter combinations in a word to the speech sounds they represent. The learner must pay attention to the internal details of the word in order to do this. A grapheme is any letter or letter combination that represents a single phoneme. One approach is to use a simple grid; each box of the grid represents a phoneme. Using a list of words that contain the correspondence or pattern being taught, students explicitly segment the word, grapheme by grapheme. The teacher says the word; then, the students repeat it, segment the sounds, and write the grapheme for each phoneme in sequence. For example, *freight* spells the long a (/ ā /) with the four-letter grapheme, *eigh*.

f	r	eigh	t

Groove: In this example, the *gr* combination is a consonant blend (two phonemes). The final -*ve* is an orthographic convention: the job of *e* is to prevent the word from ending in *v* and it has no function in marking the vowel. That is why it is in parentheses and does not get its own box.

g	r	oo	v(e)

Phoneme-grapheme mapping is fundamental at any grade level, but is especially helpful with second- and third-grade students who have gaps in learning the basic code. It should be a teacher-led activity (not an independent activity), because its value is in consciously analyzing how print is representing speech. Saying words while looking at them and pulling them apart, with modeling and immediate feedback, should then be followed by practice including writing to dictation.

Although it may seem counter-intuitive, the foundational skills of phoneme awareness and phoneme-grapheme matching also facilitate learning the less common or odd words.

WORDS WITH LESS PREDICTABLE OR ODD SPELLINGS

Because they are often very old words from Anglo-Saxon whose pronunciation—but not spelling—has changed, high frequency words may have more odd or irregular correspondences than lower frequency content words with a Latin or other romance-language base. Often called "sight words," these words (*of, said, your, do, does*, etc.) are not, in fact, learned by sight or by a rote visual memory process. The links between spoken language and print that spellers make for more predictable words must be made for these oddities as well.

Although it may seem counter-intuitive, the foundational skills of phoneme awareness and phoneme-grapheme matching also facilitate learning the less common or odd words (Kilpatrick, 2015; Treiman, 2017). That is, students who are good spellers of predictable words are also better at spelling less predictable words. Irregular words are learned most easily by students who already know common phoneme-grapheme correspondences and who can explicitly analyze the speech to print mapping system. This is because irregular words have some regular correspondences, and also because a good speller makes mental comparisons between what a spelling ought to be and what it is (of sounds like it should be *uv*) to form a detailed mental image of the word. Awareness of phoneme- grapheme correspondences, regular and irregular, is the "glue that holds the word in memory" (Ehri, 2004, p. 155). The close correlation between the ability to spell regular and so-called irregular words led to a major publisher abandoning two separate word lists from the *Test of Written Spelling* (Larsen, Hammill, & Moats, 2013) and combining them into one.

Some suggested methods for teaching words with less common patterns or correspondences include: a) grouping words with some memorable similarity (*two, twice, twenty, twilight, twin; one, only, once; their, heir; where, here, there*); b) calling attention to the odd part of a word (*fri*end; *a*ny); c) pronouncing the word the way it looks (was sounds like /w/ /ă/ /s/ not /w/ /ŭ/ /z/; d) using mnemonics (there is a rat in sep*arat*e; the princip*al* is my p*al*); and e) asking the learner to pay very close attention to the letter sequence by visualizing it and building it backwards and forwards with letter tiles before writing it.

ORTHOGRAPHIC PATTERNS AND POSITION CONSTRAINTS

English orthography is a symbol system that constrains the way letters can be sequenced and used. For example, only some can be doubled—*k, h,* and *i,* for example, cannot. Words never end in the letters *j* or *v.* The letter c spells /k/ before *o, a,* and *u,* and introduces initial blends as in *clean* and *crown.* The combination *-ck* occurs right after a stressed short vowel.

Good spellers may intuit these and other patterns but most students benefit from discovering them through guided word sorting. Instead of telling students, for example, how the letters *k* and *c* and *ck* are used to represent /k/, give them a list of words with those three graphemes. See if students can discover the pattern. Usually, this process must be guided closely by teacher questions, such as, "What letter comes immediately before (or after) the spelling for /k/?" Consciously processing and describing the patterns at work helps students establish higher quality mental images for the words.

> Inflections should be introduced before other aspects of derivational morphology because they are so essential for writing basic sentences, but they must be practiced year after year.

INFLECTIONS AND SUFFIX CHANGE RULES

Inflections (-ed, -s, -es, -ing, -er, -est, which are also called grammatical suffixes) are morphemes that change the number, person, or tense of the word to which they are added, but they do not change its part of speech. The spelling errors in intermediate students' writings frequently involve inflections, especially -ed and plural -s and -es (Moats, Foorman, & Taylor, 2006).

Inflections should be introduced before other aspects of derivational morphology because they are so essential for writing basic sentences, but they must be practiced year after year.

The suffix *-ed* is complex and should be taught one step at a time. Although its meaning and spelling are constant, the suffix has three pronunciations: /d/ as in *hummed;* /t/ as in *puffed;* and /id/ as in *wanted.* Students should begin by sorting words according to the sound of the past tense ending. Explain that only one of the endings (the -ed on *wanted*) is a spoken syllable, and the other two pronunciations are merely single phonemes. The -ed spelling looks as if it spells a whole syllable, but most of the time it does not; thus, the endings are easy to ignore or to misspell.

There are three suffix addition rules in English orthography that never fail to challenge all spellers, and especially poor spellers. We double certain final consonants when vowel suffixes are added to words (*running, hopped*); we drop silent e at the ends of words when we add suffixes beginning with vowels (*hoping, smiled*); and we change *y* to *i* when any suffix is added to a word except one that begins with the letter *i* (*studies, merrily*). These rules must be tackled because they are so commonly used. If possible, familiarize students with inflected forms that do not change the base word (*mended, punted, huffed, misses, killer, bringing*) before introducing the change rules one at a time. Start by decomposing familiar words with inflections by taking off the ending and finding the base word: *hoping = hope + ing; studious = study + ous; committed = commit + ed.* Then start combining base words and endings. For more details about these rules and how to teach them, consult Carreker (2018), Moats & Tolman (2019), or Moats (in press).

MULTI-SYLLABLE WORDS AND SCHWA

Knowledge of the six basic written syllable types can support spelling, although learning these patterns should be a stepping-stone toward understanding of morphology. Familiarity with the open, closed, and consonant-le written syllable types enables spellers to know when and why double consonants occur in words that end with a consonant-le syllable. When an open syllable is combined with a consonant-le syllable—as in *noble, title, and maple*—there is no doubled consonant. In contrast, when a closed syllable is combined with a consonant-le syllable—as in *dabble, little,* and *topple*—a double consonant results. Note that this is purely a convention of writing, not a transcription of speech. We do not pronounce two separate consonants in the middle of words like *apple*.

Multi-syllable words bring up the unavoidable problem of schwa (/ e /), the unaccented vowel sound that has been emptied of its identity and can be described as a lazy vowel. Teach children that some vowel sounds

> Instruction about schwa helps students understand why some words do not sound the way they are spelled—and reminds teachers not to rely exclusively on 'spell it by sounding it out,' because that strategy is limited with multi-syllable words.

have the stuffing taken out of them when they are unaccented. After students spell a word such as *prob-lem, a-dept,* or *com-mit,* they can say the word naturally and mark the syllable that has a schwa. Instruction about schwa helps students understand why some words do not sound the way they are spelled— and reminds teachers not to rely exclusively on "spell it by sounding it out," because that strategy is limited with multi-syllable words.

LATIN-BASED PREFIXES, SUFFIXES, AND ROOTS

Having already learned the common inflectional endings, students should be ready to move on to Anglo-Saxon and Latin prefixes (*such as pre-, sub-, re-, mis-,* and *un-*) and suffixes (such as *-en, -ly, -y, -ful, -less,* and *-ness*) (2018). Prefixes and suffixes have stable spellings and meanings. Derivational suffixes such as *-ly, -al, -ment,* and *-ous,* also signify the part of speech of the word to which they are added. The stability of morpheme spellings assists with their recognition and recall, even though the meaning of a word may not simply be the sum of its parts (*apartment* and *matchless,* for example).

THE BIG PICTURE

Teaching spelling according the principles of Structured Literacy means teaching the structure of language at all levels, including phonology, phoneme-grapheme correspondences, orthographic patterns and constraints, meaningful parts of words (morphemes) and their grammatical roles. Students remember best what they have thought about and understand, so the goal is to make sense of print and how it represents speech (King, 2000). This done, all of the other Structured Literacy components and practices together can rescue struggling students and help them become competent readers and writers. ✂

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by JOSH FRANK

A Life OUTSIDE the Box

*(Excerpts from a speech given by Josh Frank at the
HBIDA Fall Symposium in Houston, Texas on September 28, 2019)*

My first memory of my learning disability is a giant glazed donut. They sold these beautiful glazed donuts at the hospital where I was being tested for learning disabilities in Houston. Every day when we would arrive, my mom would buy me one. Because she did that, my first memory of my learning disability wasn't a bad one at all. It was a glazed donut.

In 1982 I was diagnosed with learning disabilities. All the doctors had said, "Your son will never read, he will never write, and he will never be able to do math. He will never go to college. Best to spend his childhood working to get him really strong so he can be a football player or a career that requires some muscle. Or prepare him for a technical vocation." Thankfully, my parents didn't accept this verdict.

My most vivid memory of my first years living with learning differences was my English teacher. Despite the doctors' predictions that I would never learn to read or write, I was somehow sitting in an English class learning to do those things. I have no recollection of how I learned letters and words because 95 percent of the time it was just white noise that made no sense to me. Miraculously, this English teacher was able to filter out the 95 percent of white noise I heard and allow my brain to fill up with words and pictures. She did this by letting me draw stories. I liked to create stories. She saw that early in me. And she let me do that during class. I would draw pictures of my stories, number each page at the bottom, and staple them together in the middle like a real bound book.
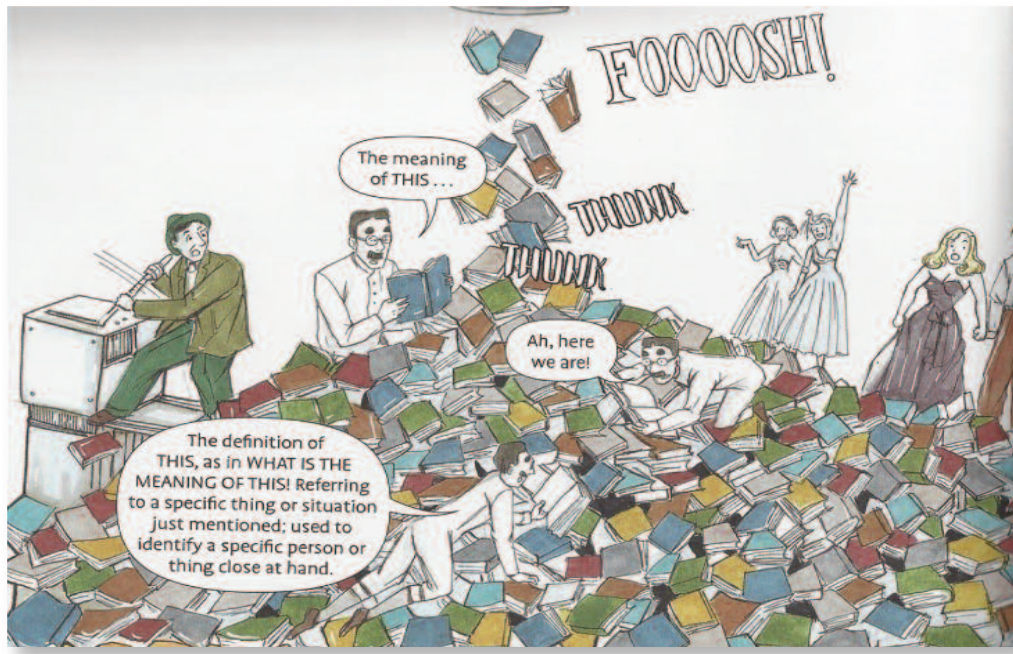
Years later, when I opened an old box in our basement, I found all these books I had written in that English class. The early ones were all pictures but over time each book had more words to go along with the pictures, then sentences, then paragraphs. Looking at these, it hit me: "My teacher taught me how to read and write by letting me write my own books." She had overcome all the doubts the doctors had raised and set me on the path of my life's work.

It is a good thing that I did learn how to read and write because otherwise I wouldn't be able to read my own books! To date, I have published four books by major publishers. I'm here to tell you about my journey through life with learning differences (not disabilities) and how I used my "different" approach to accomplish things that very few people have been able to accomplish.

My approach? Thinking outside the box. If one way--the traditional way--doesn't work, think of another way. If you can't read words, draw pictures. Don't keep banging your head against the wall trying to go straight through it. If need be, go around any obstacle that stands in your way. And that is what I have done my whole life. Think outside the box.

Throughout my childhood, including high school, I would make movies. In college I (thankfully) was not graded on my math or foreign language skills, but ninety percent on the movies I made. Then for my senior project, I wrote a cinematic play instead of a film for my thesis and I produced it in the soundstage of our film building. Many felt like making a play over a film was cheating. I called it thinking differently. Thinking outside the box. I graduated with a B plus.

After college, I started a theater company in Austin, Texas. Thus began my next lesson in thinking outside the box. I had no idea how to start a theater company. I rented a room at the local community arts organization building to hold auditions. I couldn't afford to rent a real theater to put on my play so I pitched the idea of doing my play in the building's alleyway. From that point on, most of my plays were in alleyways or bars. Another outside the box strategy. Can't afford a theatre. Find an alleyway.

I was now a theater producer. My first play got rave reviews from the local city papers and I was hooked. The value of one's ability to be successful at the thing they are best at is unquantifiable. I was best at something I had yet to figure out how to monetize. If someone had suggested at the time that it was an endeavor not worth pursuing because of this, my story would end here. But no one suggested that. My parents, although naturally concerned about me, were supportive, proud, and cheered me on.

My next idea was for a musical about The Pixies, an American alternative rock band. My extensive research on the subject led to enough material for a book. I chose to write a book on The Pixies as an oral history because it solved my grammar and spelling problem. It limited the amount of actual "writing" I would need to do because I could hire a friend with those skills to transcribe all the interviews. My job would be to edit them into the story I wanted to tell. My first book came out two years later: "Fool The World: The Oral History of a Band Called Pixies." I also incorporated pictures, just like in the books I wrote in that English class. But now I had professional artists I could collaborate with. Since that first book was published in 2004 I have had three other books published, and next year my latest book will be translated and published in Japan.

ILLUSTRATION BY MANUELA PERTEGA

You probably have noticed by now I have mentioned my parents often in this tale. Without them, and their relentless borderline pathological pursuit of giving me every opportunity possible to become the best me I could be, I would not be telling my story today. My parents gave me amazing tools to be able to see how to navigate the world differently. What I learned is HOW to get over the problem. How to troubleshoot, how to not give up, how to find new paths to the answers by doing things differently, and that you can't do things differently unless you can think differently. And of course, my parents taught me how to focus on my strengths. I have carried these tools with me on an amazing adventure that is ongoing. I still don't know exactly what I am going to be when I grow up. The challenges of thinking differently never go away, and sometimes it takes years to find one's place in a very "one way or the highway" world. I've come so far because of what I learned and how I was treated and helped. But despite the years and experiences, I will always be the little kid walking through the halls from class to class at age 8, wondering how far I can go, if the obstacles in my way are stronger than I am, if I am normal. *And always loving hot donuts.*

by ELIZABETH C. HAMBLET

Misunderstandings About IEPs, 504s, and College Accommodations For LD, ADHD: Clarifying Vocabulary

This post has been adapted and reprinted from *Elizabeth C. Hamblet's blog* and all rights are reserved by the author.

Whether I am online looking at posts people are sharing or talking to parents or professionals at my presentations, I find that there is (understandably) a lot of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of what does and doesn't happen for students with learning disabilities (LD) and ADHD at college.

Based on what I've seen and heard, it seems some people either believe:

• there are no disability accommodations available at college (or that they're only for people with visual, hearing, or physical disabilities, not those with LD and ADHD)

or

• that colleges have to follow students' high school plan and provide all of the same accommodations they received in the past

Neither of these statements is true, but I understand why people believe them.

One central fact is important to understand - IEPs or 504 plans are not valid once students either graduate from high school or age out of the system, and those plans don't "transfer" to college. IDEA doesn't cover colleges, so IEPs essentially "expire" once students are out of high school.

What interesting is that I've spoken to people who are aware of this and told me that - because their district knows IEPs aren't valid after students graduate - their district moves everyone who has an IEP to a 504 plan in their senior year of high school. They believe that 504s are valid at college because Section 504 covers colleges.

It's understandable that people believe this, but it is incorrect. What they don't realize is that while colleges are covered by 504, they come under a different subpart than K-12 schools do. That subpart doesn't require colleges to honor 504 plans from high school or create new ones. (Don't worry - colleges do provide accommodations. See bit.ly/LDblogAccommPosts to learn more about them)

This is where I think vocabulary becomes important, as it can lead to unintentional misunderstandings. The difference in the terms used at the college level may help to point to the differences in the two systems.

"Letter of Accommodation" vs. "Plans"

In my presentations, I state that there are no "plans" at college, meaning that students' IEPs and 504 plans aren't valid there, and colleges aren't required to create a similar document – they simply have to provide accommodations. Sometimes, an audience member will say that their or their friend's student attends X college and has a 504 plan.

I can't be sure how offices at every college in the country operate, and some may indeed put together a true plan. But I suspect that in some of these situations, that there may be a misunderstanding about what these documents are and what they do.

Typically, when they approve students for accommodations, disability services offices will write what is commonly called a Letter (or email) of Accommodation (called a "LOA" or "EOA") that students have to deliver to their professors. (Processes can vary from college to college.) I think that some offices call these documents a "504 plan" even though they don't actually lay out a "plan." (Of course, I may be wrong.)

To me, the word "plan" implies that someone will help students set goals, identify steps to achieve those goals, and assess whether or not students have met them. I suspect that most of these college "504 plans" look much more like LOAs and don't function as true "plans." I think it's important to make this distinction so that students know what to expect.

It doesn't really matter what these colleges call the documents they write for students, as long as students know what they mean (or don't) and can expect (or can't). And school districts and parents should be aware that high school plans won't be valid at college.

"Eligible" vs. "Entitled"

This brings up another point – college students with LD and ADHD are not *entitled* to receive accommodations simply because they had an IEP or 504 plan previously. They have to be found *eligible* for accommodations at their college, and even if that happens, this doesn't mean that they are entitled to the same accommodations they received in high school. Disability services offices are allowed to decide who is eligible and what accommodations are appropriate. Don't worry - most students will be found eligible with no problem, and if they are using basic accommodations in high school, they'll likely receive the same ones in college.

Eligibility is also an important idea, and vocabulary can matter here, too. While most students with LD and ADHD who have received accommodations in high school will also be found eligible for them in college, this not guaranteed. For example, students whose reports say that they have a "learning difference" (rather than a disability) and whose documentation does not reflect a substantial limitation to learning, or who have only test anxiety (which is not generally

accepted as a disability) may not be found eligible for accommodation when they attend college.

"Coordinator" vs. "Case Manager"

At some colleges, the person who serves as students' contact and helps to arrange their accommodations is called a "coordinator," rather than a "case manager." The former term conveys the idea that these individuals only "coordinate" accommodations, and not that they will do things that students' case managers did in high school, such as asking faculty about students' progress or even checking in regularly with students. Some might, but many coordinators don't perform these functions. (Students are actually responsible for starting the accommodation process by registering with the appropriate office or contact person.)

Not Really Disability "Services," and Not Really a "Program"

What may lead to misunderstandings, too, is the name of some colleges' disability "services" office. These offices provide accommodations for all kinds of disabilities, including LD and ADHD. But most don't provide what might be considered the kinds of "services" for students with LD and ADHD that people might expect based on what some high schools provide (such as tutoring by a learning disabilities specialist) because the laws in place don't require this. Colleges have different mandates than high schools and are not subject to IDEA.

Another source of confusion may be that some offices may have titles like the "Disabled Students' Program." I think the word "program" can be confusing, as I think it implies a certain level of coordination and that students will have access to "case managers" who will create a "plan," which could include access to special "services" rather than that students will have a "coordinator" who

arranges their "accommodations." In some cases, this title refers simply to the office that provides the required basic accommodations, not to a special program.

Some colleges *do* offer separate programs for students with LD and/or ADHD. These are truly coordinated programs, and they typically charge an additional fee to provide a real plan, access to learning specialists, etc. Students don't have to sign up for these programs in order to get basic accommodations, though, and the accommodations that students receive through the disability services office are **free**.

It is important for everyone involved in students' college transition to have an accurate sense of the environment, so that students' preparation for college can be based on correct information. I hope that these explanations will help to clarify what students with LD and ADHD should expect at college.

Elizabeth offers lots of free resources on her site to help parents and professionals prepare students for successful college transition. Explore them on her main site, www.LDadvisory.com. You'll find free tools and advice for college students, too.

For blog updates, subscribe at http://bit.ly/LDblogSubscribe

To get a detailed overview of the laws in place, the research on college students with disabilities, accommodations, and more, read Elizabeth's book, *From High School To College: Steps to Success for Students with Disabilities*, available from Amazon (bit.ly/FHS2Cbk).
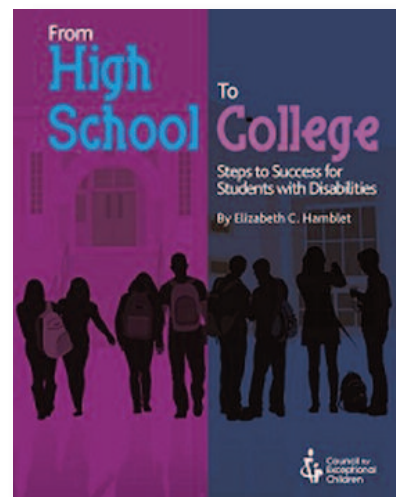
by ANTHONY BRANDT

Are We Preparing Students for the Creative Work of the Future?

Experts have predicted that artificial intelligence will replace nearly half the world's workforce within the next fifteen years. They often follow that warning with the reassurance that leaving the automated tasks to machines will free up human labor for more creative projects. Yet, if we keep sidelining creativity in education, will the workers of tomorrow be prepared for that kind of work?

Today, more than ever, we need to take a comprehensive approach to nurturing creativity. The arts can play a big role in that endeavor, taking the features of a creative mentality often hidden behind closed doors and putting them on display, where we can all share them. Because of that, they offer a way to teach the basic tools of innovation.

As a composer teaching at Rice University, I offer a course titled Creativity Up Close that's open to all undergraduates. The class alternates between discussions about the science of creativity and hands-on creative projects in oral history, music, engineering and visual art, mentored by faculty in those disciplines. One of the highlights is a "theme and variations" project.

Today, more than ever, we need to take a comprehensive approach to nurturing creativity.

In Western classical music, a "theme and variations" is based on a simple concept: a composer picks a theme and then repeats it as often as possible, each time in a new way. Inspired by that model, I ask my students to create variations on a poetry reading. The prompts mirror the musical models: each variation should present the entire poem; each should offer a unique way of transforming the text—for instance, by reading it faster or louder—so that no two variations are alike; and—as in the most adventurous sets—succeeding variations should get farther and farther away from the original, making it harder and harder to recognize.

The project teaches several crucial lessons about creativity. First, as neuroscientist David Eagleman and I discuss in our book "The Runaway Species," creativity is a process of derivation and extrapolation: new ideas emerge by remodeling prior experience. People tend to hide their sources, but look closely at any innovation, and you will uncover its lineage. As the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard has said, "It's not where you take things from—it's where you take them to."

Second, the activity of proliferating options is a cornerstone of the creative process. For instance, the purpose of brainstorming is to generate an abundance of solutions. The more potential ideas we have to draw from, the richer the eventual creative output.

Third, highly inventive people typically don't remain at a fixed distance from convention, but rather cover a range from the familiar to the far-out. That's a strategy pursued by innovative companies as well. For instance, Timex regularly updates its classic wrist watches, keeps up with current trends with its fitness watches and also experiments with wacky ideas such as the "time at your fingertips" watch that fits on a fingernail. Similarly, Boeing recently upgraded the design of its flagship 737 while also rolling out new models such as the 787 Dreamliner and flight-testing an autonomous "air taxi" designed to shuttle passengers short distances without a pilot. These companies follow the same procedures as classical composers, creating a spectrum of variations. By diversifying their output, they can keep one eye on the present and one on the future.

The instructions I give are intended to be specific enough to convey these lessons but open-ended enough to give the students full creative license. I ask them to create at least four variations and tell them that they will be evaluated on how well they fulfill the prompts: Are there enough variations? Do they contrast with each other? Does each move farther away from the source? Emphasizing these more objective measures over subjective judgments gives the students the freedom to experiment and take risks.

The students produce artwork that is personal and unique—and at the same time, cultivates transferable tools of innovation. I picked a poetry reading as the seed for my "theme and variation" project, but the prompt is readily adaptable. Human minds are constantly creating variations on themes, from the latest sneaker lines, to the typefaces that brand our products and personalize our messages, to the twists on classic recipes, to the design of windows, doors, chairs, and eyeglasses. Instructors can pick any output that best fits their courses.

Back in 1819, the composer and publisher Anton Diabelli sent a waltz theme he'd written to a bunch of prominent composers, asking each to submit one variation, which he planned to publish in a group volume. Ludwig van Beethoven responded by writing thirty-three variations, ranging from playful reinterpretations to some of his most radical music.

We can teach our students to think like Beethoven, and we can encourage them to apply that mindset to everything that interests them. It is this kind of free-wheeling human enterprise that will advance culture and commerce as the machines labor away on the factory floor.

Highly inventive people typically don't remain at a fixed distance from convention, but rather cover a range from the familiar to the far-out. That's a strategy pursued by innovative companies as well.

Dr. Anthony Brandt is the Keynote Speaker
at the HBIDA 24th Annual Conference—"Making Creativity Visible" | February 22, 2020

Contributing Authors for 2020 HBIDA Resource Directory

ANTHONY BRANDT, **Keynote Speaker**
24th Annual HBIDA Spring Conference | February 22, 2020

Composer Anthony Brandt is a Professor at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and Artistic Director of the new music ensemble Musiqa. He and neuroscientist David Eagleman have co-authored *The Runaway Species: How Human Creativity Remakes the World*, which has been published in eleven countries and was the Official Selection of the 2018-19 Common Reading Experience at Texas State University. Their book is the basis for the Netflix documentary "The Creative Brain," hosted by Dr. Eagleman.

Dr. Brandt's musical compositions include three chamber operas, as well as orchestral, chamber, vocal, theater, dance, and television scores. His latest work, the chamber opera *Kassandra* with a libretto by Neena Beber, will be premiered in a co-production by Opera-in-the-Heights and Musiqa in February 2020. Recordings of his music are available on the Albany, Novona Live, and Crystal labels.

Dr. Brandt has contributed a chapter to the book *Mobile Brain-Body Imaging and the Neuroscience of Art, Innovation, and Creativity*, and has co-authored a chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* and articles for the journals *Frontiers, the International Journal of Neuroscience*, and *Brain Connectivity*. He is currently a co-investigator in an NEA Research Lab studying musical creativity and the elderly. He is also a co-investigator at Methodist Hospital's Center for Performing Arts Medicine on a study examining music's role in stroke rehabilitation.

With Musiqa, Dr. Brandt presents inter-disciplinary public concerts, as well as an annual free educational programming that has served over 60,000 students at over 230 Houston area public schools. Musiqa has earned two national awards for adventurous programming and eight grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

At Rice University, Dr. Brandt has organized three international conferences on "Exploring the Mind through Music." He received the 2019 Rice University Faculty Award for Excellence in Professional Service and Leadership, and is a past winner of the University's George R. Brown and Phi Beta Kappa teaching prizes.

JOSH FRANK is a writer, producer, director and composer. He has penned numerous plays, including an authorized adaptation of Werner Hergoz's Stroszek, screenplays, including an adaptation of Mark Vonnegut's *The Eden Express*, and musicals, including *The Jonathan Richman Musical*. He is the author of *Fool The World, the Oral History of the Band Called Pixies* (St. Martins Press USA/Virgin Books U.K.) and *In Heaven Everything Is Fine-The Unsolved Life of Peter Ivers* (Simon and Schuster/Free Press.)

Josh is presently researching his third book and finishing a new screenplay. His latest book "Giraffes On Horseback Salad," A Graphic Novel written in collaboration with the Marx Bros. and Salvador Dali estate, was released in March of 2019 (Quirk Books USA/Penguin U.K.) In his spare time, Josh runs an artists complex in Austin, Texas called Starving Art and a Mini-Urban Drive-In Movie Theatre. Visit his books at www.horsebacksaladbook.com

ELIZABETH C. HAMBLET has worked as a learning specialist in disability services offices at the college level for nearly 20 years after starting her career in the field as a high school special education teacher and case manager. Having recognized the information gap that left professionals and parents unaware of how to prepare students for success at college, she created programs to educate professionals and families about how to help students make a smooth transition to postsecondary education. Hamblet makes presentations locally and at national conferences to educate professionals, parents, and students about the changes students will find at college and how to best prepare them for success there. In addition to her book, *From High School To College: Steps to Success for Students with Disabilities*, she has published numerous articles on this topic in a variety of journals and platforms, including Understood.org, where she is a college expert. Hamblet also continues to do what she loves most– working with students – as a part-time learning specialist/consultant at Columbia University's disability services office. Ms. Hamblet offers advice and information on her website at www.LDadvisory.com. You can connect with her on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/LDadvisory or on Twitter@echamblet.

LOUISA C. MOATS, Ed.D. has been a teacher, psychologist, researcher, graduate school faculty member, and author of many influential scientific journal articles, books, and policy papers on the topics of reading, spelling, language, and teacher preparation. After a first job as a neuropsychology technician, she became a teacher of students with learning and reading difficulties, earning her Master's degree at Peabody College of Vanderbilt. Later, after realizing how little she understood about teaching reading, she earned a doctorate in Reading and Human Development from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr. Moats spent the next fifteen years in private practice as a licensed psychologist in Vermont, specializing in evaluation and consultation with individuals of all ages and walks of life who experienced reading, writing, and language difficulties. At that time, she trained psychology interns in the Dartmouth Medical School Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Moats spent one year as resident expert for the California Reading Initiative; four years as site director of the NICHD Early Interventions Project in Washington, DC; and ten years as research advisor and consultant with Sopris Learning, obtaining two Small Business Innovation Research grants from the NICHD. Dr. Moats is most well known for her research and writing about the need for improvements in teacher education. Her more recent publications have focused on helping teachers understand the language basis for reading and writing. They include LETRS Professional Development (Voyager Sopris), LANGUAGE! Live blended literacy intervention (Voyager Sopris), and Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers (Brookes Publishing), as well as a series of articles and books for the International Dyslexia Association.

JOAN SEDITA, M.A. is the founder of Keys to Literacy, a literacy professional development organization based in Massachusetts. For over 35 years, Joan has been an experienced educator and nationally recognized teacher trainer. She has authored multiple literacy professional development programs, including *The Key Comprehension Routine*, *The Key Vocabulary Routine*, *Keys to Content Writing*, *Keys to Early Writing*, and *Keys to Close Reading*. Beginning in 1975, she worked for 23 years at the Landmark School, a pioneer in the development of literacy intervention programs. As a teacher, principal, and director of the Outreach Teacher Training Program at Landmark, Joan developed expertise, methods, and instructional programs that address the literacy needs of students in grades K-12. Joan was one of the three lead trainers in Massachusetts for the Reading First Program and was a LETRS author and trainer. Joan received her M.Ed. in Reading from Harvard University and her B.A. from Boston College.

TIMOTHY SHANAHAN, Ph.D., is Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Founding Director of the UIC Center for Literacy. A former Director of Reading for the Chicago Public Schools, Shanahan is author/editor of more than 200 publications on literacy education. His research emphasizes the connections between reading and writing, literacy in the disciplines, and improvement of reading achievement. Tim is past president of the International Literacy Association. He served as a member of the Advisory Board of the National Institute for Literacy under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and he helped lead the National Reading Panel, convened at the request of Congress to evaluate research on the teaching reading, a major influence on reading education. He chaired two other federal research review panels: the National Literacy Panel for Language Minority Children and Youth, and the National Early Literacy Panel, and helped write the Common Core State Standards. Tim was inducted to the Reading Hall of Fame in 2007, and is a former first-grade teacher. His blog, www.shanahanonliteracy.com, is widely read.

WILLIAM VAN CLEAVE is in private practice as an educational consultant whose specialties include morphology and written expression. An internationally recognized speaker with an interactive, hands-on presentation style, William has presented on effective teaching practices at conferences and schools both in the United States and abroad since 1995. Recent projects include consulting with three schools as part of a literacy grant in Montana; participating on the MTSS Writing Standards Committee for the State of Pennsylvania; implementing several Trainer of Trainers projects using his sentence structure approach; and writing a series of workbooks and a companion book on developing composition skills to complement his sentence approach. The author of three books, including *Writing Matters* and *Everything You Want To Know & Exactly Where to Find It*, as well as a number of educational tools and activities, William has served as a classroom teacher, tutor, and administrator in the private school arena at various points in his career. William's work and materials can be found at wvced.com.

HBIDA RESOURCE

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TO ADVERTISE WITH US CONTACT:

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Apps and Other Resources for the iPad that Promote Reading Skills

The 21st-century learner has access to applications and other technology resources that can enhance their educational experience. With these assistive technologies at their fingertips, there are more ways than ever for students to find help with academic struggles. These innovative and engaging tools are particularly beneficial for students with dyslexia. Assistive technology can aid in the areas of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, written expression, spelling, and reading comprehension. Additionally, employing technology tools can help boost confidence and increase executive functioning skills. These tools help learners find new ways of approaching challenges and broaden the pathways of success for students with dyslexia.

Phonological Awareness:

Phonics Awareness (bugbrained.com) Phonics Awareness is an app that teaches your child how to segment and blend sounds and use vowels. *Free*

Phonemic Awareness Bubbles (iTunes store) This app helps children develop their ability to listen for and discern sounds at the beginning of words through games. It includes matching, eliminating, and choosing images that either begin with the same sound or don't fit the pattern. *Free*

Partners in Rhyme (iTunes store) This app uses games to help children develop an awareness of rhyming. Games include matching, eliminating, and choosing images that either rhyme or don't fit the pattern. *Free*

Phonics:

Name That Cutting Pattern (iTunes store) This app helps students practice reading multi-syllabic words by identifying common cutting patterns. *$.99*

Name That Syllable (iTunes store) This app helps students learning about syllabication by identifying the syllable type of a word. *$.99*

Starfall (starfall.com) The website offers a range of activities from specific letter-sound practice all the way up to practicing reading short stories. *Free*

Alphabetic Principle:

Bob Books (bobbooks.com) Simple illustration brings magic to your kids. It will catch their attention in a fun, entertaining and educational way and help them to learn how to read. Bob Books Reading Magic #1 and #2 available. *Each version $2.99*

Handwriting:

Letter School—Learn to Write! (Letterschool.com) This is for younger children. It contains upper and lower case and numbers and allows kids to practice essential skills. Lite version available. *Free with in-app purchases.*

Spelling:

Build a Word Express (Atreks.com) Learn to spell sight words, long vowel and short vowel words (700+ words and an option to create your own spelling words with your own voice). *The base game is free with options to upgrade.*

Simplex Spelling HD (pyxwise.com) This program focuses on teaching the Dolch Sight Words, which make up 50%-75% of all printed text (this includes the most common words in the English language such as 'the', 'and', 'of', etc). It is designed to help emergent readers build a strong foundation in spelling and reading skills. The complete word list contains over 260 words and can be found on their website. Lite version available. *Full Version- $4.99*

Houston Branch IDA Parent Networking Group

Meet up with other Houston area parents and share what you are experiencing as you learn about dyslexia, its effect upon your child, and your challenges in advocating for your child in school. Casual morning coffees, reserved luncheon seating at the Fall Symposium and Spring Conference, access to IDA publications, as well as member discounts are all included in your parent IDA membership. As a parent IDA member, you are automatically enrolled in the Houston Branch of IDA, as well as the chapter's PNG. We look forward to seeing you at events coming up in 2020! Watch for updates on HBIDA social media and your email.

JOIN PGN IN 2020! For information contact: HoustonIDAparents@gmail.com

Chicktionary (shockwave.com) Unscramble a roost full of letters and create as many words as possible. Each chicken bears a letter. Touch them to spell out a word, then watch as the word appears below them. CHICKTIONARY COOP is the next generation of the award-winning CHICKTIONARY word game named as a Top 25 iPad app for kids by TIME and a top iPhone and iPad app for grade-schoolers by MSNBC, Mashable, and Tecca. Online only. *Free -$6.99*

Word Wow (donkeysoft.ca) An engaging game where you create words to help the worm dig deeper into the ground. The bigger the word, the better the bonus. *Free*

Name That Rule (iTunes store) This app helps students practice spelling derivatives by looking at words and deciding which spelling rule applies. *$.99*

Comprehension:

Brain Pop (brainpop.com) Watch a free educational movie everyday and then test your new knowledge with an interactive quiz. For an optional in-app subscription you have access to over 750 videos in any academic areas. All videos are close-captioned so it is easy to follow along. *Family Plan $10.99 month*

FarFaria Read Along Kids Books (Farfaria.com) Choose from the most popular read aloud kids books for ages 1-9, for free. Kids choose from unlimited children's educational books, bedtime stories, picture books, audiobooks, nursery rhymes, songs and more. *Free*

Meet Millie (/www.milliewashere.com/) Millie Was Here is a fun and furry book app series designed for little fingers (but you'll watch too). Kids can listen to the story, read along, play games, hunt for stickers, and more. They'll think they're playing a game. You'll know they're reading a book. *Free*

Read Theory (readtheory.org) This website has a simple sign up, after which students take a short diagnostic test that places them at a grade level. Then, they read passages and answer comprehension questions on their level. Students receive immediate feedback with explanations after each passage answered. Passages range from 1st-12th grade level. *Free*.

Written Expression:

Inspiration Maps (inspiration.com/inspmaps) This program is filled with multiple tasks. You can brainstorm and visualize ideas with maps and diagrams. Organize your thoughts and ideas. Make sense of concepts and projects. Build critical thinking and reasoning skills. Organize yourself for studying by building study and note taking skills. *Free - $9.99*

Explain Everything (explaineverything.com) Explain Everything is an easy-to-use design tool that lets you annotate, animate, and narrate explanations and presentations. You can create dynamic interactive lessons, activities, assessments, and tutorials using Explain Everything's flexible and inte- grated design. Use Explain Everything as an interactive whiteboard using the iPad2 video display. Explain Everything records on-screen drawing, annotation, object movement and captures audio via the iPad microphone. Import Photos, PDF, PPT, and Keynote from Dropbox, Evernote, Email, iPad, photo roll and iPad2 camera. *Free-$24.99*

Reading Alternatives:

Speech Central: Voice Reader This is a text to speech app. It will read web pages to you. *Free with in-app purchases*.

Writing Alternatives:

Dragon Anywhere (nuance.com/dragon/dragon-anywhere.html) Dragon Dictation is an easy-to-use voice recognition application powered by Dragon NaturallySpeaking that allows you to easily speak and instantly see your text content for everything from email messages to blog posts on your iPad™, iPhone™ or iPod touch™. *First week free then $14.99 monthly*

Felt Board (softwaresmoothie.com) Upon entering this application, users will immediately get a craft like feeling as every aspect of this educational app is created with felt. Use your fine motor and hand-eye coordination skills to develop amazing stories as you tap, drag, drop, pinch and zoom pieces into a scene. Felt Board for iPad is a very user friendly application for children young and old. It is an application that encourages all learning styles as children can work collaboratively or independently. *$2.99*

Sock Puppets Complete (Smithmicro.com) Sock Puppets lets you create your own puppet shows in seconds, then share them on Facebook and YouTube with just a few taps. Just add puppets, props, scenery, and backgrounds to start creating. Hit the record button and the puppets will automatically lip-sync to your voice. *Free with in app purchases*

Notetaking:

Evernote (www.evernote.com) This app allows users to take notes in an innovative way. Users are able to organize their notes into different notebooks and can add pictures, sound, and set alarms to remind them to study. It is synced to your phone, tablet, and computer. *Free*

Quizlet (www.quizlet.com) Users can create digital flashcards as a study tool with Quizlet. Users can also add in images and sound recordings to enhance their flashcards. Once created, users can review with games and different tests until they master information. *Free*

APPS TO PROMOTE READING SKILLS

Notability (gingerlabs.com) This app integrates handwriting with PDF annotation, typing, recording and organizing so notes can be taken any way you want. $8.99

My Homework (myhomeworkapp.com) Tracks your homework, test, project and lessons. Get reminded when an assignment is due. Supports time, block and period based schedules. Can sync to any device. Teachers can create an account and students can automatically be in sync with their teacher with one touch. *Free*

Teacher Supportive Apps:

Kahoot (www.getkahoot.com) Using the Kahoot dashboard, teachers can create unique and interactive games to review content with their students. The highly engaging format and easy-to-use platform transforms the classroom. *Free*

Quizalize (www.quizalize.com) The Quizalize website allows teachers to create fun games on any topic. Students can then play them individual games in class or teachers can assign it for homework. As a bonus, teachers can import information directly from Quizlet. *Free*

Flocabulary (www.flocabulary.com) The Flocabulary website offers hundreds of videos on a variety of topics, including Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Vocabulary. The videos include companion activities to complement each lesson. In addi- tion, they are all close-captioned for easy viewing. *$10/month for a lite version*

Nearpod (www.nearpod.com) Using Nearpod, users can create slideshow presentations with interactive activities, websites, and videos. While presenting, the slideshow can be synced across all devices in the classroom. *Free*

Socrative App for teachers and Students (go to YouTube for instructions) Great way for a teacher to give a short T/F, multiple answer or short answer quiz. Quoted from their website, "Socrative is a smart student response system that empowers teachers to engage their classrooms through a series of educational exercises and games via smart phones, laptops, and tablets." Works well and could transform the use of "Clickers" in every school! *Free.*

Starfall Education (starfall.com) At Starfall, children have fun while they learn - specializing in reading, phonics & math - educational games, movies, books, songs, and more for children K-3. *Free*

iTunes U- iTunes U iTunes U has lots of curriculum material created by educators categorized by subject area, submitting institution, and grade level. All the material is vetted through the submitting organizations, mostly Colleges, Universities and K-12 Edu- cation groups. There is a Beyond Campus area that also has materials from museums, libraries (think Library of Congress!), and other educationally minded organizations. Best of all, all material is *available for free.*

Executive Functioning:

Alarmed (iTunes store) This app is great to help students remember important dates and times. The app allows you to set up repeat scheduling, pop up notifications, and customized alarms. The best part is the "nag" feature, which will have the alarm go off every minute until the task is complete. *Free*

Vocabulary:

Vocabulary Spelling City (spellingcity.com) Over 42,000 spelling words with customizable sentences and definitions. A real person says each word and sentence. This app also has free home pages for teachers and parents to save lists, and has teacher training videos. There are free printable handwriting worksheets. Ten games are on the iPad and there are over twenty- games on the internet. This app is only for use with VocabularySpellingCity Premium Members, which can be purchased on their website. *Membership is $34.95 annually.*

Marie's Words (www.marieswords.com) This vocabulary program uses flashcards that combine full color, engaging drawings with 550 of the most common SAT words. Each flashcard has the definition, synonyms, and antonyms on the front and a coordinated drawing on the back. $39.99 *for the complete set*

Written Expression:

Snaptype (www.snaptypeapp.com/) A huge help for students who struggling with writing, Snaptype allows users to take a picture of any document. Using the app, they can type directly on to the worksheet, preventing any handwriting struggles. Additionally, they can send the completed worksheets to their teachers directly within the app. It also stores all the documents, helping with organization. *Options available for free-$4.99*

Learning Ally (www.learningally.org) Learning Ally is a collection of human-narrated audiobooks, literature, and text- books. The program offers over 80,000 audiobooks, making it ideal for students with reading challenges. *Educators should note that TEA has provided funding for public schools to access accounts for eligible students for free. $135 a year*

WebOutLoud (iTunes store) This innovative app is ideal for struggling readers. The app will read the content of any website to the user. *Free*

Behavior Support:

Classcraft (www.classcraft.com) Classcraft is an innovative behavior management system where students create an avatar. After the avatar is created, students earn XP based on positive behaviors. This combines video games and behavior management. *Free*

Class Dojo (www.classdojo.com) Class Dojo allows the user to track positive and negative behaviors in their classroom. The behaviors are fully customizable and the interface is very user-friendly. Data can also be shared with parents with the touch of a button. *Free*

Remote Access:

Splashtop Personal (Splashtop.com) Splashtop is the easiest way to access all of your content from your computer from any device from anywhere. *Free with in-app purchases*

Math:

Dragon Box (dragonboxapp.com) This is the first real Algebra game for iPads. The idea was to create a game that children experience that is actually fun, but where they also would be able to solve mathematical equations. *$4.99*

iAllowance (Jumpgapsoftware.com) Allows you to manage your child's finances and teach him or her about saving and spending money. Whether you want to set up a weekly allowance or pay out a special reward. Support for multiple children, unlimited banks, chores and you can email & print reports. *Free - $2.99*

Science:

Touch Physics HD (gamez4touch.com) - Touch physics models real physics. Play your own music and change the laws of physics. This app resumes where you last left off and shake to reset. It is very addictive. *$2.99*

NASA App (nasa.gov) Current NASA information. Over 150,00 images with the latest news and stories. It has launch information and countdown clocks. *Free*

The Elements (touchpress.com) The Elements: A Visual Exploration is a beautiful interactive iPad book. It preserves the lush look and beautifully composed pages of the best-selling hardcover edition, but adds an astonishing new dimension to the material. Examine over 500 3D objects from all sides by spinning the images. Compare the properties of every element in beautiful detail. *$8.99*

Google Earth (earth.google.com) Take a virtual journey to any location in the world. Explore 3D buildings, imagery, and terrain. Find cities, places and local businesses. *Free*

Miscellaneous:

Common Core Standards (masteryconnect.com) - View the Common Core Standards in one convenient app. It is a great reference for students, parents, and teachers for understanding the core standards. You can quickly find the standards by subject, grade and domain. *Free*

Dyslexia (nessy.com) This website provides a short video of what it is like being Dyslexic, with helpful information for parents and teachers. *Free*

Dyslexie Font (www.dyslexiefont.com) This font was created by someone with Dyslexia to help improve his own reading abil- ity. After finding success with it, he decided to offer it to others in hopes that it could help them too. The font has nine main features, including bigger opening and slanted letters. *Pricing on Website*

Khan Academy Kids (khanacademy.org/kids) This app includes thousands of activities for kids ages 2 - 5 that are aligned with national education standards. *Free*

Mad Libs (madlibs.com) Based on the original Mad Libs books. This app works on building grammar. Use your voice recognition to enter your funny silly words. Share your stories on Facebook, Twitter, or email. *Free*

Stack the States/ Countries (dan-russell-pinson.com/my-games/) This is a great educational app that helps you learn the 50 states the easy way. Watch the states actually come to life in this colorful and dynamic game! As you learn state capitals, shapes, geographic locations and more, you can actually click, move and drop the animated states anywhere on the screen. *$2.99*

Promoting Executive Function in the Classroom
By: Lynn Meltzer

Accessible and practical, this book helps teachers incorporate executive function processes—such as planning, organizing, prioritizing, and self-checking—into the classroom curriculum. Chapters provide effective strategies for optimizing what K–12 students learn with easy-to-implement assessment tools, teaching techniques and activities, and planning aids.

Writing Matters: Developing Sentence Skills in Students of All Ages
By: William Van Cleave

This spiral-bound manual contains structured steps for teaching written expression on the sentence level. Also included are numerous examples and sample activities and assignments. Two companion consumable workbooks are available: *Sentence Sense, Level A* and *Sentence Sense, Level B*.

The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan
By: Ben Foss

An excellent resource for parents, this book is a blueprint for renewing your child's confidence and love of learning—identifying and building on your child's strengths, best practices for accommodations, the latest technologies, and simple ways to secure your child's legal rights.

Multiplication and Division Facts for the Whole-to Part, Visual Learner
By: Christopher Woodin, Ed.M.

Students need multiplication facts to multiply and divide multidigit numbers and perform fraction operations. These facts need to be organized through a relational context so that they may be ordered and compared. Learn to provide students with a way to store, access, and express multiplication and division facts through multimodal activities that utilize visual and kinesthetic processing. The techniques presented support various learning styles and culminate in the ability to learn, compare, and express math facts in an accurate and fluent manner.

Overcoming Dyslexia: A New and Complete Science-Based Program for Reading Problems at any Level
By: Sally Shaywitz, M.D.

Suitable for parents as well as teachers, this comprehensive, up-to-date, and practical book yet to help us understand, identify, and overcome the reading problems that plague American children today.

It's So Much Work to be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success
By: Richard Lavoie and Michele Reiner

As parents and teachers know, every learning disability has a social component. This book provides practical, expert advice on helping learning-disabled children achieve social success.

Basic Facts About Dyslexia and Other Reading Problems By:
By: Louisa Cook Moats & Karen E. Dakin

An excellent reference for teachers, this essential resource defines dyslexia and illustrates, with real-life examples, how to recognize dyslexia and other reading problems at various stages of development, from preschool to adulthood.

Access our full BOOK NOOK, including *Young People's Books Focusing on Dyslexia* at www.houstonida.org

HELPFUL WEBSITES

DYSLEXIA

International Dyslexia Association-Houston Branch
713-364-5177   houstonida.org
HBIDA provides two programs per year for teachers, professionals, and parents, a free Resource Directory annually, email for information and referral services, and a Speakers Bureau of professionals available to present to groups about dyslexia.

International Dyslexia Association
dyslexiaida.org
Dyslexia Self-Assessment test:
https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-test/

Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA)
(972) 233-9107
altaread.org
Referrals to Certified Academic Language Therapists; information about dyslexia.

Region 10 Education Service Center
972-348-1410
800-232-3030 ext. 1410
State Dyslexia Coordinator
region10.org/dyslexia/
Texas Dyslexia Law Handbook, accommodations and resources

Neuhaus Education Center
713-664-7676
neuhaus.org
Teacher and Parent education, on-line classes, adult literacy classes

Parent Networking Group
(PNG) www.houstonida.org

PRESCHOOL AND ADULT RESOURCES

Get Ready to Read   **getreadytoread.org**

TECHNOLOGY

Learning Ally
Formerly Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic   **learningally.org**

Texas State Library – "Talking Books Program"   **tsl.state.tx.us/tbp**

LEGAL

Disability Rights Texas
disabilityrightstx.org
Advocating for people with disabilities in Texas

The Arc of Greater Houston
713-957-1600
Advocating for inclusion; classes for parents, and information

Dyslexia and Related Disorders Handbook
region10.org/dyslexia/

National Center for Learning Disabilities
ncld.org

US Dept. of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
800-872-5327
www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html

Wrights Law
wrightslaw.com
Workshops and information on federal special education law
www.wrightslaw.com/law/ocr/sec504.guide.ocr.2016.pdf

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Attention Deficit Disorder Association, Southern Region, ADDA-SR
adda-sr.org   281-897-0982

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning Disabilities Association of Texas
ldatx.org
Annual Texas conference, information

LD online
ldonline.org
Website with articles and resources

Mary Yarus, M.Ed., LDT, CALT
Recipient of the 2020 Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award

The Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award was founded to recognize Branch members who make outstanding contributions for students with dyslexia and related language learning differences in our community. This prestigious award was established in 2006 in memory of Nancy LaFevers Ambroze, a highly respected speech and language pathologist, who believed in early diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia.

This year, the Houston Branch of the International Dyslexia Association is proud to honor Mary Yarus, M.Ed., LDT, CALT as recipient of the 2020 Nancy LaFevers Community Service Award in recognition of her exemplary service and dedication in the field of dyslexia.

Mary's career in education began in 2001 as a dyslexia specialist, then later as a Certified Academic Language Therapist and Licensed Dyslexia Therapist, following her daughter's diagnosis of dyslexia. After eight years in private practice, she worked in family support and adult literacy at Neuhaus Education Center. In this capacity, she provided information and programs for parents, taught adult literacy students, and coordinated the adult literacy program for students 18-80. She now works as a Dyslexia Specialist at Region 4 Education Service Center providing instruction for public and charter school teachers.

Mary is past president of the Houston Branch of the International Dyslexia Association and former co-chair of the Academic Language Therapy Association for East Texas. She also had the honor of serving on the Screening Committee for the TEA and Region 10 to update *The Dyslexia Handbook 2018: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*.

Teaching reading is the most rewarding thing she has ever done. Mary loves the "Aha!" moment when the letters and sounds form words and begin to make sense to the struggling reader. That's when the magic begins.

HBIDA 24th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Making CREATIVITY *Visible*

Dr. Anthony Brandt, Keynote Speaker

Saturday
February 22, 2020
7:30 AM - 3:30 PM

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www.houstonida.org**

CEUs Credit Hours Pending for:
ALTA, TSHA and
LPC and LSW

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Anthony Brandt
"Making Creativity Visible"

Composer Anthony Brandt is a Professor at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and Artistic Director of the new music ensemble Musiqa.He and neuroscientist David Eagleman have co-authored *The Runaway Species: How Human Creativity Remakes the World*, which has been published in eleven countries and was the Official Selection of the 2018-19 Common Reading Experience at Texas State University. Their book is the basis for the Netflix documentary "The Creative Brain," hosted by Dr. Eagleman.

Dr. Brandt's musical compositions include three chamber operas, as well as orchestral, chamber, vocal, theater, dance, and television scores. His latest work, the chamber opera *Kassandra* with a libretto by Neena Beber, will be premiered in a co-production by Opera-in-the-Heights and Musiqa in February 2020. Recordings of his music are available on the Albany, Novona Live, and Crystal labels.

Dr. Brandt has contributed a chapter to the book Mobile Brain-Body Imaging and the Neuroscience of Art, Innovation, and Creativity, and has co-authored a chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* and articles for the journals *Frontiers*, the *International Journal of Neuroscience*, and *Brain Connectivity*.He is currently a co-investigator in an NEA Research Lab studying musical creativity and the elderly.He is also a co-investigator at Methodist Hospital's Center for Performing Arts Medicine on a study examining music's role in stroke rehabilitation.

With Musiqa, Dr. Brandt presents inter-disciplinary public concerts, as well as an annual free educational programming that has served over 60,000 students at over 230 Houston area public schools.Musiqa has earned two national awards for adventurous programming and eight grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

At Rice University, Dr. Brandt has organized three international conferences on "Exploring the Mind through Music." He received the 2019 Rice University Faculty Award for Excellence in Professional Service and Leadership, and is a past winner of the University's George R. Brown and Phi Beta Kappa teaching prizes.

Break-Out Sessions

Charley Haynes, Ed.D., CCC-SLP

"Word, Sentence Level Strategies
for Supporting Written Expression "

Charles W. Haynes, Ed.D., CCC-SLP is a Professor and Clinical Supervisor in the Graduate Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions.He received his doctorate in Reading, Language, and Learning Disabilities under Jeanne Chall at Harvard Graduate School of Education. With colleagues at Landmark School, Dr. Haynes developed the nation's first language-based program tailored for children with dyslexia and expressive language disorders.At the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions, Dr. Haynes worked with friend and colleague Dr. Pamela Hook to create a MS curriculum that offers dual teacher certification in both Speech-Language Pathology and Reading. A specialist in the area of expressive spoken and written language development strategies, Dr. Haynes has given many keynotes, workshops, and invited addresses in the USA, Canada, Asia, Europe, South America, and the Middle East. In 2014, he received IDA's Margaret Byrd Rawson Award for his contributions to the field of dyslexia.

Cora Box & Allison Fernandez
"The Language of Math'"

Cora Box earned her Master of Arts in Teaching Degree from LSU in 2010. She spent seven years in the elementary classroom, specializing in working with students with learning disabilities.From 2017-2019, Cora served as the Lower School Math Coordinator at The Briarwood School. She has a passion for creating engaging, kinesthetic math lessons and has presented at local and national conferences.

Allison Fernandez earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh before finding her passion for teaching. Since then, she has over eight years experience in education, teaching grades 4 – 6 and serving two years as Lower School Assistant Head at the Briarwood School. Allison is highly trained in dyslexia intervention strategies and masterfully engages students in lessons. Currently, Allison is an ELA teacher in Pearland ISD.

Dr. Mary Prasad &
Dr. Carolyn Denton

"ADHD and Anxiety in Children with Reading Difficulties: Insights from the Children's Learning Institute"

Carolyn Denton received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology in 2000. Since that time, her work has focused primarily on developing and evaluating interventions for students with or at-risk of reading difficulties and disabilities (RD). She has led several large studies, including studies of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 reading interventions, funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (US Department of Education) and the National Institutes of Health. She also led a study of interventions for children who have both ADHD and RD. Currently, she is part of a team that is developing and testing a Tier 2 intervention in both reading and writing for kindergarten children at-risk of literacy difficulties. Although most of her work has been with elementary school students, she has also worked with struggling readers in middle and high school. Carolyn is the author of four books and numerous book chapters and over 60 journal articles on reading intervention, multi-tiered systems of support in reading, and related topics. She has done numerous presentations for educators, clinicians, and researchers across the US and in Europe and Asia. Carolyn was formerly a professor at the Children's Learning Institute at UTHealth. She is currently a senior research scientist with Oregon Research Institute.

Dr. Mary Prasad is a Pediatric Neuropsychologist with the Dan L. Duncan Children's Neurodevelopmental Clinic at the Children's Learning Institute, as well as an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at UT Health in Houston, Texas. She completed her bachelor's degree at Trinity University in San Antonio. She received her master's and doctorate degrees in Clinical Neuropsychology from the University of Houston. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center in New York and her post-doctoral fellowship at the UT Health. Dr. Prasad has been evaluating children at UT Health since 2000. She specializes in the identification of developmental disorders such as Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and learning disabilities. She also evaluates children with neurological disorders such as traumatic brain injuries, seizure disorders, and brain tumors.

Courtney Kilgard & Matt Krocak
"Flipping for Flipgrid"

Courtney Kilgard is currently the Technology Specialist for grades K-6 at The Briarwood School. Previously, Courtney taught 6th grade science Briarwood. Courtney holds multiple certifications. She is a Google Certified Educator Level 1 & 2, a Nearpod Certified Teacher, a Seesaw Ambassador, an EdPuzzle Coach, and a Flipgrid Certified Educator. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies Emphasis in Science and Reading from Stephen F. Austin State University. Courtney is dedicated to bringing meaningful, interactive technology to encourage a blended learning environment to help teachers meet the needs of students with learning differences.

After over 20 years as an audio and broadcast engineer, Matt Krocak set upon a second career as an educator. Matt is currently teaching 7th and 8th grade technology classes at The Briarwood School. Matt holds a BA in Radio/TV Broadcasting from University of Houston, is a graduate of the Master Recording Program at the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences, and is a Certified Technology Specialist. When not working at studios doing voice over work, you can find Matt racing cars at local race tracks. Matt truly enjoys teaching and has a passion for working with students with learning differences.

Dr. Brenda Taylor
Dysgraphia is More than
Messy Handwriting

Brenda Taylor's career in education has always been driven by a passion for students who struggle with learning in the classroom. This passion eventually became focused specifically on students who experience language-based difficulties that impact learning to read and/or write.

Brenda has served in various positions throughout her career – as a teacher, both general and special education; an educational diagnostician; a dyslexia specialist; and an educational consultant. Additionally, she served as the State Dyslexia Consultant. She is a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) with a License as a Texas Dyslexia Therapist (LDT). Brenda is also a Nationally Certified Educational Diagnostician (NCED). Most recently she earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an Emphasis in Reading and Literacy.

Brenda opened her own private practice, T3 Educational Services, to provide assessment and therapy services for students in the Brazos Valley. She also teaches part-time at Texas A&M University.

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HBIDA LOCAL TELEPHONE HELPLINE

for information and referral services:

713.364.5177
or
email: HoustonBIDA@gmail.com

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month

for more information about the
Houston Branch of the International
Dyslexia Association and membership,
Visit **www.houstonida.org**

ABOUT IDA

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals with dyslexia, their families and the communities that support them. IDA is the oldest organization dedicated to the study and treatment of dyslexia in the nation—founded in 1949 in memory of Dr. Samuel T. Orton, a distinguished neurologist. IDA membership consists of a variety of professionals in partnership with individuals with dyslexia and their families. IDA actively promotes effective teaching approaches and intervention strategies for the educational management of dyslexia. The organization and its branches do not recommend or endorse any specific speaker, school, instructional program or remedial method. Throughout IDA's rich history, our goal has been to provide the most comprehensive forum for parents, educators, and researchers to share their experiences, methods, and knowledge.

ABOUT HBIDA

THE HOUSTON BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION (HBIDA) was founded in 1978 at a meeting among parents and teachers who were concerned for the education of children with language learning problems and wanted to create an organization to promote efforts to help those children.

HBIDA welcomes your participation in all of the many activities we sponsor. We encourage you to join The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) and participate with us in HBIDA as we work together to increase awareness and support for individuals with learning differences in the Gulf Coast area. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The members of the HBIDA Board are all volunteers who bring a diversity of skills to the organization.

NANCY LAFEVERS AMBROSE SCHOLARSHIP FUND: SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO ACCESS DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

The Nancy LaFevers Scholarship Fund serves to promote the appropriate diagnosis and treatment of dyslexia and related disorders by offering scholarships for diagnostic testing of children and adults, coordinated by the HBIDA scholarship committee and local diagnosticians. Donations to this fund fulfills Nancy's wish to enable diagnostic services for families who could not afford them otherwise.

HBIDA encourages all potential applicants to visit the HBIDA website for detailed information on the application process and further guidance: http://www.houstonida.org/scholarships/

Like Us on Facebook!   **Follow Us!**

HBIDA Objectives

- Increase community awareness of dyslexia

- Encourage the use of scientifically-based reading instruction for individuals identified with dyslexia

- Support educational and medical research on dyslexia

HBIDA Programs & Services

Spring Conference
Fall Symposium
College Panel
Parent Networking Group
Regional Group Events
Website and Social Media

SCHOLARSHIP FUND for teachers and parents to attend our conference and symposium in memory of John Lopez, D.D.S.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND for educational diagnostic testing for children in memory of Nancy LaFevers Ambroze

RESOURCE DIRECTORY of articles, helpful local and national organizations and websites, and local service providers

HELPLINE for information and referral services: 713.364.5177

SPEAKERS BUREAU OF PROFESSIONALS is available to present to your group about dyslexia.

Texas law (19 TAC §74.28) now requires that districts and charter schools must provide a parent education program for the parents/guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

HBIDA

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