Speld VEVVS



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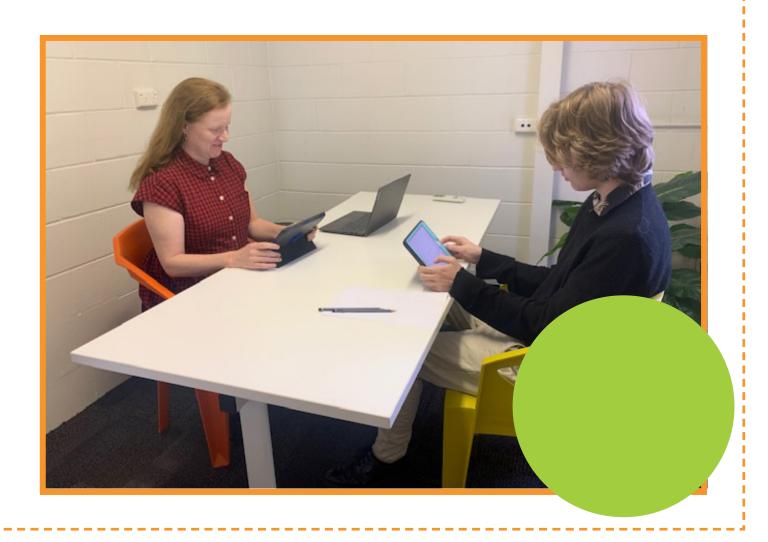


New Speld Qld Assessment Locations!

DAYBORO

BENOWA

To book in for a psychoeducational assessment at one of our new locations please complete the <u>assessment application form</u>.





What Psychologists Wish Parents & Teachers Knew

By Kathy Brunnen, Psychologist

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS (SLD) OCCUR ON A CONTINUUM OF SEVERITY

This means that one person may have a learning disorder just in one or two specific areas (e.g., reading fluency and calculation accuracy), and they can achieve at their highest potential at school with the help of some accommodations. This is a mild SLD. Another person may experience great difficulty across many academic skills (reading, writing and/or mathematics) where they require intensive intervention and accommodations across their schooling, and yet may not be able to complete all activities efficiently. This is a severe SLD.

Ultimately, it is important to keep in mind that people with an SLD will experience it differently from one person to the next.

IS DYSLEXIA THE SAME AS AN SLD?

Yes, but it's one type. A "Specific Learning Disorder with impairment in reading" is a bit of a mouthful. Technically, Dyslexia is a pattern of difficulties characterised by problems with accurate or

fluent word recognition, poor decoding, and poor spelling abilities. However, an individual may simply have a specific difficulty in reading fluency only. Schools refer to this as Dyslexia as well.

There are two other areas in which a Specific Learning Disorder can occur. Impairments can be in written expression (Dysgraphia) and mathematics (Dyscalculia).

SLD RISK FACTORS

The DSM-V-TR details the following as risk factors for individuals to go on to experience an SLD.

- family history of an SLD (this is observed in populations across both alphabetic [e.g., English and German] and nonalphabetic languages [e.g., Japanese and Mandarin)
- early life exposure to air pollution, nicotine, flame retardants, lead and manganese
- speech delays/language impairments, fine motor weaknesses

Those who are at-risk will not all go on to experience a Specific Learning Disorder. About half of the individuals at-risk experience Dyslexia etc (Muter & Snowling, 2009).



EARLY ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION ARE BEST



For a best-case scenario, difficulties are identified early in a child's academic life, and specifically targeted with extra help to improve those skills. There are limits to the tests available to psychologists, which makes assessing individuals aged six and under challenging. The optimal time for assessment is around Year 2. That way, there is still time during their crucial development to remedy difficulties.

However, it is never too late. For self-esteem reasons alone, assessment can be critical in an adolescents' development. Knowledge of why something may be challenging for them can be very freeing. On the flipside, knowing that they don't experience an SLD can help them to trust their skills.

LESS IS MORE

One hour of extra help or intervention is best received as 10 minutes per session for six days, rather than one 60-minute session, once per week. Attention, self-esteem, tolerance, and efficacy all benefit from this model.

CAN THOSE WITH DYSLEXIA/DYS-GRAPHIA/DYSCALCULIA BE HELPED?

Yes. Depending on the severity of the individual's difficulty, improvement is often observed. For example, those who experience Dyslexia who receive explicit phonological awareness building intervention have better reading and spelling skills than others with Dyslexia who do not receive such intervention.

It's important that people who have co-occurring difficulties (up to 70%) receive support for those areas too. For example, speech pathology for articulation improvement, occupational therapy for fine motor strengthening, and behavioural programmes and medication for ADHD.

THE CONSULTANT EFFECT IS REAL, EVEN FOR CHILDREN.

Ever had HR recommend mindfulness for wellbeing at work? It's pretty easy to brush off. Then have you had a consultant come into the workplace to deliver a session on wellbeing, and recommend mindfulness? Do you tend to feel more compelled to give it a try? This is the consultant effect.

Don't be discouraged if your child has trouble



engaging with academic work with you as their parent. It's very common. If you have the resources to engage a tutor, it can be worth it, just to help the child engage in the intervention. All of a sudden, children may listen, absorb, and learn information that you've already covered, simply because it's someone external saying it.

However, considering the less is more idea, still try to incorporate practice of one specific skill 5 or 10 minutes per day.

JUST SHY?



Teachers and parents may report that some children are shy at school or amongst others who are not their immediate family unit. On occasion, this can be harmless if it does not persist. However, children whose academic and social lives are impacted by 'shyness' may well be experiencing anxiety symptoms. Individuals who do not respond to questions and/or are slow to complete tasks, may not have a learning difficulty. They may be highly concerned about how they look or come

across to others. Some children who experience anxiety symptoms don't respond to questions unless they are sure they are correct. They may not even say they don't know the answer, out of fear of judgement. Other times, they may complete tasks very slowly because they are hesitant in their accuracy, and/or they may be checking their work over and over to ensure it's perfect. These are examples where anxiety symptoms interfere with life.

So, what do you do? Have a chat with the Guidance Officer/School Psychologist to discuss your concerns. If they also suspect your child is experiencing anxiety symptoms, connect with your GP to obtain a referral (to get Medicare rebates) to a psychologist or other mental health clinician. You can also access these services directly without a referral. What if it's both anxiety and learning difficulties? This is a common occurrence. Sometimes children who are aware of their difficulties develop anxiety related to their learning, which interferes with their ongoing learning capacity. If anxiety prevents them from doing work, address the anxiety in the first instance. If they still get their work done, you can focus on both at the same time.



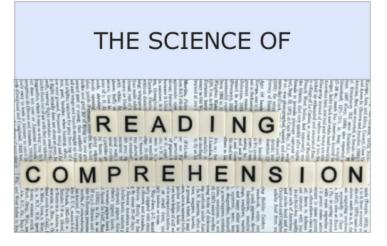
The Science of Reading Comprehension

he term Science of Reading has been the focus of attention for several years (see my January, 2020 post). The term refers to the research that reading experts, especially cognitive scientists, have conducted on how we learn to read. This body of knowledge, over twenty years in the making, has helped debunk older methods of reading instruction that were based on tradition and observation, not evidence. Much of the discourse around instruction based on the Science of Reading tends to focus on the importance of explicit instruction for phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency.

But what does the research tell us about effective instruction for comprehension? The title of a 2021 article by Duke, Ward, and Pearson caught my attention related to this question: The Science of Reading Comprehension Instruction. The authors summarize what decades of research have told us about the nature of comprehension and how to develop students' comprehension. We know that before students can comprehend what they read, they need to have foundational word-reading skills in order to read most or all of the words in a text. However, as important as fluent word reading is, this is not sufficient for strong comprehension.

Duke, Ward, and Pearson note that comprehension instruction should begin early, at the same time that early elementary students are developing oral language, phonemic awareness and phonics skills. They point out that, "The relationship between word-reading instruction and reading comprehension

instruction is more synergistic than competitive." For example, teaching comprehension monitoring provides a form of feedback to readers as to whether they have read a word accurately.



The authors identify three main areas of instruction that develop students' reading comprehension abilities: teaching text structures, comprehension strategy instruction, and vocabulary and knowledge building. They also address other factors that affect comprehension such as the purpose for reading and difficulty of a text, level of engagement with text, opportunities for text discussion, instructional practices that kindle reading motivation, and opportunities to write about a text.

TEACHING TEXT STRUCTURE

Discerning the structure of a text aids comprehension — attention to the structure of the text during reading provides a scaffold for understanding. Duke,



Ward, and Pearson note that, "A huge amount of research has examined the impact of text structure instruction. We have long known that students benefit from instruction in common structures and elements of narrative and informational text."

Based on a meta-analysis of research related to the effects of teaching expository text structure on comprehension, Pyle et al. (2017) reported that this type of instruction is an effective reading comprehension strategy for a range of student abilities and grade levels. They explain, "It is likely that text structure instruction is effective because it presents students with an organizational framework for approaching expository text that is often complex and dense with academic vocabulary." They suggest that teachers explicitly describe expository text structures and teach students the clue words associated with various text structures, model the use of text structures in reading (and writing) to draw students' attention to the organization of the text to identify the key ideas and details to support their text recall, and consider introducing graphic organizers as a support to assist students with identifying and using the text structures to organize the critical information collaboratively with students." Explicit instruction of text structure is a key component in several Keys to Literacy professional development programs: The Key Comprehension Routine, Module 8 in Keys to Beginning Reading, and two Keys to Literacy writing professional learning programs (Keys to Content Writing and Keys to Early Writing).

COMPREHENSION STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

The National Reading Panel (2000) identified several comprehension strategies as effective for improving comprehension: comprehension monitoring strategies, use of graphic organizers and semantic maps (including story maps), question answering and generating by students, and summarization. In a May, 2018 blog post, Shanahan notes, "Strategies like monitoring, selfquestioning, visualizing, comparing the text with prior knowledge, identifying text organization, and so on are all intentional, purposeful actions that are effective in improving comprehension or recall.... Comprehension strategies should be taught-and, according to research, should be taught using a gradual release of responsibility approach. That just means that the teacher models and explains when, how, and why to implement the strategies. Then the teacher guides students to use the strategies themselves, turning more and more of the responsibility for that over to them gradually."

Duke, Ward, and Pearson point out that, "Research has long shown that proficient comprehenders engage in particular mental activities to support their understanding of what they are reading. Some students learn to use these processes seemingly naturally, but many benefit from explicit instruction in how to think before, during, and after reading; how to monitor their understanding; and how to help themselves when meaning breaks down." They go on to say, "A relatively recent meta-analysis included multiple-strategy instructional approaches in examining the effectiveness of comprehension strategy instruction in regular classroom settings in grades 3–12. The researchers found positive effects on both standardized and researcher-developed



tests of reading comprehension. Reviews of the impact of comprehension strategy instruction with younger students have also found positive effects."

Approaches to comprehension strategy instruction that involve teaching several strategies that can be used in concert have also been found to be effective (National Reading Panel, 2000; Pressley, 2000; Duke et al., 2004). The Key Comprehension Routine and Module 9 of Keys to Beginning Reading offer instructional suggestions for teaching comprehension strategies as single activities and in combination as a reading comprehension routine.

VOCABULARY AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

What role does background knowledge play in supporting comprehension? Duke, Ward, and Pearson note that research has established that one's knowledge, including one's academic content knowledge and the cultural knowledge developed through day-to-day activities, affects one's reading comprehension. While there is general consensus that background knowledge supports comprehension, it is not possible for students to know everything there is to know about every topic that might come up in the text they read. Duke, Ward, and Pearson point out, "Surprisingly little research has focused on the impact of content instruction on reading comprehension." Given the differences in background knowledge that students may have related to what they are reading, it is important for teachers to use an activity before reading that helps students activate their prior knowledge, or to provide some background knowledge. One example is the use of a Top-Down Topic Web graphic organizer, a comprehension strategy that is integrated in several Keys to Literacy professional development programs. This graphic organizer lists the topics and sub-topics from a text in a hierarchical format, with the broadest topics at the top. Prior to reading, the teacher asks students to identify and share with peers something they already know that is in the topic web. Based on the responses, the teacher can add to students' existing knowledge by providing additional information about the topic.

What role does vocabulary play in supporting comprehension? One of the oldest findings in educational research is the strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Comprehension is significantly affected if a student does not know the meanings of a sufficient proportion of the words in the text (Stahl, 1999; Samuels, 2002). Previewing unfamiliar words prior to reading helps students gain enough information about words so they won't "stumble" over them while reading (Graves, 2006). Previewing is one of the 5 instructional components of The Key Vocabulary Routine. See my December, 2019 blog post about previewing vocabularv that includes instructional suggestions.

CONCLUSION

There are many factors that contribute to a student's ability to comprehend text. Teachers



across all grades and subjects need to combine numerous instructional practices to help students build the comprehension strategies, knowledge of text structure, vocabulary, and connections to background knowledge needed to learn from text. Unfortunately, most teachers do not learn these instructional practices prior to entering the classroom. A big part of Keys to Literacy's mission is to provide practical, research-based professional development to help teachers grow their ability to help students become proficient readers. To learn more, visit the large collection of free resources at the Keys to Literacy website, including videos, archived webinars, articles and book chapters, templates and printables.

This article is by Joan Sedita and has been sourced from <u>Keys to Literacy</u>.

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Sounds-Write: a Linguistic Phonics Approach

By Kylie Power, Sounds Writer Trainer

ounds-Write is the gold standard in evidence-based, linguistic phonics programs. Throughout 2022, Speld QLD have been conducting four-day Sounds-Write workshops in Brisbane and throughout the state.

The purpose of these workshops is to provide classroom professionals, tutors, speech therapists and sometimes parents and grandparents a comprehensive system with which to teach reading and spelling.

WHY IS A LINGUISTIC PHONICS APPROACH SUGGESTED BY SPELD OLD?

Before answering this question, let's define 'phonics'. Phonics refers to the predictable relationships linking speech sounds to written letters. It is not a teaching 'method' but rather, a body of knowledge. There are 44 sounds of English, and these sounds are represented by letters and combinations of letters.

Linguistic phonics programs use a speech to print approach. They are phonemic, beginning with what students learn before they come to school, the sounds in speech. A linguistic phonics approach uses this already acquired knowledge and moves on to teach students how to represent these individual sounds (phonemes) with letters or combinations of letters (graphemes). Traditional phonics programs are generally graphemic, focussing on the written representation and moving to the sounds. Linguistic phonics approaches do not teach children that letters 'make' sounds, rather that the sounds are the basis for the alphabetic coded.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

Years of research into how our brains learn to read and write has identified a synthetic phonics approach as the most successful approach to the teaching of reading. Linguistic phonics is

"The review shows that the systematic approach which is generally understood as synthetic phonics offers the vast majority of young children the best and most direct route to becoming skilled readers and writers" Final Report – Jim Rose March 2006.

a more recent approach to synthetic phonics. Jim Rose comments in, 'The Independent



Review of the Teaching of Early Reading'.

A similar conclusion was reached by the writers of the Australian National Enquiry into the Teaching of Literacy Dec 2005.

"In sum, the incontrovertible finding from the extensive body of local and international research is that for children during the early years of schooling (and subsequently if needed) to be able to link their knowledge of spoken language to their knowledge of written language, they must first master the alphabetic code – the system of grapheme- phoneme correspondences that link written words to their pronunciations. Because these are both foundational and essential skills for the development of competence in reading, writing and spelling they must be taught explicitly, systematically, early and well."

Evidence from over thirty years of research concludes that effective phonics programs should include several important elements. They should be systematic, introducing sound/ spelling correspondences in a logical sequence from simple one letter spellings to more complex. A successful, synthetic phonics program must be cumulative, building on a student's previous knowledge. The three essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation need to be explicitly taught and enough time for practise and consolidation must be provided. Students must be engaged in multi-sensory activities to optimise their learning. Finally, students need to be given opportunities to consolidate their newly taught phonics knowledge at a connected text level.

The Sounds-Write program contains all aspects of a robust, evidence-based linguistic phonics program. Sounds-Write is a highly structured, multi-sensory, incremental and code-orientated instructional approach to teaching reading and spelling.

UNDERSTANDING WORKING MEMO-RY AND COGNITIVE LOAD THEORY

consideration Another important when choosing an effective phonics program is the limits of working memory for novice learners and Cognitive Load Theory. The Sounds-Write program's use of clear, succinct, honest language helps students understand how the English alphabetic code works. Reducing the language load also reduces cognitive load for novice learners. The limited capacity of working memory affects the amount of new knowledge students are able to manage. Teachers must be mindful of the language used during explicit phonics teaching and the number of new sound/ spelling correspondences being introduced. If working memory is overloaded, learning cannot take place. To ensure new knowledge, skills and concepts are transferred to long term memory, teachers must provide students with plenty of opportunity for practise, review and consolidation.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT AT A SOUNDS WRITE WORKSHOP?



During Sounds-Write workshops, participants receive information about how the English alphabetic written language is developed and why it is necessary to teach students in a systemic way how to decipher this code. The main lessons in the program are demonstrated and participants are given time to practise the lesson scripts and receive feedback. The workshops also include discussions about assessment, the use of decodable readers and the versatility of the program. Sounds-Write can be used as whole class instruction from Prep to Year 2, with revision in Year 3. It is also well suited to intervention for students who have fallen behind and can be used with teenagers and adult learners.

WHERE HAS SPELD QLD DELIVERED SOUNDS WRITE WORKSHOPS?



Sounds-Write face-to-face workshops have been extremely popular at Speld QLD. All courses for 2021 and 2022 have been booked to capacity. During 2021 and 2022, Speld QLD conducted many Sounds-Write workshops in Brisbane, two in Townsville,

one in Tolga and two at the Gold Coast. Very soon, Sounds-Write will be delivered to teachers and speech therapists in Cairns. A further four workshops were completed by Speld QLD funded by the Education Department in conjunction with The Reading and Writing Centre. In 2023, Speld QLD are committed to ensuring many more teachers and speech therapists will be able to access this important training, conducting workshops in Brisbane, Rockhampton, the Atherton Tablelands, Townsville and Toowoomba.

Most participants in these workshops are teachers, support staff and speech pathologists from QLD State Schools. Participants from Catholic and Independent Schools, including Flexi-schools are beginning to increase in number. Sometimes teachers from Special Schools and Secondary Schools also attend, along with parents of dyslexic children wishing to assist their own children at home to improve their reading and spelling skills.

HOW CAN I BOOK SOUNDS WRITE TRAINING FOR MY REGION OR SCHOOL?

Speld is dedicated to continuing to provide this sought-after training for all who are passionate about using evidence-based programs to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for students in Queensland. If your school is interested in Speld QLD travelling to your region, please contact our office or email Kylie Power at: kylie.power@speld. org.au to enquire about this possibility. Schools in smaller regions may wish to collaborate to access



this popular workshop.

FEEDBACK FOR THE SOUNDS-WRITE FOUR-DAY WORKSHOP:

"Have never been to a PD where the days have gone so quickly. So relevant, a well sequenced course."

"Best PD I have attended. Very well presented. Easy to follow. Lots of hands-on learning. Content was not too overwhelming. Got a lot out of the course."

"I like that this is so practical and has given me the knowledge and skills to make changes straight away in my classroom"

"Excellent course, explicit teaching models, practical lessons and strategies that you can use in all areas of teaching."

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New Speld Qld Professional Development!

The Challenge of Learning to Read



- The changes that have been made to the Australian Curriculum (Version 9) mean schools need to consider how they are teaching students to read.
- We have designed a one-hour workshop to assist educators to understand the research and theory behind learning to read and spell and how they can implement best practice in their classrooms in light of the recent curriculum changes.

Find Out More



How to Develop Number Sense

In early years foundation stage EYFS children need lots of opportunities to explore and play with numbers in order to develop number sense - here one early years lead shares the activities she uses.

SABRINA PINNOCK

Developing "number sense" is a crucial part of early maths learning: it helps children to understand what numbers mean, gives them the ability to be flexible with numbers, and, ultimately, sets them on the path to becoming great mathematicians.

In the early years foundation stage (EYFS) classroom, children need lots of opportunities to explore and play with numbers for number sense to develop. Here are five easy



activities I use to make sure this happens.

EYFS: Activities to nurture number sense

'HOW MANY OBJECTS ARE THERE IN THE JAR?'

Have a jar in the classroom in which you can fit objects of various sizes. Start off with a small quantity of relatively large objects - for example, three ping-pong balls - and ask the children to estimate how many there are in the jar. As they gain confidence, use smaller objects and increase the quantities.

Throughout this activity, it's important to have regular conversations with the pupils to discuss the contents of the jar. For example: "Why is your estimation more than five?" "Why can't there be 100?"

'CAN YOU HELP ME COUNT THIS?'

Make sure that children have the opportunity to count various objects. This can be built into everyday routines around the classroom: you could ask children to help you count the toys



in the toy box or the pens in the pen pot, for example. Getting children to count objects of different sizes helps them to realise that size does not affect the quantity. For instance, eight footballs are still a smaller quantity than 10 sweets, despite the children being able to hold the sweets in their hands.

'CAN YOU SORT THESE BUTTONS BY COLOUR?'

Sorting is a great daily activity for young children: they can explore real objects and sort them in different ways. Buttons are a perfect resource because they are all different shapes, sizes and patterns. Let the children decide among themselves how they'd like to sort them; whether it's by colour, size or shape.

It is surprising how observant children can be, and soon they will be sorting objects in many creative ways. This all helps children to practise counting and organising a set, which develops their understanding of quantities.

'HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE IN CLASS TODAY?'

Regularly talk to the children about how many children are in school and how many are absent, and find a way to record this each day - you could have pictures of all pupils as part of a self-registration, for example.

You could also have questions of the day: for example, "do you prefer apples or bananas?" The children could write their name or place a picture

on the preferred fruit. You could even have an area for children who don't like either to record that, too.

These conversations can encourage the comparison of quantities. They can also influence addition and subtraction language, while the visualisations will allow children to develop a deeper understanding of numbers.

'SHALL WE VOTE ON IT?'

Allowing pupils to vote for a story - either with a show of hands or by adding objects or named slips to jars - encourages them to count and compare to reach a decision on the winning book. You can ask them things like: "how many votes altogether?", "Has anyone voted twice?", "How can we find out which book has the most votes?"

The possibilities for this activity are endless, and pupils will develop critical-thinking skills to problem solve. This daily activity can really help to develop the skills needed for good number sense.

Sabrina Pinnock is an EYFS teacher and a maths lead in England.

This article is by Sabrina Pinnock and has been sourced from TES.







Sounds Write Face-to-Face (Far North Queensland)

Presented by Kylie Power

Time: 9:00am - 3:30pm Tues - Fri

18 Apr

Sounds Write Face-to-Face (Gold Coast)

Presented by Kylie Power

Time: 9:00am - 3:30pm Tues - Fri



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