Growing up in a family with nine girls, five boys and my parents, I remember    our home being very busy and never quiet. Someone was always doing something, good or bad. I remember my mother often sitting with my siblings at the kitchen table helping them with their homework. The lesson often ended with both parties being angry and frustrated.

 At the age of 35, I decided not to send my five-year-old to school but to teach him at home and at the age of 50 I sit at my kitchen table with my third child as I continue to try to teach him to read. Flashbacks of my mother sitting with my siblings come to mind as I pray to God to help us get through another lesson. I am so frustrated and so is he. I keep looking for ways to help him and some days he does well and other days he just gets angry. He is trying so hard to read and get it right and I am trying so hard to find a way to help him learn.

I remember the day I was crying to my sister and telling her how frustrated I was because I couldn't seem to find the answer to my sons reading problems. He was turning into such a difficult child and creating so many problems within the family. He was lying about everything and doing anything to be difficult. I struggled with thoughts of sending him to school but I felt that would make my day easier but it wouldn't solve his reading problems. How do you teach someone when they just want to fight and be angry? I told her I was praying to God to lead me to whatever was going to help me figure out this child.

The next day our family went to visit my father-in-law. He had saved the paper for me because he thought I would be interested in an article and that it might help my son. I sat down and read it and immediately went to the computer to Google for more information. The woman on the video was describing my son and telling me she had the answer for him. I called EBLI the next day and when I found out the cost my heart sank. How can you say you can't afford to teach your child to read? How can this be the answer to my prayer but out of reach financially?

I am so thankful to Shanna and to Ounce of Prevention for working with my finances and my son. The difference that this program has made in such a short time is amazing to me. His attitude has turned around and his confidence is higher than a kite. He finally knows that God didn't short change him in the brain department and that he is a very smart boy with many talents and that HE CAN READ!

After reading The Teacher Who Couldn't Read, I have a whole new understanding of my son. The anger and frustrations and feelings of being let down expressed by John Corcoran were the same feelings that my son was starting to develop after five years of school and trying to make sense of all those letters. They were the same feelings I had as I tried to find a way to teach my son and it wasn't working. I am so thankful I found EBLI and the key to reading for my son at 11.

My daughter is in 11th grade this year and I know that this program would help her to be a better reader and comprehend so much better. But again, how can you say you can't afford to teach your child to read? My youngest child is in first grade. This program would guarantee her reading success. How can you say you can't afford to teach your child to read?

Coming from a family of 14, I have siblings who struggle to read, I have nieces and nephews who struggle to read. I have heard my siblings talk about the struggles that their children have gone through being in special ed programs that still did not teach them to read but was devastating to their self-esteem. Some were labeled as dyslexic and many other titles and don't forget the medication. They received diplomas, yet many of them still did not have great reading skills.

As I sat watching Shanna teach my son to read, I saw the article on the wall and read about the scholarship program that you offer. I am not sure what you look for when you choose the person to give that honor to, but I do know that I would love to be able to teach my family to read. Teaching people to read would be changing their life, and the world, one reader at a time. I remember being in grade school and dreading having to read out loud and my teacher told me to read more and I would get better. I love to read! I can't imagine a life without reading! I can't have this knowledge and not share it and pass it on. How do you say you can't afford to teach someone how to read?

I am very thankful for everyone who has helped us on our journey. It has changed our lives and our family tremendously. I hope to give that gift to many people and to be the answer to their prayers by learning how to teach someone to read. What a wonderful gift!

Sincerely,
Joyce Carroll,
Jacob's mom