

You are all set.

Okay. Welcome, everybody. I am so excited that you're here, and I just can't wait to share all of this great stuff about blending.

The past few weeks we've been going into classrooms, and I've been doing a lot of videotaping that we use in our trainings, and I've been working with anywhere from kindergartners to high schoolers.

And oh my gosh, I've had so much opportunity to really push even the high schooler, and all the way down to the kindergartners with their blending. So there's lots of fresh stuff in my head.

I'm going to show some video to you of several of these kids, some kindergartners, some first graders, a 10th grader.

Those kids where like, "Oh, my gosh.

Are you going to get these sounds put together, or are we never going to get there?" I'm sure that if you're on here, you've had that feeling before. So thank you so much for joining.

I'm so excited to share. Please be sure, if you're just coming on, to sign in in the chat and tell us who you are and where you're from, and if you'd like, you can tell what you do or how you heard about us or whatever.

And Hannah is on here, too. Hannah, you want to say hi again?

Yep. Hi, everybody. I'm Hannah.

Hannah's going to be collecting your questions.

So as I'm saying some stuff and you're really like, "What on earth is she talking about?" Or you have some wonderings or whatever, be sure to write the questions in the chat, and Hannah's going to be collecting them, and we may stop along the way to answer questions. But for sure at the end, I will do my very best to answer all the questions that you have about everything that I share with you.

So what's going to happen, what our setup is here, is that I'm going to talk a little bit about some things that cause difficulty with kids getting to that blending thing, some things other than what you may think, and then some other things you want to look out for.

And then we have a video that's about six and a half minutes of these three different groups, or two one-on-one kids, and then a small group of kids.

So you can see some of these things I talk about in action, and how I actually go about pulling those words out of the kids and getting that blending to happen together.

So we'll do that, and then we'll come back together and go over questions. So that's our game plan. Okay?

So feel free, don't be shy, don't be quiet.

On the Zoom be quiet, I guess, unless you have a question that you're hopping on.

But in the chat, don't be quiet for sure.

So interact with each other, ask questions.

The more interactive this is,

the better that I am able to get you what you're curious about

or what you need. Okay? So I really, really appreciate you being here.

And I'm going to share my screen, and we're going to get moving.

Nora, can I answer one quick question before you get rolling?

Uh-huh.

Because Nicole just asked, and I think it's important that we say it from the start, if the recording of this will be available to view after tonight, and the answer is absolutely. So since you're on the mailing list for this webinar, you'll get tomorrow an email with the recording, and then any resources that are shared tonight or talked about, we will include for you, too.

Yes.

So never fear if you have to leave a little early.

It stays in the cloud forever.

With you. Yeah, and we'd like for you to share it, too.

We like these things that everybody who can benefit from it, please share away.

And those of you who don't know me, I'm actually the founder of Evely.

And like you probably, I am kind of an addict of all things literacy and promoting literacy and sharing about literacy and learning about literacy. So,

we will share all kinds of things that come up in the chat.

Like I say, if there's any references or resources that we share.

And we'll also share the video that's going to be in the

PowerPoint that we're doing, the video that I'm talking about.

You'll be able to get that, too. So we'll give it all to you so you can take advantage of those.

Okay.

Let's see.

I've got to get to

where I'm looking at here. There we go. Okay, so here is...

Oopsie. Go away. There we go.

Our PowerPoint.

And I don't know why it's not letting me do a slideshow, but that's okay.

We don't have to have it as a slideshow.

So our whole goal here is to accelerate blending.

That's what our purpose is tonight.

All those kids who are stuck, and all those even at the beginning of the year, we want to move those kids, those little kindergartners.

If we can get them blending by the end of September, which is typically our goal with Evelyn, and that's where we get almost all of them

to, that's what we want to do. But oftentimes you have those stubborn blenders that are just like, "Oh, my gosh. Get moving there." So how do we move all of them, but especially the stubborn ones, further and faster?

Okay, so that's where we're going to go. I'm going to try to get this...

This thing keeps popping up here. I don't know why it won't let me show my slideshow, but that's okay. We'll do it this way.

So what are the things that hinder blending?

Now there's some things that are really obvious, and most of us probably know about them, and that they are hindering our blending.

First of all, the kids don't know the sounds that are going with the letters.

And I'm talking about blending in text, okay?

We have blending in the dark, basically, where you're doing auditory blending and you're not seeing any letters. There's a lot of training that more and more

people are doing with that, which is so exciting, that over the

20-some years that I've been doing this, I see more and more of that blending

instruction and segmenting and phoneme manipulation happening, especially in our

K and first-grade classrooms. But what we need to have is that,

obviously, to transfer over so that they're doing that blending in the

context of words, because that's where they have to use it, right?

That's what we need it for. So if your kids don't know what sounds go with what letters, then

they're going to have a hard time blending them, right?

You're going to have to be giving them information. And we have that.

You're going to see on these videos, pretty much all these things I talk about, one or more of these kids will exhibit these kinds of

things that we're talking about here.

So we need to know what sounds go with what letters,

and getting them that quickly. Okay, phonemic awareness.

So our phonemic awareness is blending sounds together.

We're working on the blending, right?

Segmenting sounds,

and moving sounds around. So the number one thing that your kids are going to have issues with, of course, is blending.

Well, we're not going to get to phoneme manipulation, moving sounds around in words, if our kids can't blend. So this is such a huge-

Steppingstone, that we're going to be stepping off from is to get that blending,

because once that hits, we can really start moving with getting our kids

becoming more and more automatic at decoding and reading and all those

things. But if they're stuck at blending, we're kind of stuck, and then that's a

bummer, right? So another thing that's really important, this is so

crucial, is working memory. And when I talk about working memory, some people say

short-term memory, working memory, there's different things, and I still have not

ever heard--

Some people say, "Oh, they're both the same thing," and I've read different things.

So when I'm talking about working memory, I'm talking about that about

five seconds of memory where you do an action.

Okay? So we'd like to have our kids

to have five seconds of working memory.

If you teach kindergarten or even first grade, a lot of times we got to do some

work to get them there. And it's interesting because words,

hardly any words, there's a few, but not a lot, that are more than five seconds

long. I find that intriguing. And also syllables.

Very rarely will you find a syllable that's more than five seconds long.

So we have to say one sound per second.

Now, if we're going really slow, let's say we're doing the word cat, because that's the word everybody talks about, right?

So if we do this c-a.

Now again, our little ones probably don't have five seconds of working memory.

They may have three, we're hoping.

But we can't go slow like that, because if we go slow like that, we're bypassing their working memory, and they have no clue.

You get to the t, and they'll say something like tomato, right?

Something that starts with a t for sure.

So we've got to go fast enough, all right, so that we're keeping within that working memory time so that they can utilize this information.

So a lot of times our instinct is to do the exact opposite, like, "They're not getting this, so I think we need to slow down." And that is really actually not it. Okay? We want a sequence and order.

So when we're going to do blending, we're always, always going to talk about blending the first sound and the second sound.

We don't go to the end of the word or blend one sound and the rest of it.

We blend the first two sounds, and then we move on to the next one.

If it's a four-sound word, then we blend those three sounds, and we'll move on to the fourth sound. So we're always going left to right because reading is left to right, and we want to keep our kids sequencing and tracking and doing all those things in order. So we don't want to bypass that five seconds of

working memory. So you've got to do a lot of hand-holding, and you'll see that in action in the video, but we've got to move it.

If you're waiting

for a few seconds for them, they're reading the word, and they

can't pull out that a,

especially if it's more than five seconds, they're never going to really probably

get it much. But we want to

prompt them to help assist them with that information.

So be mindful, okay? Three to five seconds.

Some kids get up to seven seconds of working memory, but five seconds is our goal,

and it's not usually where little kids are at. Okay?

But we can get them there, and doing this kind of instruction actually

trains and grows from that three to five, moving them up to

five seconds of working memory. Another thing that hinders blending, and this is

oftentimes first grade or tenth grade, you're going to see this.

The older that they get, the more this is a problem, and that's guessing, okay?

They're going to say a couple of sounds and just say whatever

because they're not blending that word.

They're trying to look at the whole word, and you'll see I do a lot of covering up,

but even when you cover up, they'll still guess, which is like, oh my gosh, that

crazy guessing monster, which is a whole other story.

We've done a webinar on that one too.

But the guessing when we're trying to blend, you just have to stop them from

doing that, okay? We play something called the point game, and you'll see it on there. When they

don't guess, you give them points, and you make a great big deal about it or whatever their

issue is because different kids have different issues. Letter name interference.

The older the kids get typically, the more we see that they're wanting to say the letter name instead of the sound. So that doesn't work

because if you're saying C-A-T, this is not a C-A-T,

right? The letter names are not what we need to access to be able to

blend words together. It's the sounds.

So we really tell kids, when we're doing this reading, unless it's a vowel, which is sometimes the letter name, not always, of course, but once in a while or sometimes.

Unless it's a vowel, you are not going to be using letter names.

We want to forget about those while we're reading because what we need to access when we're reading are the sounds.

So the older the kids you have, more often those kids have memory issues, okay? So they don't have five seconds of working memory as these kids get older, okay? And they're trying to utilize what they know, which is typically that letter name.

So then they're all kinds of confused. C, cuh, what am I doing here?

Or they like to say ss for C because the first sound in the letter name C

is

s, which again, it can be a small percentage of the time, but that's not the sound that goes with it the majority. So that letter name interference, if you have older kids or you're teaching older kids, you're going to see more and more of that happening as well as that memory thing. So we've got to stretch that memory, deal with that, make sure we're working within that five-second working memory, and get rid of those letter names when they're trying to do the skill of blending, okay?

All right.

Another thing that hinders blending, and these things are so interesting, these next three, is phonological reversals.

And what I mean of that is they look at a whole word, and they move all the letters around. Like they say felt for left.

They all have the same letters in them, right?

But they're trying to take that whole picture of the word and saying,

"Let's try this." It's really fascinating some of the things kids come up with.

Grill

for girl, that's another one that will happen.

So when you actually move the sounds to a different order than what they are there. So those phonological reversals, you must force the issue of left to right in order. We are absolutely crazy about being really particular about sticking left to right in order. We don't go to the end. We don't come back.

We don't look at the middle. Whatever we're doing, it doesn't matter if it's a very big multi-syllable word, but especially with that,

too. But with blending, one sound and then the next, put them together, and then the next, okay? Not going to the end and coming back.

So we've got to get past some of these issues that cause problems for the kids. If the kids have reversals, Bs and Ds, as you know, are one of the main ones that are going to happen, and you have to do that correction thing, and there's some other things that we do with handwriting.

You can look for our handwriting webinars, and we also have some on B/D reversals, actually fixing them.

We have a webinar on that too. M and W, that's another interesting one. One of the little girls, the kindergartener you're going to see, she has an N and U reversal. So basically, I started doing pretty much every word I was doing with her had an N and a U in them, so that we can strengthen that, instead of avoiding that.

So when they have those reversals, you just have to do a little bit more coaching and error correction and giving them that information and having them regurgitate, basically, say it right back to you.

Another thing that's really common, and again, it seems like as they get older, they do this more and more too, is they insert sounds.

They'll add a sound. If the word is "straight," okay, they'll say "state." And the interesting thing is, if the word is "state," they'll say "straight." It's just so strange.

But they'll insert the ER and O, their very two favorites,
or when they're there, they'll leave them out. I always find that very interesting.
Another, the third, probably third place, is NG.
They like to throw in that NG or leave out the NG.
And I just kind of kid with them. I say, "Do you see an NG there, or do you see a
ER? Nope, there's no ER. Well, don't say it." Okay?
Or I'll say, "If you can show me a ER in this word, I'll give you a million
dollars." And they'll be like, "Really?" And I'm like, "Yeah, because there isn't
one in there." So just kind of really getting them to pay
close attention to those. Those two sounds fall out of your mouth really
easily, and you'll see a lot of kids, especially if they're
struggling readers as they're getting older,
that they do those insertions. This last one is
like, oh my gosh, you want to have a little vice and hold their sweet
heads down on the word. How many times, we could all count a
gazillion, I'm sure, where the kids are trying to read a word, and then they look
up at you. And I'll say to them, "Your brain is saying, 'Oh my gosh, this word is
not on Nora's face.' Keep your eyes on the word." We play a point game.
They keep their eyes on the word, they get a point, okay?
Sometimes I'll ask if it's okay if I hold their head.
Some kids will even hold their own head.
Because if they look up at you, even if they were going to get it right, they look
up at you, there's nothing in front of them to decode, so most

likely they're going to forget it and say something that's crazy, and off-base. All right? So these are some of the main things. Of course, there can be others, but these are some of the main things that are going to hold your kids back with blending. It's different.

The littler ages are a lot more similar.

The struggling readers, they get a little bit older, they have a lot more similar of those things, different ones of these.

So these are some of the things that you'll really see are causing your kids problems to getting all the sounds in order of a word and getting the word out of their mouth. Okay?

Hannah, any questions that I need to deal with before I move to my next point?

Nope, not yet.

Okay. Very good.

Okay. So a few things that you want to remember when you're doing blending with these kids, okay?

This one is so important, okay? Really, really, really important.

So if you listen to nothing else, be sure you listen to this.

The sounds must come out of the child's mouth, okay?

If they come out of your mouth, they go into your brain, and you get to be a better blender, okay? They have to come out of their mouth.

So you have to say to them, "Say whatever." They need to be saying the sound, okay? So even if you've told them, you could say, "I've told them a million times," but until those words and sounds come out of their mouth, they may

be doing parroting, and you're just repeating after you, but it still has to come out of their mouth. They have to blend those sounds, and not C, A, C, A. They have to make them smooth, CA, and they have to do it out of their mouth. So be mindful of that, that it's really, really crucial that all of these things come out of their mouth so they can get those neural pathways connected, okay?

To make this more automatic. And at first, and you'll even see with this video, you'll be like, "Oh my gosh.

This is like, huh, that is really, really challenging." It is really challenging at first, but you have to do a bunch of work for a really short amount of time. Really literally one word sometimes or two, but you've got to do that and stick with it stuff, okay? So be mindful.

The sounds have to come out of the student's mouth, not just yours.

So when you're doing blending, where you have the letters there that they're looking at, this is a very different cognitive load than when you're doing blending when they're just listening.

Now, when they're just doing oral blending, okay, you have to have that memory to remember what's been going on there, and you've got to kind of coach them along.

But when you're doing blending with the letters, okay, and the word, they have to remember what sound goes with that letter. What's the shape of that?

Is that this one or is that that one?

Then I also have to do the skill of putting these sounds together.

So it's a lot of a cognitive load that we're asking them to do just with a

word. And then, of course, we want to get them into a book, so we have to do it with several words. So you just have to be really vigilant about giving the kids the information they don't know, parroting when you need to parrot, helping them along with what they need to have happen, okay, and then moving on. And blending is one of those things that...

All this gray hair that's coming out, and I need to color my hair, but it is like, oh my gosh, the guessing and then not blending.

So pulling that stuff out of their mouth, making sure that they're putting those letters together, and then adding the next one, you have to really slow down and put a ton of focus on it, maybe even just for a few words, and then the kids will just get better and better, okay?

And so you have to know that it's going to be messy

Especially with those ones that struggle a lot. Okay?

Your students, if you are a whole class classroom teacher and you're doing Heggerty or Kilpatrick or any of that oral blending stuff, which is wonderful, you know that there are kids who can hide. Okay?

And also then when you get them at the reading table and they're doing a decodable text or something, then they just totally fall apart and they aren't doing that, okay? Because they can pretend they're doing all that, C-AT, cat, and everybody else-- Or they're trying to copycat the other kids. So know that they can hide in a whole class, and they can actually hide fairly well in a small group, too. Okay?

So what you have to do, even when you're doing a small group, is you're doing blending one-on-one with each student.

So we do have the kids, one student will read maybe a sentence, or if we're at the very, very beginning of kindergarten, they'll read a word or whatever. But one student doing it, and then we may do one all together, and then the next student. So you can coach that particular student to get it out of their mouth. Because again, they can lag behind and wait for their buddies next to them to be saying it, and then just kind of copycat, where they don't really have the skill themselves.

And I know you can relate to that, too, right?

Where you have those kids that do that.

So in your small group, you're still going to have to put some focus one-on-one. Remember, it's kind of like teaching somebody to read at the very beginning. It takes a whole lot more focus and time and energy for a short amount of time at the beginning, but you've got to put that on there. Even if you have a few of your kids that are struggling blending still, pull them just for one or two words, just for a few minutes, okay? When you're doing small group or somewhere in your day. Okay?

So those are some of the key points.

All right. So this is what's going to be in our video.

The video's about six and a half minutes long.

I've got a kindergartner who--

These are the first two words that she'd ever read.

It's in the first session that I ever worked with her, okay?

So she's in middle of kindergarten, and she does fairly well with

her sound to symbol for the most part,

but blending just has not been there at all.

And her teacher was like, "Oh my gosh, she's really, really struggling."

So you'll see in the first word, it's pulling it out

of her mouth and a lot, a lot of hard work.

But you'll also see

the second word that she does, it goes so much faster, and that's including the

"a" and the "n" which she confuses and reverses and that type of thing,

too, and has a hard time really retrieving.

But it gets much faster because those were the sounds that we focused on.

So she has that reversal, she has problems recalling her sounds, and she

loves to look at my lovely face. Okay.

She's a looker-upper, a looker-upper, a looker-upper.

And kids like to look at your face because they're like, "Did I do that right?" Or,

"How was that?" Or they're looking for approval,

"Yay, you got it. Boo, you didn't."

Whatever. But they do like to look at your face, so you've got to keep their eyes--

For her, today, I actually worked with her for the third time in her school, and

I drew some little eyeballs on the board, and I said, "Keep right

here. These are where your eyes go. On the words, not on my face," okay?

So she'll be doing that. Then we have a small group of first graders that were very low. There's one little girl, Hope.

I worked in both these sessions, so it's just a minute or so from each of them.

But you can see in the first reading session that you're going to see on the video, that she's guessing the words, she's looking at me, she's doing all kinds of crazy stuff. But I wanted you to notice this next session was the next time that I was in their class working with them, and how much faster she's getting and how much better she got as far as that blending. Okay?

This is not for the faint of heart, okay?

Getting these kids to become blenders and then get better at blending.

But you'll see how rapidly it can go.

And then the last student on here is a 10th grader, and it's her very first session, and we're actually doing different Edly activities.

I was doing consonant E, word like tap and tape and hop and hope and that type of thing, and her blending problems with some of those words.

And then another, we had done a sort with different ways to spell the sound

E. And she's got, of course, words in her memory.

When I first worked with her, I went and got her and brought her down from her classroom and I said, "So how would you describe your reading?" And she said, "It's a disaster. It's a total disaster. I read like a robot.

I don't know a lot of what I'm reading at all.

Sometimes I know it's not that word." Today was the third time I saw her, too, and she said, "You know what? I figured out the word school.

I was reading, I wrote it, and I said the sounds as I wrote it on my little sticky notes, and I'm like, 'That's school.' School is a weird word." And I'm like, "It is." But she's got multi-syllable words, some that she has in her memory when we go to read in text.

But you'll see how we're going to take care of her when she's misreading these words and needs to blend the sounds together. Okay?

So she has a lot of letter name interference, and then recalling, is it this sound? Is it that sound? What's going on? Okay?

So that is what you're going to see in the video, and so I'm going to scoot to that so you guys can see and listen.

And again, please ask questions as we're going here, and I will answer those. Let me move this over here.

I will answer those.

Now I've got to move you up here. Okay, there we go. All right.

So you'll see the kindergartner first, then two first-grade groups, or the same group two different times, and then our 10th grader.

Give me a sound.

A.

Just a second.

C.

Don't guess if you don't know what's after this. So what do we have so far?

C-A.

A.

Let me hear you say it together.

Ca.

C-A. We're going to smoosh them together.

Ca.

Don't add that R in there, because there's no R. Okay? Say C.

C.

Put your hands down, sweetheart. C. What's next?

A.

Let's smoosh them together. Ca. Let me hear you.

Ca.

Just say with ca. Ca. Don't stop in between. I want it nice and smooth.

Ca-

You ready? Say cat. Cat. Cat. When I show you the next sound, you don't let it fall out of your mouth, but you need to hold that A. So say ca. Let's hear you.

Ca.

Ca. Ca. Don't add anything. Say caa,

and don't stop your mouth until that N comes out. You ready? Ca.

Let me hear you. Keep that mouth open. Go for it. Ca.

Now what do you have?

Cam. Cam. Beautiful. See how well that works? Cam. Okay, you ready?

So now you're going to say cam, and when I cover this, it's going to fall out of your mouth. Let me hear you. Cam.

Cam. You know what you're doing? You're looking at me.

Do you see those letters on my face?

Good. I'm glad not. I don't have letters on my face.

You need to look right down here so you know what's going on.

Let me hear it one more time. Cam. Let me hear you.

Cam.

Cam. So what's that word? Cam. Cam.

Say

it. What's the word?

Cam. Yeah. Do it again. Cam. You know what this is?

You know what I like about this? It looks like it, but it has this little thing.

Think of this as your teeth on your lip. A. No.

We don't read the letter name, but look at this.

When this is like this, it's like look at my teeth. You make this sound.

It's like this is kind of a hanger. T. Yeah.

Let me hear you. Calm down. Calm down.

Let's try again.

C. Well, that N is upside down a bit, isn't it? This guy is a a. Say a.

A. Tell me that a again.

A.

Yes. Chin off the table. Chin off the table. Okay.

Sit up so that blood can get to your brain. One more time.

Say a.

A. Tell me again.

Say fff.

A. No, let's make them smooth. Mush them together. Fff. A.

Faa. Let's say them together. Fa. Fa.

When I uncover this, we know how to fall out of your mouth. Let me hear you again.

Fa. Fa. Say N.

N. Let's do it again. Fa.

Fa. What do you have?

Fun. Fun. Now that would be a word, but we got another sound.

So I want you to say fun, and when I cover this, let it fall out of your mouth.

Let me- Fund. The word?

Fund. Fund! You are a reader, girl. I love that.

So if you

said, "Mom, I want you to fund my account for me to buy a new doll."

Okay? Fund means putting money towards something.

A,

N, D. The. That's not the, sweet pea.

It's got the same number of letters, but you can't hear those sounds.

Say your sounds, sweet pea, and then put them together. Put your finger on it.

Say a. A.

N. What do you have so far?

A, N. A, N. Say it faster.

An.

An. D. And. There you go.

H. Uh.

Uh.

Let me hear it. Say it.

H.

Huh.

Huh.

Huh. N.

What do you have so far now? Hun. Hunts. Yeah, hunts. Say hunts.

Say your sounds. Huh. Huh. What's this one? Tuh.

What's this one? Tuh. Good

job.

He. Say your sounds. Hih.

Say it. Hih, eh, kuh. Yeah. Whih,

eh,

oo,

ah,

tuh. What? Very good reading.

John eh, ee, tuh, went

to

a... Juh, uh, m,

tuh.

Shuh. There you go.

Friends. There's no C, A is a. Say E. I.

Put your eyes right here. Was. There's no A or Z.

Huh, but now say E. Look

right here. Oh, look. P.

P. Oo, eh,

tuh,

went. Tell me those sounds again. That's okay.

Cuh, you,

cue.

Put

those

together. Cuh,

you, cue. Cue. So say cue, and when I cover this, let it fall out of your mouth.

Let me hear it. Cuh, you, cue. Okay. All right.

So what I want you to do is I want you to hold it. Cue. So say it for me.

Cue. Just say cue. Cue.

That's what I'm talking about. Good job.

And I said, "Friends help."

Friends

help. P-E-E. Say it. Friends help bees. All right, sweet pea. Tell me those sounds.

Puh, reh, ee. Say it again, slow down. Pre. Pre.

So I want you to say pre, when I uncover that, and that's when I let it fall out of

your mouth. Pre.

Okay. Pre.

That's all. Just say pre, and hold that S. Let me hear you. Pre.

I think we're going to go priest. We're going to priest this with a priest.

Okay.

All right.

Let's see.

So those are your ladies. Now,

you may be thinking, "Wow, some of that is pretty darn hard, and that's a

lot of work, and it was too challenging for the kids." And I

understand that. A lot of times we think if it's not

easy and flowing for the kids, then they're not going to learn it.

But I pulled this quote that I love from a book that

I really like a lot called "Make It Stick." It's about cognitive processing and how

we learn, basically. And this is what it said, "The more

effort that is required to recall a memory or to execute a skill," like

those kids were doing, right? "Provided the effort succeeds..." This is

a really important part of this quote, "Provided the effort succeeds." So they've

got to be successful. It's not like let's challenge, challenge, challenge, and we

never get to success. Okay? So we've got to be sure that we're coaching them, we're

pulling it out of their mouth, we're parroting with them to make it sure that

they're successful. But the more effort that's required, okay, the more the

act of recalling or executing the skill benefits the learning.

So basically, the more they have to struggle, not to the point of,

"I'm going to give up," but with you coaching them, okay,
the faster and better they're going to learn.

So you've got to remember that when you're really trying to pull this out of those
kids as far as the blending goes. All right? So I just wanted to share that quote.

And as Hannah said, you guys will get the recordings and the links tomorrow.

We'd love you to share the link that you get in the email on your Facebook,
Twitter, whatever kinds of things you share on, so other people can benefit from
that.

We want you to just share away. Oops. I just lost an earring.

And that is all, so I'm going to quit sharing my screen and come back
for questions.

So

Hannah, what have we got?

Well, first of all, this isn't a question, but it's just too cute, so I have to
share it. Lori said that she, when the kids look up at her, she holds a
file folder in between there, because it's like, "No.

Then you can't..."

That's too funny. I like that. Sometimes I'll do this, and I'll cover my
own, like you're going to look up at my hands because...

But I like the file folder. What a good idea. Thank you for sharing.

No option.

Yeah. I am not here. You can't see me.

I do love that. And then, let's see.

So then, actually, somebody was asking me if you know the exact book they were reading from, the first graders in that first video.

Was that something that you brought, or was it from their classroom?

Oh, those kids, the first thing in hers, it was something from the classroom.

It was something the teacher gave me that they hadn't read before.

A decodable, I don't know what it was.

And then, a follow-up question to that from somebody else, do you always use decodable readers? Any you would recommend?

If you have kids that are little kids like that, and they can't read yet, yes, for sure. Okay?

Now, if you look at that 10th grader, no.

I'm not going to use a decodable reader.

I'm going to deal with the words that we need to deal with and the blending of that in the context of authentic text.

We move our kids, kindergarten, definitely first grade, out of decodable readers and into authentic text fairly quickly.

But if they can't blend yet, you've got to keep giving them that practice.

But you notice that little kindergartner, that was her first session, and we did some CVC words, but we've got to move on, so we do CVCC. And actually, today on her third session, we were doing CCVC words, as well as

words with sh. She read an entire story. It's a four-sentence story.

That little girl read the whole thing.

It was just like,
oh my gosh, unbelievable what happened in just the third
hour of doing it. So, we do start with decodable,
and with our little ones, we stay in decodable.
We'll have them sort c, where they're doing
c and k, and c k, and k e, and then we'll have them
read a story that has a lot of that. But we'll also move our
little ones into books like Dr. Seuss books and
simpler books like that, too. But always, we start them out in decodables, yes.
And then Julie is wondering if there's value to using, I think you
kind of just touched on this, but word family books, or if it's better to stick
with decodables.
I don't care for word family books, personally.
Because what that does is it
sends the message, even if we don't say it out of our mouth,
that the first sound is the crucial sound in every word.
We teach four sounds in a week in kindergarten.
They have four sounds, and there's a vowel in each group of four
those first five weeks, so that they can make words,
so they'll be able to read, and they'll be able to spell and that type of thing.
So I don't like the word family thing.
If we do the word top, we may also do the word pot or whatever, but we don't just
start with the same sound. Because even those alphabet things that are up in

the classroom on the wall, the ABC thing, and
B never has cab, right? Or anything with a buh
anywhere but at the beginning. So those are always at the beginning, so the
kids oftentimes just assume that first letter is really
important, because what do kids do when they guess?
They say the first sound right, and then they fling something crazy, right?
So that's why I stay away from
those word family books.

Yeah.

We've got lots of good questions coming in. I'm really excited about this next one.

Good.

Are you ready for it? Sorry, I just-

Yep. Nope, I'm ready.

Are authentic texts that you mentioned are the same as leveled readers?

No.

When I say authentic text,

I mean basically books that you'd get out of a library, typically.

Now, leveled readers, I really caution for teachers to stay away
from levels A to D, okay? Because those kids
cannot read those books, basically, unless they're
given some of the words. Like, "I see an astronaut."

You have to tell them the "I see a," so they're kind of memorizing that part, and
then they're required to look at the picture.

So what it does, a lot of times- That we see very frequently,
those A to D books, is it fosters for them to look at the picture, and it
also creates very early a habit of guessing,
is what we find. And then that habit, that guessing habit, is really hard to
undo. So level texts that are level E and above,
those are books to read, so they can certainly read those with you.

When the kids are reading with us, they struggle. Okay?

We want them to struggle so that we can keep moving their reading higher and
higher. So what they're reading with us, if you're doing levels and your
kids are at a level G, I would, when they're with you, have them be a I or
J. That's what our Ebly teachers do.

And those of you Ebly teachers on here who use leveled readers,
maybe you can
jump in on that. They're not the same as the kids would be reading
independently, because when the kids are in front of you, that's gold-plated time
with an expert. You don't want them just to read like they'd read if you weren't
there, right? Accurately and fluently and all that type of thing.

You want them to struggle a bit so that they can keep increasing their
ability with more challenging text.

So authentic text, when I say that, I just mean, books, really.

Trade books. Maybe we can-

Yeah. Trade books

... make a recommended reading list with these guys, too.

Oh, okay. That's a good idea. Yeah.

I'll put that on there.

We have certain ones. When our kids are getting out of decodables, we like using

Dr. Seuss. We like using Frog and Toad.

Frog and Toad is fun, and they're like, "We're reading chapter books." And we may only read a couple sentences when we're starting to do the reading stuff.

Henry and Muggs, there's all kinds of good books like that, but they get

real excited when they can go to their library

or to a bookstore and find a book that they

then can read. So we want to foster that love of

reading early and quick.

For sure.

And Ashley, who's an Eby-trained first grade teacher, just shared that she uses

the leveled readers from levels E and up, just because

she has multiple copies for small groups.

She goes way higher than they could read independently.

Yep.

So.

Yep. That's what I love, yeah. Perfect.

And then the next question is, "How do you

recommend using decodable readers whole group?

Teacher read first, echo read, call on students?" So what does the reading look

like?

Whole class? Whole class?

Yep.

Okay, so what we do with whole class is

our sentence reading and our decodable stuff, we always have the students read

first. Okay? Now, at the very

beginning... Oh, it's kind of hard to explain what we actually really do.

But when we're reading decodable stuff with the whole class,

let's say we've taught /s/

/m/ /t/ /a/ /p/ /a/ /k/ and, I don't know whatever the other one is, /m/ I guess.

All right? So it might be "Pat

and a cop," or I don't know. Whatever.

It's going to be some words that are not titillating, of course.

It's not great literature, but sentences, because it's hard to make a story out of

just eight sounds. But we'll do some sentences, and we've taught those sounds

explicitly to the kids in the context of words.

They've said in pulled and said in wrote, and they've had a lot of exposure to

those. Then we put a sentence up on the board, and we'll have the kids

say the sound. So let's say if it's, "Tim is

a cat," or whatever. So they'd say the sounds, /t/.

And if they said /a/ or whatever, we'd just tell them, "Say I." So the whole class

does it. They know when we point, they say, we lift off, they stop.

So they're reading those sentences.

So when we do it whole class, they read it through, we make sure they're decoding

it absolutely perfectly. Then we, you the teacher,

we read it back nice and fluently. Okay?

And then the students read it again.

So we're getting that decoding practice, the error correction, they hear the fluency, then they read the fluency.

We do not ever

read anything to the kids first,

at any age or grade level.

But we also don't, when we're in kindergarten especially, we aren't giving them stuff to read that we haven't already taught them.

So when you're still at that one letter spelling thing, okay,

one letter, one sound, you've got to get them where your

lesson matches your text. So we've done the lesson on these sounds, we're going to

make sure our text has those spellings in it to practice

reading, because reading is a whole lot harder, of course, than

doing stuff that's guided.

Great question.

So hopefully that answers your question, too.

Renee was wondering about would a teacher read a leveled book first before the kids attempt to read it, if you're giving a book that's technically too hard.

But really-

Yeah. That's a great question. The reason we're giving the book that's too hard is we're trying to, of course, always move them toward independence.

That's our goal. Even when we're starting with our three sound words in kindergarten, we're wanting to get our kids so they're decoding quickly and well and accurately, so that they won't need us so much.

And when they are with us, that we're moving them to the next level.

We have no problem having kids be one, two, three grade levels above the grade level that they're in, as far as their reading, because that just opens up so much more for them. So with a leveled reader, what we do is we guide them, and we've been teaching them Eibly and about the sounds.

So let's say they're reading, and they come to the word "of," and we haven't taught that yet.

And it's a kindergartner or even a first grader.

We'd just point to it and tell them, "Say uh." They'd say uh out of their mouth, of course, because it's not just going to be listening to us. And then /v/.

"Now put those two sounds together." And I'm not saying those words, I'm cuing with my pencil, because the more I talk, the more I interfere with them.

Or they have the word

nation or something like that. We're going to help them decode using the system of logic we've been teaching them all the way through. Right?

So we're just applying that system of logic in the context of reading and writing and spelling, because that's the whole point of all the stuff we're teaching them, hopefully. So, no, we don't ever read a book

to them first. Now, if you're reading to them for listening comprehension,

obviously you'd read to them, but you're not expecting them to then go read that

book. When you're reading a novel to kindergarten, first grade, fifth grade, whatever grade you read to.

But we want them, because if you read it to them first At least some of the words, they are going to go from memory.

They're not going to use their decoding skills to figure them out.

So we need them to be accurate and then become automatic.

If that makes sense.

The next question is, how do you feel about word walls versus sound walls?

How do I feel? That's an interesting question.

How do I feel about that? We don't use word walls, and I will tell you why we don't. And it's not really about how I feel.

I'm really pretty careful about...

It doesn't matter how I feel or what I believe, or really what you guys feel or believe either, okay? We are really pretty obsessed about looking at what does the research show and combining it with what have we found from being in thousands of classrooms helps the kids move the furthest the fastest, based on what that research shows. Okay?

So combining those two things. So why we don't promote word walls is because when you look at a word wall, under the letter A, you have the word at, you have the word eight, you have the word all, you have the word are, right?

You have the word,

let's see, all. So here for at, the sound for A

is a. For eight, it's A. For all, it's a.

For are, it's a. For, what else did I say?

About.

About. Let's say it's about. Now it's a.

So we have all these different choices for that sound under the letter A.

So if the kids are thinking, "I wonder how you spell the

word about," okay? They are not going to be looking under the

A, because we're going visual. Reading is auditory first,

actually. We go what you hear, then what you see.

So they're going to be looking under the U, right?

So the sound wall, and I really for many years, would go into classrooms because

almost-- or a word wall. Almost everybody had a word wall.

And oftentimes kids are standing in front of it, and when I ask

them what they're doing or what they're finding,

if they're even doing that, which a lot of times they're not using it too much, but

they would be standing in front of it because they were told to go look at the word

wall, but they have no idea. They're looking for the word phone under

an F, of course, okay? Or whatever. That's not a great example.

Is it benefiting those kids to move them further in their reading, writing,

and spelling? And no. So what we use is when we do our sorts

for a sound wall, and then there's sound walls of how you hold your mouth.

We always talk about how you hold your mouth when you're making certain sounds.

But our sound walls are our sorts. So here's the ways to spell C.

Okay? This one. And so you can see patterns that way.

This is a c at the end, typically. This one is at the beginning.

This is, or s or sh, or A or U or whatever sounds they

are. So we use that for our sound wall stuff

because we want our kids to have something that they can utilize and

access and apply, okay? Always the goal is

to move them to be a better reader, a better writer, a better speller.

That should be the goal of every single thing, no matter where we're

starting at. The beginning to moving on.

The next one is about consonant blends.

So he has some really struggling to hear blends with the R sound,

/k/ and /t/ and /d/. Trying to have them manipulate with colored letter tiles, and

that's helping a bit. Any other suggestions?

Mm-hmm.

I had today, every one of my sixth graders in my group

were putting their blends together. This is the problem.

When you are using a system, an alphabetic system like

ours, and we're segmenting the sounds, we need to segment to the

smallest unit of sound. That's going to be important for reading, but it's even

more important for spelling. So if you're saying,

like you're writing, I don't know, green, okay, and you say /g/

as you're writing the G, guess what you're not going to write?

You're not going to write that /r/. So this is what we do.

We give the kids a place to look,

okay, while they listen, but they're not looking at the letters.

This is important, okay? So we don't teach blends.

I mean, we do teach, obviously, blends all the time, but we never teach /gr/ as one thing. Never. We don't do anything that does /tr/ or /pl/

or /gr/ or any of that kind of stuff. We always segment to that smallest unit.

So when a student, and this happens a lot with older kids and adults that we teach, they'll say /gr/ or /tr/ or whatever, and we'll say, "/gr/ is two sounds." So we're giving a place to look while they listen.

When they're looking straight ahead, you're engaging your auditory sense.

Reading is auditory first. That's how the English alphabetic code was made.

We had words. We didn't have symbols to go with them. Somebody threw some letters.

Actually, we kind of stole from a bunch of different places for ours, but the

English people in England, they're the ones that took it.

So we match sounds that we say to spellings, okay?

So we show the kids, /gr/ is two sounds.

So now they've got a place to look, because most people are more visually strong than auditory strong, while they listen. /Gr/ is two sounds.

What's the first sound in /gr/? So I'm not segmenting per se, but I'm slow blending so they can see that this is two things, and I just want the first one, /gr/.

So we do that, and then we move right back to the text because a lot of times, the more we move away from having the letters, a lot of times we'll have more

struggles when it takes a lot of time and a lot of energy, and we're not getting that sound to symbol becoming more automatic and fluent that we need. So that's how we do it.

This next one isn't actually a question, but a little conversation that I think is helpful for everybody to hear.

So Lacey had shared that with your error corrections, you always tell them, "Say," and then the correct sound, rather than engaging in an exchange like, "Look at that sound. What does the A-I say?" Something like that.

And Julie responded that she loved that switch in her instruction, and for those of you who, many of you probably don't know, Julie taught balanced literacy for 19 years. Is that right, Julie?

And then-

Oh, yeah

... yeah, something around 20, 19, 20, and then took Edly training this past school year, has been teaching that way.

But she said when she learned that switch, she wanted to say, "Duh, of course, they don't know, or they would've told me the sound."

Yes.

When they make a mistake, if they knew that that was going to be E instead of A, or /n/ instead of /a/, they would've said that.

So when they make that mistake, the more we talk, the more we interfere with their thinking, and we also take up a whole lot of time, right?

And they don't want to hear a whole big, "Just say a." Boom. Done.

Let's move on.

Our whole goal with Evelyn is to free up your teacher.

What is teacher's number one commodity? Time. You guys need more time. Okay?

So to free up your time so that you have more time to do

more great fun things, so it's not just feeling so overwhelmed all the time.

So the more you talk, the less they learn, really, and you're interfering, too.

If

our little

girl, the 10th grader, was saying /p/, /r/, /i/, /e/, "Now, that can be I, but what else do you think it can be?" And then she'd have to go back.

Every time I interfere with her thinking, or I talk, I interfere with her processing. Okay? So then it spreads

stuff out and

it gets frustrating and all that type of thing.

So as simple as possible,

is better. Okay? And more efficient, too.

We're big on efficiency, really big on efficiency.

Someone was wondering if you would suggest solidifying the alphabetic principle through handwriting before beginning blending words.

We begin blending words in the second week of kindergarten.

We definitely do handwriting with it. Okay?

So we do,

say, see, hear, touch, doing it all so that we can have a lot of

repetitions and commit stuff to long-term memory quicker, and also in the context of a word. Because if you think about kindergartners, /t/ means nothing to them. /G/ means zero to them, right?

But top or,

I don't know, gas, those words in the context of word, it's meaningful and relevant. So we don't teach at all in isolation, but we do teach handwriting, reading, spelling, segmenting, blending, all of those things interchangeably, which is why our kids can move so fast as they're doing that because it helps with the repetition, and it also helps imprint the information more readily, and also, the application makes it meaningful and relevant.

And then,

Denise was wondering, when do you know to move from decodables to authentic text, a trade book, something past a decodable?

Yeah. When there's those girls, that second time in that first-grade group, they're moving along a bit, I may do some of the...

I don't know. Let's say we've sorted A or something.

I might do something that has some A words in it, I may do, but really, we like to move faster than you would think.

Once they become somewhat automatic at decoding,

and blending and that type of thing, and even, we don't say, "Well, we haven't taught you uh or vah in of, so we can't go to that." We just tell them, "You got the word they in there? Cool. You got the word aisle? I don't care.

Say I-O." We don't avoid things

because of that. So once they can blend and once they have a fairly good understanding of the one-letter spellings and we've taught them that concept, that two, three, and four letters can spell a sound in English and how to apply that.

And maybe some of our kindergarten teachers could, and first-grade teachers, that if you're a K or one Evely teacher, maybe and you're on here, you could speak to that, too.

But typically,

they have to be able to blend for the most part, of course.

And we get them into multi-syllable words even in kindergarten pretty quickly.

So once they can do that, and they understand about the concepts of English, then we can get them more into authentic text.

But it depends on how you're teaching them, really.

The next question is, and

I think it ties into what you were just saying, too, is when teaching the 10th-grade student, had you done a VCE, which I'm assuming means vowel consonant E, lesson before moving on to the blending portion?

That was in the middle of the VCE lesson. That was the lesson.

What I was doing right there was how we teach consonant E.

And then,

do you stick with decodables in kindergarten until all sounds and syllable types have been taught?

I don't know syllable types, to be honest.

I've never taught a syllable type in my life.

But I've taught thousands, probably tens of thousands of people.

So we don't teach any syllable types.

So I guess that answer would be no.

Or-

What was the other part of it? Huh?

Until all sounds have been taught.

No, because in decodables,

you've got stuff like the

tan cat or whatever.

We've taught those sounds, then we're going to apply it in a book, okay?

So,

one-letter spellings,

when we're still in explicit instruction in one-letter

spellings, which is about eight weeks or so in kindergarten, we keep our

kids in decodables. And also when we move to those digraphs, like shh

and wuh and

tuh, and that kind of thing,

they're mostly in decodables. And again, we differentiate.

Some are and some aren't. It depends on the kids and

where they're at and how far and how fast that they're moving.

So you've got a few more questions, but I think this is a really important conversation to have before we end here.

Carly was just sharing that she's only ever done balanced literacy.

Julie responded to her that, her too, until this year.

She's so amazed at what her kindergartners can do and is glad that she stumbled onto you, Nora, and the science of reading.

But I just thought you might want to speak to that a little bit.

Yeah.

It's a learning curve, and Julie would be able to speak to that more than I would because I didn't ever teach that way because actually, I'm a nurse, by the way, by education. I came to this whole literacy thing over 20 years ago because of my own daughter's struggles.

So I did a ton of research about how can

I help my child,

and a lot of it didn't make any sense until I found-

... the stuff that led me to creating EBLI, basically.

So, and that's how I taught her. So what I would say

is learning more about what you're doing, looking at your

kids and how are your kids progressing, and do you have

those, and this is what Julie and a lot of our teachers share all the

time, that, "Oh my gosh, I'm working so hard, and then these kids are not moving like they should," or they're frustrated with reading, but especially frustrated with writing and that type of thing.

So learning about

teaching this way, and there's a whole lot of stuff.

Now is the time in life to learn about it, for sure. And also, learning about EBLI.

We have apps, we have teacher trainings.

We actually have a great deal that we're going to have going on, starting next week through the end of March,

is Reading Month,

with EBLI being \$750

for the whole training and lessons and everything that you have, which is a total steal. There's a lot of things that you can do to

begin to learn how to move your kids so that...

Our goal is always, we need 95% to 100% of our kids to be proficient, and it doesn't matter on what assessment.

Our EBLI kids are not taught in the way of balanced literacy, basically, when they're teaching EBLI, but we can use leveled books.

EBLI-taught kids, typically in K and one, are at like a Level

J at the end of kindergarten and a Level N at the end of first grade, which is a whole grade level above, and they don't test them above that.

So it doesn't matter what assessment that you use.

If you're truly teaching kids to read, they'll blow every assessment out of the

water. But if we don't have 95% of our kids, and we have kids that are in very disadvantaged areas, kids that are English language learners, that get to 95 to 100% of them in these schools become proficient. It's a process.

It doesn't happen in one year, typically. But you can move them there.

And until they get there, the question we always ask, and we encourage everybody to ask is, "What do I need to do differently?" If these kids haven't gotten there yet, what do I need to learn?

At our reading center here, we have people that come from all over the country that we work with one-on-one. And it doesn't matter if they're 82 or 17 or 7. If they're not making progress, we search the world over to figure out what do we need to do differently so that they are.

And that's my recommendation

for that. But teachers who are teaching EBLI in their classrooms would probably be able to

speak to that from a day-to-day thing a little bit better.

Yeah, I know that there's-

Yeah

... and it's what typically happens when we show pieces, that there's more questions than answers.

Yeah.

But there are lots of good answers, too.

So I know we're coming right up on 8 o'clock.

Yeah.

But you're good with-

No, I'm willing to stay for a few more minutes if people would like to, if there's more questions you'd like me to answer, but...

Yep.

So Caitlin asked this, about which specific decodables

we

prefer, that the kids have liked. And I think we're going to include our recommended reading list for you guys in that email tomorrow.

We use a lot at the beginning. We use Bob Books, we use Nora Gado's books.

Most of them, there's not a whole lot of options, really, as far as titillating decodable stuff. But the kids are very titillated with it, by the way.

They are so excited when they can truly decode those words and read them.

So yeah, those are the ones that we typically use, but there's some really great lists. The Reading League, if you're not familiar with The Reading League, go to thereadingleague.org, I think it is.

But they have a whole list of decodable.

Some are pricey, some are free. So, there's a lot of

places. If you're not on the Science of Reading, there's a Science of Reading:

What I Wish I Learned in College Facebook page, and people give phenomenal suggestions on there about all kinds of stuff, too.

So, that's a good place to be.

And ask questions like that, too, because there's lots of resources.

Yeah. We'll share both of those tomorrow.

Okay. Let's see. What's my next question?

It was, "Is it beneficial to do a picture walk before reading an unseen text?"

I don't mind that at all, especially when you're doing a big book or you're doing it with a whole class type of thing.

But a picture walk, yeah, where you're predicting and thinking, "I wonder what's going to happen here." Now, if you're talking little kids, a lot of times that's when you're going to then go and read it to them because they usually can't read that, per se. To be honest, when I'm teaching, personally, especially when we're teaching remediation, I don't do that because we talk about it as we go.

Even if it's Sam sat on Matt and Matt sat on Sam, who sat on who? You can talk about comprehension stuff as you go and all, but I'm a little bit obsessive about instructional seconds, and so

it depends on the context. Whole class, you've got a book that you're going to read to them, for sure. What do you think might going to happen?

Or, in doing it also,

how we do it in the context of as you're going through and reading the book.

So,

I don't typically do it, to be perfectly honest.

Actually, I've never done

it,

when I'm reading with, especially kids who are needing to be remediated.

They've been so stuck to those pictures for so long.

Yeah. What we do, to be perfectly honest, is we cover up the picture as they read the words, because we read words, not pictures, and then we'll uncover the picture, say, "Wow, do you think they did a good job with this illustration of what we just read there?"

So that's kind of a fun thing, too. But a lot of times, especially if they're used to looking at the pictures, that takes them out of tracking, and they've got ping pong head and all that kind of stuff, so they're not tracking with their eyes and all. So we'll cover up that picture to keep them focused on the words.

Then we'll uncover it as we go.

This question might be slightly off topic from blending, but this is from a reading interventionist for K four who's really struggling to help her kindergarten students with rhyme discrimination.

How do you suggest helping those students?

Well, this is how we do our rhyme. Now, and interestingly, David Kilpatrick, who I love to death, and I've been emailing with him the last few weeks. I've been interacting with him.

He introduced me at the Reading League conference, and I've been following his work since his book came out, and I love him to death.

Many of you probably know of him because his work is phenomenal.

But he was at the Plain Talk conference in New Orleans a couple of weeks ago, and he said, "Please don't obsess about rhyming.

Kids don't need to be rhyming. Well, you want to teach rhyming, but they don't have to be rhyming proficiently or to mastery or anything before you can move on." So, that's one thing.

So, don't be too bent out of shape on it.

But how we teach rhyming is the Kelly Kelly Bobelly game.

You got to be careful, some of our teachers will attest to this, with certain names. Okay? But Kelly Kelly, Bobelly, Banana, Fanna, Fo, Felly.

We do that, and we actually train our kids how to do it, and then we'll do their names, but then you have troubled names that will have naughty words, so you got to be careful with that. But we do that.

Actually, Julie, who I know Hannah had talked about on here, she talks about her kids, they were painting and doing artwork, and they're going, "Yellow, yellow, bobello, banana, fanna, fo, fellow." So they're doing that rhyming stuff, but that's how we teach rhyming.

And then, going back-

Carter. Yeah. There are worse ones, though.

Carter, partner is not great.

The question is going back to the vowel consonant E.

So do you teach the vowel consonant E in kindergarten so they'll know which vowel?

Do you let them guess? How does that work?

We do not let anybody guess. Okay? We are very anti-guessing.

So we have a very explicit scope and sequence that we use where we teach all the one-letter spellings, then we start teaching some of the digraphs, the SH, and the CH, and the TH, and that type of thing. And then we'll teach the consonant E, and then we do some sorts.

So we teach in this progression, and then we'll have... I just wrote a lovely two, a Jane and Kate went to the lake kind of thing or something like that with a kite.

I don't know what they were doing. But we just wrote our own because teachers are like, "We want to have it in our hands to have some decodable stuff." So a lot of consonant E after we've just taught the consonant E to our kindergartners or first graders.

So we teach it explicitly, then we apply it.

That's what we do.

Is it possible to get some samples of the Ebley activities, kindergarten or first grade?

What I would recommend, if you want to see what it looks like, to be honest, for free, you can get the Ebley Island Lite.

It's an app. We have three apps, Ebley Island, Ebley Space, and Ebley Sight

Words Made Easy. Ebley Island is for three to six-ish-year-olds. It's all the one-letter spellings in the context of words, and you'll see our Say and Pull, and it has handwriting. It's pretty phenomenal.

The free one has four of the 16 stories.

The paid one is \$4.99. You can put several kids on one device. We have it on iPads, Androids, and Kindle Fires. So you can do that. That would give you a very good sample of what we do and how we do it at the very beginning. Ebley Space does a lot more. It actually has our consonant E instructions, some multi-syllable instructions, some handwriting instruction, sight words, teaching high-frequency words by sound, phoneme manipulation, but a lot of stuff on that. So that would be a good way. We don't give out as far as sample kinds of things because the Ebley is a whole process system of logic that includes all of the five components of reading plus writing, spelling, and handwriting. So it's not like a kind of pick-and-choose kind of thing, and I know that that's common to happen. So there are some things that you can see. If you go to our YouTube page, you can see I've actually taught you some of the concepts of up to four letters can spell a sound, and there's another one, Sweet and Sweet is the name of the video, where in English we say the same sound and it has a different spelling. And also, there's one on Owasso, which is where I was born and raised, where in Owasso, it has three Os in it. One is A, one is A, and one is O, and we call that same spelling, different sound.

So it talks about that because those are the concepts we have to teach our kids, as well as multi-syllable strategy, how to deal with that if we want them to be able to read anything, ever, always, and become the very best and highest readers and writers and spellers.

So there's a lot of things that we have that you can get a taste of Ebley, for sure. But we don't give out sample lessons because it's kind of hard to do. It's not something that you take a little bit of this and a little bit of that, if that makes sense. But do the apps.

That would give you a really good idea.

So two more questions for you at this point.

The first one is that this person often gets kids that have had reading recovery before they get to her. She finds that they guess their way through everything and don't know their sounds.

Do you recommend teaching sounds first to these students or moving right into blending?

You have to do both. When I first opened my reading center in 1999, and we followed our data, for the first four years, 50% to 55% of our kids were reading recovery graduates.

So they were typically third to fifth graders, and they came to us as absolutely horrific guessers.

So I feel your pain. The problem is, you can't go all the way back with third to fifth graders to CVC words unless you want to lose them, and it would take way too long.

So you have to teach the sound, the symbol, and the segmenting and the blending all together to move them far and fast. So a good thing for them, for you to do maybe, would be the Ebley Space app. You could try that, depending on how old they are and that type of thing. We don't have the luxury of taking a year or a long time to remediate these kids that are third and fifth and 10th and 12th grade and reading at typically about a second or third-grade level, especially when they have inefficient strategies like guessing and skipping words and looking at the pictures and looking up at you and using the letter name all the time. There's all these inefficient strategies that you have to undo. We really probably spend more time undoing bad habits than we do teaching them how to read. Because it's really pretty straightforward to teach them how to read, but the older they are, unfortunately, the more deeply embedded their bad habits are. And that's always a bummer, because it takes a lot of work from you to undo those bad habits. So we have little stickers that say, "I slayed the guessing monster." We play the point game like our life depends on it. We have a lot of tricks, because we've seen a lot, a lot, a lot of kids and adults who, the older they are, the more deeply ingrained those habits are. So, yeah, you've got to intersperse the hand-- Ugh, the

handwriting. Can we talk? The handwriting is crazy, right?

The handwriting's impacting their reading fluency, too, and a whole lot of other things. So you've got to deal with that also.

So there's just so many things that you have to deal with, but dealing with them as simultaneously as much as possible is key.

And then this last question is maybe one of my favorites.

How do you ensure letter name and sound acquisition?

And Nora, where my head goes with this is to share with these guys, too, a little bit about how EBLI is different from the other phonics programs that are out there, and how the application is such an important piece.

Can you read that question again?

Yes. How do you ensure letter name and sound acquisition?

Again, EBLI is a speech-to-print instruction. So it's systematic, it's explicit, it's rule-free.

We don't have syllable rules, and we don't have phonics rules. Okay?

We've never taught any of those.

We teach from speech to print, and we teach by sound.

Now, we don't say, "Don't ever teach the letter names," but we say, "Really please de-emphasize the letter names." Because you can be the best reader in the whole wide world and never know any letter names besides the vowels.

Okay? Because sometimes those are the same as the sounds that go with them.

So we over-emphasize the sound. That's what you need to access to read.

Okay? And we de-emphasize the letter name, and we try to teach it as far away from reading instruction as possible.

If you teach it in handwriting, or we have this alphabet thing that we do to improve their processing speed and fluency and all that type of thing, and we'll do the letter name there. Okay?

But we keep it as far away from instruction as possible, because if you're a teacher of third or fourth or fifth or seventh grade kids, you see the problem with letter names.

Every illiterate person that doesn't read at all that we've ever worked with, they know their letter names, but they can't read.

Some of them not a word, or just a few words. Okay?

But they know their letter names. What they don't know is their sounds.

What they can't do is blend the sounds together.

Now, there's a correlation between letter name research, of course, and good readers typically know their letter names.

They also know their sounds, though. Okay?

So we don't put that focus on the letter name.

We put that focus on teaching speech first, and then print.

We don't say, I don't know,

"Uh, ah, ah, this is R," or whatever. We don't teach anything in isolation.

We don't teach spellings in isolation.

We don't

do worksheets about-- We don't do a lot of worksheets really much at all.

But we don't do that type of thing. We go, "What do your ears hear your mouth say?"

And then match the symbol that we, somebody, made up, we're going to blame it on those English people,

to match to that sound. If that makes sense.

Did I cover what you thought, Hannah?

Yeah. And, too, just that application piece, I feel like that's so different with-

Oh, yeah

... the getting into the reading and getting into the writing.

Yeah.

Because we really don't teach to mastery when we're introducing the concepts and strategies, but it's where they're reading and they're writing is where they get to-

Right. That's something, too, the teaching to master.

I've got somebody in our online training right now who's like, she really wants to teach every activity to mastery. And my great book, this is the one that I got that quote out of, "Make It Stick." Love this book.

It's great about learning. Talks about do not teach to mastery.

And with EBLI, it's scaffolded. We keep building.

If your kid's still, like my little first year kindergartner,

she has a bugaboo of a time with "uh" and "mm." So I found

every "uh" and "mm" word I could think of, actually, I found it out of my head, in

the moment. I changed my words I was teaching her to give her more exposure to that, and she got better and better at it.

I'm forgetting what I'm explaining, though, here right in the middle of this.

Hannah, what was I talking about?

Application rather-

Oh, application. So then we're going to actually use it.

So even in our kindergarten, we teach four sounds. Okay?

You can't make very many words with a, s, mm, and t. Okay?

But you can make mat and sam. So we have them not only learn those

in the context of a word, then we will read little two-word sentences, really, with them. And then we're actually going to have kids write.

So the learning these things and applying them, you are going to have m, and t, and a in everything you ever read.

Those sounds are going to be in there.

So it's not like, "Oh my gosh, they don't have these to mastery.

We can't move on to our next week of sounds." We can, because we're going to use these four and add these other four. Now we have eight.

And then the next week, we have 12. You can do a lot more with stories in 12 sounds than you can with four, or even eight. So we're building.

So you're going to continue to have that

learning over time, which my "Make It Stick" book talks about how you want to have the learning over time, not to mastery.

That's not how the best learning happens, okay? According to brain imaging.

They call it interleaving. You do it over time, where you keep reinforcing and adding more information.

And then you have that background knowledge that you add more to.

And I say more information, more spellings for sounds, more patterns, more all that kind of stuff.

David has a great question about

what does Kilpatrick say about your letter sound/not focusing too much on rules? That would be, we don't teach them at all, Dave, we just teach patterns.

And then so what does he say about your letter sound/not focusing too much on rules/syllables philosophy?

If you look at Dave's book in chapter 11, the Essentials book, he talks about highly effective, moderately effective, and low effective research that has shown a standard score of 25, which is like the ceiling pretty much, or a standard score in the low single digits into the teens type of thing.

Well, not even that, mid

six to 11 or so maybe, and then up to five as far as a standard score, which isn't very much. Okay?

If you look at that, every single highly effective study that he has in there, that actually RTI was based on and everything, is speech to print. It's phonographics, which is what I was trained in for four years, and was a trainer of, four years before I

created EBLI.

It's Lindamood-Bell, okay?

Her further along kind of stuff. And

every single one of them are speech to print. They are not rules-based.

They are not based on syllable rules, phonics rules.

Phonics that is

teaching that more print to speech, they are kind of in the mid-range,

most of those, low to mid-range as far as their data.

So David doesn't say much about anybody's--

He's big on, as he should be, practices. Are you doing these things?

Are you doing phonemic awareness? Are you doing phony manipulation?

That's embedded right into EBLI all the way up through our high school, and not

only in isolation, but in the context of when you're reading AWASO

and you say the first sound is O, you have to pull it out and put in an uh.

Wuh.

Oo, let's say, you have to pull out that oo and put in the ah.

He's big on the phonemic awareness and

especially phony manipulation, and that is embedded into phonographics,

Pat Lindamood stuff, and EBLI. Okay?

So he loves the processes. He

sat through my whole presentation at the Reading League that was a packed thing,

and he had to sit behind me on the floor, which I felt really bad about.

But so he does know about what we do and how we do it, and it's more about the

practices and that, and we don't call EBLI a program, it's more of a system. But it's more about the practices of what you do and how you do it as opposed to the program. So yeah, he thinks EBLI's pretty grand, I think. I think he would tell you that. I know he recommends it sometimes in his presentations.

Yeah. And David said, "Love all this research coming out.

It's so great for the teaching and reading." It really is.

And also that it's coming to the forefront because there's been a lot of research for a long time.

It's been here. When I studied it and researched it 20-some years ago, it had been there

for 20 years, a lot of it. We've gotten a lot more.

But a lot of his research, he's talking about from the '80s and '90s and the stuff that's in his book. It's just I think the time is now, so that's exciting.

Yeah. Thank you, Emily Hanford, for that.

Yes. Yes. We love Emily Hanford and the stuff.

People are thanking you for this because-

Well, thank you guys for staying

... one last one that just came up, do we use an alphabet song to teach the letter sounds?

You mean like A, B, C, D, E, F, G? That'd be kind of hard.

But you can. That's kind of fun.

We do not do the A, B, C, D except for teaching handwriting.

We do that in our handwriting alphabet fluency thing.

But-

She's saying sounds, not the names

Well, in Scotland, they do that. So if you want to

sing the alphabet song by sound, I think that's a great idea.

I think that would be very fun.

Sure. And again, it's not like people say EBLI doesn't

believe in teaching the letter names.

What I say about the letter names is they're like your middle name.

I'm sure your middle name is lovely.

The majority of people I know, besides my children and maybe my family, I don't

know their middle names. Okay? So it's not the most

necessary thing that we need. We're not asking anybody to get rid of it, but that's

not where we're putting the main focus. Okay?

We're putting the main focus on what you need to access the most, which is the

sound to be able to do the job of reading and writing and spelling.

So yeah. But you can teach the letter name too, of course.

And I think we've-

Are we done?

... reached the end of our questions. Oh, no.

Somebody's got one. Do you teach EBLI to dyslexic students who do not have any

other type of reading instruction and find they learn to read well?

Typically, they've had other reading instruction.

Yeah, almost all the kids that come to us that are dyslexic, they've had a lot, sometimes years, of other instructions of a variety of kinds. Sometimes it's reading recovery, sometimes it's LLI, sometimes it's Orton-Gillingham, sometimes it's a whole bunch of different things. So yes.

Those kids pick up very much the logic of how we teach.

Typically, when we're teaching at our reading center, we work with kids 12 to 24 hours. It depends on the degree of their

bad habits, just like pretty much all the other kids.

But they love the idea of this system of logic that is systematic and it stays the same.

It's not like, for these words, you have to do this. You have to memorize them.

For these words, you want to do that.

For these words, you want to use this rule, but then you have exception to that

rule. They're just like, "What is going on?" And they may get going

fairly well with reading to a degree, but their spelling still is

lacking a lot. So yeah, we see a lot of kids who have been diagnosed as dyslexic, both at our center and, of course, in schools, too.

And find they learn to read well?

Yes. Yes. Very much so. And spell. Spell and write, too. Yep.

Okay. I think now we may-

Are we good? Well, thank you all, and those of you who hung out here till almost 8:30 at night. My last one went for two hours, and I was going to try to cut this one close, but I hate to

stop when you still have questions. So thank you all for joining.

I appreciate it very much. It's been a pleasure.

And we have a really exciting webinar, oh, I got to tell you this, that's coming up in March. We are going to have a panel.

This is my gift, and their gift to you for March is Reading Month.

We are going to have a panel with state-level

Education person from Tennessee who they're doing some phenomenal work all the way across the board, including at leadership, about changing the way reading is taught and really advancing their kids.

She is at state level, and then we have a superintendent that's actually also from a district in Tennessee. We have a principal from Missouri who took her school from 13% proficient to 95% proficient in three years.

Okay. Really exciting. I had a two-hour Zoom call with her yesterday talking about it. And then we have a literacy coach, if you're familiar with Emily Hanford's "At a Loss for Words,"

the literacy coach on there, Margaret Goldberg is her name.

She's from Oakland, California, and

all of these people are going to share all their tips

and tricks and their roadmap of how they got to where they are with moving

the needle really, really far, like from 13% to 95%, and to

show you and share some of their mistakes so that you don't have to

make them, and to help give anybody who's interested a roadmap.

We also have, actually, Julie, who's been on here, our kindergarten teacher who

taught balanced literacy for 19 years and then just switched completely to the

science of reading this year, which usually people are a little more gradual with

that. So these people are going to share.

It's going to be a really kind of authentic,

getting down in the weeds, "This is what we did, and let me

give you a roadmap so you don't have to get all the bumps and bruises that we had

along the way." Mark your calendars for March 26th at 7:00

p.m. It's going to be two hours long.

It's not going to be nearly enough, I'm finding as I'm talking to all these people.

So we just want to help everybody who's interested in

really moving their kids' literacy far and fast,

get some tools and tips and suggestions and

systems and all that kind of good stuff. So information from these people.

Sorry to cut you off there, but Jodi was just wondering if you can mention the

Missouri school name and person. She'll be on the March webinar.

The person?

The person and the name of the school.

Yep. It's Angie Hamlin is the principal, and she's at Matthews Elementary, and it's got something county in it.

I can't recall, but yes, that's where she's at in Missouri.

Unbelievable. If

you know any principals that are like, "Hmm, I think I'd like my school to be 95% proficient," she's

a firecracker and just the most lovely Southern accent, and just an amazing instructional leader.

And yeah, they did it in three years.

I'm like, "Have you ever heard of such a thing?" They were on the failing, I know that's not what it's called, something else list, but basically the failing school list her first year as a principal.

So we're excited to share.

They're all really excited about sharing their journey so that others can learn from it. So mark your calendars.

All right, anything else, Hannah, that I forgot, maybe?

Nope, I don't

believe so. Oh, maybe.

Did I leave? I don't know what happened.

Nope.

Oh, okay.

All right. Well, thank you guys all for hanging out, and for staying late, and for

all your great questions. I love answering questions and sharing.

Feel free to email us, too. You can email us at info@epley.com,

or you can go on our Facebook page, too, and respond to

the little thingy on there, about

the blending webinar. And do feel free, we would love it if you share

this so that other people can benefit from it too. All right.

And have a wonderful rest of your Thursday evening. Take care.