

All right. Welcome everybody. I am Nora.

I am the founder of EBLI, which is Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction.

It is a system that we train teachers in and we teach people.

It's very effective, very efficient, and based on what the research says you need to do to teach anyone to read to their highest potential.

So, I'm always very excited to share things that I have learned, so that people don't have to make the same mistakes that I have, and to help all of us be able to move ahead effectively and efficiently in teaching our kids, our own children, or our students, or both, of course.

So what I would love for everybody to do, if you would, is please introduce yourself in the chat. Tell us where you're from. Tell us what you do.

I always like to hear that. I read every single thing that you write in the chat, not while it's going, of course, because then I can't focus, but afterwards.

And Alyssa reads every single thing, and any questions you have, she's going to take, and I will answer those at the end.

So be sure and share in the chat. I love to hear stories.

I love to hear what you're hoping to gain out of this, and I especially really, really love your questions.

So be sure and as we go along, ask your questions in the chat.

I'm not going to stop in the middle of the webinar because I have a tendency to get a little sidetracked and go on and on.

So I'm going to present all the information, and then we'll go back and answer your questions based on that. Okay? So share in the chat, ask your questions, and we're going to have a very good time tonight, which is so exciting. So I'm going to share my screen, and we're going to just get going right away.

So thank you for being here, by the way.

I really appreciate that you sharing your evening with me and with us.

Okay.

So here we go. Tonight-- Why are you not doing that? I guess I need my glasses.

From the beginning. There we go. All right.

So what we're going to be talking about tonight is foundational reading instruction. All right?

The why, the how, the what, especially the why and the what, and also somewhat of the how. Okay, so that's what our goal is for tonight.

So

I'm first going to talk about the English alphabetic code and why it's so complex, and what are the main things that everybody or anybody needs to know about this code in order to move them through that process so that they become the best reader, writer, and speller possible. And then I'm going to share a dozen tweaks, basically, in areas that almost all, if you teach, almost everybody teaches these, and some ways to kind of

speed up your instruction and become a little bit more efficient with it. And then at the end, we will have question and answer time. I'm always willing to go over some, but what we've found is that often there's an awful lot of questions, and questions I don't get to in the question and answer, I will answer before we send out the recording tomorrow, and we'll also send a document that has the answers to all those questions. All right?

So whatever you ask, I will do my very best to answer it in a way that is satisfying to you. Okay?

Some of them will be here live, some of them will have to wait until tomorrow.

Okay. Why aren't you going now? There we go. Okay.

So the first thing that I'm going to talk about here is the foundational reading pieces are typically the kind of unsexy parts of reading. It's like the foundation of the house.

Who really wants to pay attention to that, right?

We know it's important, we know that it's there, we know without it, the house would probably fall apart, but it's not the part that we typically focus on. And it seems to be in reading instruction, it is the same thing. It's not the most exciting piece that everybody wants to deal with because we want to get to living in the house, right?

The reading and the writing is kind of the equivalent of living in the house as far as literacy. But if we do not have that foundation in a place, in a way that it's very

firmly ensconced, we are going to have trouble in River City,
sometimes sooner and almost always later.

So I'm going to talk about that

foundational stuff. In EBLI, we deal with all of these things that are around the
house, and especially for that whole goal of all of it, which is reading and
writing. Think of those as the people that are going to live in this house and
enjoy it. So all of those other things are very important.

Some of them I'm going to touch on when I go through the
dozen areas that I'm going to talk about, too.

But the main thing that we want to be sure that everybody, every child,
every adult, every learner, every reader, has a really strong
foundation is in that phonemic awareness and phonics.

Now, I'm not going to talk much about, I'm going to just mention, really, phonemic
awareness in this webinar because next
month,

April 29th it is, I'm going to be doing a webinar on

phonemic awareness and the actual process that we use in EBLI

to teach phonemic awareness, starting at the sound level and moving kids from
letters all the way to all auditory, and how we do this even with
preschoolers, and the whole process. I'm going to actually teach it to you.

So it's going to be very interactive next month.

So I'm just going to touch on that. And a little bit more about the phonics, which
just basically means matching the sounds that come out of our mouth with the

symbols or the letters that represent them in print.

So this is where we're going to hang for a little bit here at the beginning.

All right? So English is an alphabetic code, means it's based on an alphabet. The alphabet letters are symbols for sounds that we say, and there are simple codes like Spanish, where it's mostly one letter, it represents one sound, and it's pretty straightforward.

Italian is another one that you can learn quite quickly.

English is not a simple code. It's a complex code.

We pulled it from a bunch of different

languages, and it tells you here, this graphic tells you a little bit about it.

It's interesting that 30% of it is from what they call a dead language, which is

Latin. And I really like this Arabic piece where our words like

coffee and alcohol, I'm like, "Did we know that those came from Arabic language?"

So we have an awful lot of areas that

our words came from, which makes it

That our alphabetic code is a lot more complex, and I'm going to talk to you

about what we mean by that. But this little graphic shows you

basically why it's complex, and

that we really have to-- It's very logical, which is good though, too, and we need

to teach our teachers and also, of course, teach our children how to

deal with the logic of the English language.

So I'm going to say this, and I'm actually going to reiterate this when we get into

our little dozen tweaking areas here.

And this is from Emily Hanford, it's one of her radio documentaries.

This one's from "Hard Words," but she says, from her-- And everything that she says

is based on

research. You can trace it, and she puts the references into her stuff at the

end, too. Another big takeaway from decades of scientific research,

so that's a lot, is that while we use our eyes to read, obviously,

I'm looking at these words, the starting point of reading is

sound. And this is absolutely critical.

And in the trainings of teachers that we do, oftentimes, it's kind of like a

big paradigm shift, like: "What are you talking about, reading is sound?

Here's letters and words that we're dealing with." But these letters and words

on the page, represent the sounds that are coming out of

our mouth. So first, we have to pay attention to what's the sounds that we

hear, and then the symbols that we see to represent them.

So that seems like a kind of a little thing, but it's really a pretty significant

thing when it comes to our complex English alphabetic code. All right?

So this is a big one that you might be wanting to think like, "Oh, well, no big

deal." And it really is a really very big deal. Okay?

Down here, there's a little asterisk that says last month's webinar

was pretend reading. So if you watch that, I talk a lot more about that

whole situation.

All right. In EBLI, this is what we

call basically the logic of the English language.

These are the core things that are part of that phonics part. Okay? And when I say phonics, everybody, typically, you have something conjured up in your head, and most everybody has a little bit of a different thing. I don't mean rules and exceptions to rules, and long and short, and magic and silent, and all that type of thing.

When I talk about phonics, what I mean is the very pure definition of phonics, which is matching the sounds that come out of my mouth, or your mouth, or anybody's mouth, with the symbols or letters in print. Okay?

So these are the concepts and skills that you need to manage that sounds that we say matching to the letters in print that represent them. So the first concept is, and I'm going to go a little bit more into depth with this, is that in English, one letter can spell a sound, but also two, three, and four letters can represent one sound.

That's something that's often news to a whole lot of people, whether we're in education or not in education, or we're great readers or not so much. So one, two, three, or four letters can represent one sound.

The second concept that in English, we have 44 sounds.

Used to be when I first started doing this work about 25 years ago, things that I read would say 37, 44, 40 sounds. So then to be PC, I'd say 37 to 44, but really, 44 is basically the correct thing here as far as how many sounds that we have in English.

And the interesting thing is almost every single sound in English, both vowels and

consonants, can be spelled in more than one way. Okay?

Some of them can be spelled up to 20 ways.

Our sound sh, there's 20 ways to spell the sound sh.

So this is a concept that our kids and us need to understand

to be able to manage the English alphabetic code to our highest potential.

Okay? That's our second concept. The third concept is in English,

sometimes the letter or letters can represent several

different sounds. So the letter A, for example.

A lot of times we know a long and short A.

Long A is the letter name, and short A is the most common sound, or ah.

So we typically know that, but there's seven other sounds that go with that letter

A. And a lot of times, we use the term schwa

to try to explain that away.

I've tried to get people to really teach.

How are you going to teach me the word wall, where the A represents ah, or the

word father, where the A represents a, or the word stomach, where the

A represents i? If you tell me that all those seven are a

schwa, how am I going to apply that, learn that to apply it?

And I haven't had anybody able to actually do that for me

to explain how are you going to teach that to a child

in order that they can internalize it and apply it, not just for reading, but also

for spelling. So those are three things that really

muck up the gears a lot when we are talking about the English

alphabetic code. So a lot of times, we just make up things about it because we're like, "We don't know what's going on." As far as that goes.

So we want to

know for sure that we're giving our kids that.

And then we have to have these phonemic awareness skills.

The skill of blending, which is pushing sounds together, because that's what we have to do at the concrete level and

slow, r-u-n, run, and then pretty soon we're reading

run and, I don't know,

believing, and

phonological, and all those types of words automatically, but we have to start

out at that sensorimotor level, being very concrete, where we're

saying, putting the sounds together.

So blending is just putting the sounds together, and pretty soon, all great readers

do that automatically. Not at first, though, or I guess segmenting is first.

So that's blending. So the other one is segmenting.

Segmenting is pulling sounds apart in a word.

So if I have the word cheese, the sounds are

ch-ee-se. If I have the word make,

m-a-k. So pulling those sounds apart, that's segmenting.

Blending, if I were to say

f-r-u-n-t

Front, that would be blending. So segmenting is pulling apart, blending is putting

together. Phoneme manipulation, phoneme is just a word for sound.

Manipulation means moving around.

So phoneme manipulation means taking out a sound, putting in a sound, or moving a sound around in a word. All right? All of these are skills that we really need to be proficient in and automatic in, in order to be reading to our highest potential.

So with EBLI, we teach all of these concepts and skills very much intertwined. Okay? We teach them explicitly, we teach them systematically, but we don't teach them in isolation. And this fourth skill down here, it's not a phonemic awareness skill down here.

Well, really,

in the way that we do it anyway. It's a multi-syllable strategy, and it's how do we teach our students to manage multi-syllable words that are two or five or seven syllables long so that they read them accurately and they spell them accurately, with whatever they're doing as far as literacy.

So this is really the keys to the kingdom. All right?

This is what we need to have if we are going to be reading, writing, and spelling.

We need to have a firm understanding of this to do that to our highest potential.

Okay?

So, to give you some examples of what I was talking about there, when

I say one, two, three, or four letters can spell a sound, all of these words on the left are two sounds long. Okay? The green

letters represent the first sound, the spelling for the first sound, okay?

And the red represents the spelling for the second sound.

So the word "up," pretty straightforward. U, p. One letter, one sound.

No big deal. The word "tea," t, ea. Two sounds, but

this is a two-letter spelling for E. Okay?

The word "urn," ur,

n. Two sounds, but now we have a three-letter spelling, okay, for ur.

And then "way," w, ay. And here we have a four-letter spelling.

So in English, when we say a sound out of our mouth, a sound can be spelled with one letter, two letters, three letters, or four letters. All right?

Very

rarely do kids know about that, and really very rarely do adults know about that.

So this is a really important concept that we need to understand and be able to internalize to best manage the English alphabetic code.

Our next concept is that in English, the 44 sounds can be spelled in a variety of different ways.

So if we're saying the sound A, okay, we have the sound A.

Here are some of the ways to spell the sound A.

So we have this one in rain, okay, that's pretty straightforward, in day, and this one we may know, and this one for sure for A in game.

These ones become a little bit less common, which means over here, we don't use them as much, but they happen in quite a few words, okay?

This A in ballet or Chevrolet. I'm here in Michigan, not far from Flint, so

that's a A at the end of ballet or there's quite a few words where that, thank you,
we stole or borrowed from all these different languages.

This one is from the French. So, if you notice here, the
sound A, all right, these four all have the letter A,
and five of these spellings for the sound A
don't even have the letter A in them.

So when we have our kids doing the matching and trying to put the letter
name and sound and making that the same kind of thing, it can
cause a lot of confusion, both with, quite honestly, with vowels and with
consonants. So we just talk about these as symbols.

They could be flowers. They could be trees.

They could be all kinds of shapes. But we
chose to borrow spellings that are actually letters, okay?

So in English, we use letters to represent the sounds that we said.

They're just

representations of our sounds. Then for consonants, all of these are
spellings for s. So this, yeah, we know this about s in

fast or s in city, and even this one can be s when an E, I, or Y comes after
it. So this one at the end for the s in

peace and s in purse. But again, over here, and these aren't even all of
them, by the way. Over here,

less common spellings, but there's patterns. This is the beautiful thing.

The human brain learns best in patterns, and there's patterns throughout all of

these spellings, all right, because of

the origin of where we

borrowed them from, I guess we could say.

Like this one, if you think of words like listen and whistle and wrestle and

Christmas, okay? This two-letter spelling for one sound, s, happens a lot

of times in the middle. So we want to teach our kids all of that information

so that it makes sense to them. Okay?

So that it's not just some big mystery, because when it's a mystery, then we fall

back on ineffective and inefficient strategies to try to figure it out.

And our third concept is that in English, the exact same spelling can

represent a bunch of different sounds.

So we have the example of the A, so we see here this is a in at or A

in ape. Now it's u in was, A in father,

awl in wall, I in luggage, eh in catch,

o in war, w, o, r, okay? And i in naive.

How crazy is that? Now we don't teach all of these at one time.

However, second grade and above, we do teach six of them at a time because we're

going to organize the information and have our kids

listen for patterns. This forces

that phonological awareness,

the differentiation, okay, of sounds and

all kinds of good stuff like that. So we don't have to make up some story like

schwa or whatever for kids to try to explain away all of these guys over

here. All right? Because then, we don't really have a way to help our kids apply this information.

And then here's an example for consonants.

This can be ch as we know, like in chip and chirp and much.

It can also be k, like in school and Christmas, and it can be

sh in machine and chef. So the exact same spelling,

different sounds that come out of our mouth.

So we need to be able to deal with that because if we're looking at it, that's not going to help us. It's got to be

dealt with from what we're hearing and what we're listening to, which is,

again, the basis of where reading

starts, what we hear first.

So those are our three concepts,

and

our skills, the blending, segmenting, and phoneme manipulation we have to use

to deal with those. Then we need to make sure that our children can

read and spell and know the meaning of multi-syllable

words. How we do this and how we recommend doing this is showing

this... We do this a lot,

whether we're going to teach a certain pattern in a word like "-cian" as a

person, like magician or pediatrician or musician, okay,

that C-I-A-N and "-cian" at the end, we may teach a group of words like that.

Or we may teach a bunch of words that really don't have anything to do with each

other, except for they're all in the story the kids are going to read.

So they see them all together, how they're going to see them, and then we split them with a visual piece in space in between.

I read some cognitive research, and this was probably more than 20 years ago.

I've been looking for it, actually,

to be able to reference it, and I don't...

This was when we didn't have the internet stuff, and I don't even know where I got all the research stuff that I found back then, those articles.

But

this cognitive research said that if you show kids hundreds of multi-syllable words with a visual space, not a slash, but a visual space in between, you're going to greatly increase their fluency and their comprehension, and we have found that that's true.

And then what we do is we call we ebleize it, where if there's a two, three, or four-letter spelling, we underline it, so the kids know to say one sound and not four when there's four letters there.

And then we have a whole process of putting it all together.

But we need to teach our kids of how to segment the sounds and syllables and how to then put them back together.

So it's again, that unhinging it and putting it back together, both of those things. Because reading and spelling are two sides of the same coin.

You use the same skills, concepts, and information.

One of them, you have something there that you're decoding.

The other one, you have a blank slate, and you have to encode and produce the spellings for the sounds. Much more challenging.

That's why spelling is much more challenging.

So those are the things that we need to know about this code.

Up to four letters can spell a sound.

The same sound can be spelled in a lot of different ways.

And we can have the same spelling, and we're going to be saying different sounds for it, and we have to have a multi-syllable strategy

that results in us knowing how to accurately

spell the word, how to accurately read the word, and how to know what the

word means, okay? And then we've got a foundation that is

strong as tungsten steel, and we are ready to build the best house

ever. Everything can be built upon that when we have that

information as far as our kids. So that is the foundational information that

all kids and adults ideally need to have to

have that foundation to read their highest potential, and write and spell.

Now I'm going to talk about a dozen tweaks that you can make,

any of us can make,

that we have learned, quite frankly, through trial and error over the last 25

years of our own EBL team doing this, but also the thousands of teachers

that we have trained and coached in their classrooms and the tens of

thousands of kids who have been taught EBL.

We're constantly refining and evolving to become always

and always and always more effective and efficient.

So we're going to share some of these.

I'm going to share some of these tweaks with you guys, and this is a place, just a

FYI,

where you probably will have a lot of questions. I love questions.

Please type your questions in the-- The only thing that will really make me sad is

if I'm done with my 45 minutes, which I better hurry up,

and it's question time, and I have no questions.

So you're going to have stuff come up.

I might possibly be moving your cheese a little bit.

You may be feeling a little uncomfortable.

I may have one point come up, you're going to be like, "Yes, I totally agree with

that. I do that. This is so awesome." And then the next thing I say, you'll be

like, "Listen, Nora, what are you talking about?

I don't agree with that." I love you to be skeptical.

I'm perfectly happy with you not agreeing with it, for sure, but I want you to keep

your mind open and then question like, "Hmm, I wonder if

there's some validity to that," or, "Why would I do that?" Always ask

yourself that question. Why am I doing what I'm doing?

Or why might I shift what I'm doing to do something

differently like what she's talking about?

So if you have questions about them, I want to hear those questions. All right?

So type them in the chat as we're going, please.

And if you're new, I know a bunch of people have been coming on, please write in the chat where you're from. I always think that's fun to look at.

And also why you're joining us tonight.

What is your interest in being here?

Because I love to be able to connect with you that way, too.

All right, so here we go. One other thing

I do want to explain. I'm talking about tweaking.

I'm not giving you explicit instruction that's going

to change your whole way of teaching or of assisting your child if you're a parent. So tweaking is kind of like if you have,

I don't know, let's say you have something that the doctor says, "You have this, and we have to do surgery to fix it, but we can't do that for six months.

But you can do all of these things that will take away a lot of the symptoms, that will make it a lot better." So I'm giving you tweaks.

I'm giving you some adjustments to the house.

I'm not having you build the house with explicit instruction.

Those are two very different things.

And my background as a neonatal ICU nurse, I used to go to lots of medical conferences, and we would learn about intubating a baby, about

ECMO, this heart-lung bypass for kids that had lung problems, stuff we would learn.

We didn't go to the conference thinking we were going to learn how to do it, but we

would think we would learn about what it is, so that we could see if we were going to pursue it further. So that's a really significant distinction because oftentimes when I presented at conferences, educational conferences, I might get feedback where teachers are like, "Well, we wanted to go back in our classroom and be able to teach EBL," or be able to... Which is a huge, long process.

It's like kids saying, "Well, I wanted to listen to the teacher for an hour and be able to read when I came into kindergarten." It's a process that has to happen. So I'm going to give you some things that are going to definitely move you toward that and tweak a bunch of stuff, but I just wanted to share that clarification because sometimes there's some confusion with that.

Okay, so here we go. So the first one that I'm going to talk about is when you're teaching reading and spelling What you need to do is focus on the sound first, not the letter name.

The letter name is like somebody's middle name.

I'm not asking you to get rid of it, and I'm not asking you to not to have your kids know what it is. Feel free to teach it, maybe in handwriting or some other place. But don't teach it, especially if you teach preschool, kindergarten, little kids,

emerging readers. Do not teach it at the same time that you're teaching reading or spelling. Okay? We need to go to the sound, because the sound is what you need to access, not the letter name. Okay?

In lots of countries-- I know in Scotland, there was a gentleman who

told me he came to the States when he was seven. He knew all the sounds.

He knew how to read. They tested him on his letter names.

He wasn't so good on his letter names.

Most kids are going to be good on their letter names anyway.

He was good at reading, though, and he was like, "I got dinged because I didn't know the letter names, but we learn the sounds because it's what we need to access to be able to use to read." Okay?

So the consonant letter names is almost always going to be at least two sounds. So every single consonant letter name is never the same as the sound.

Now, it may be like B is buh-ee, so the first sound is that buh. That's cool. But then you have C, sss-ee.

And maybe about 20% of the time that letter C represents the sound sss, but not the majority of the time. It's usually going to be cuh.

So when you show children that letter and say, "What sound?" More likely than not, they're going to say sss, because the first sound in the letter name C is sss. So you could try it with a few kids and see what happens there. The other, the biggest one, too, is W.

When you show children the letter W and say, "What sound goes with this?" Almost always, they'll say duh. And you'll be like, "Why are they saying duh?" Well, they're saying duh because the first sound in W, duh, uh, buh, ul, yuh, oo, is duh. Y, they say wuh. It's never wuh, right?

But the first sound in Y is wuh. Wuh-i.

So

if we're going to be as effective and efficient, we need to give the kids the information they need to know to do the job we're trying to get them to do, which is read and spell. Now, this is another point.

At our reading center, we have taught people up into their 80s, okay, many, and people who don't know how to read a word.

Every single one of them past second grade know their letter names.

Every single one of them. So there is a correlation between little kids who know their letter names typically do better with the reading.

I mean, when they do the testing, but it's not because they know their letter names. Okay? And what the people who are illiterate and subliterates don't know past second grade when they come to us is the sound to symbol correlation. So we know that that's what the weakness is and what they need to learn.

And actually, it's really hard to, what we call it, letter name interference.

The older the student that we teach, the harder it is to undo that letter name interference, because they really think that those letter names have to be important because they've put so much time and energy into learning them.

So to make your life easier and your kid's life easier, focusing on the sound.

What sound do you say for this? We don't say, "What sound does this say?" Because quite frankly, no letters ever talk. And we say that to kids.

Letters don't talk. Letters are symbols to represent the sounds that we say.

We talk, they're the symbols. Okay?

So just some food for thought.

Feel free to ask questions if you have them on that.

When you're reading, please look at the words and not at the pictures.

What we do in schools and in our center here is we cover up the picture,
because the picture is an enhancement.

It never, ever was it meant, except for back in the old days before we actually had
words and they had pictures on caves.

It's why we have words, because people got too confused by looking at these
pictures and trying to figure out, are they saying, "Come to dinner?" Are they
saying, "Let's have a war?" Or what do these pictures mean? Right?

Because a picture really does mean a thousand words, and you could interpret it in
a lot of different ways. And very rarely are you going to
interpret it in the way the word's written on the page. Okay?

So we do not look at the pictures to read when we're going to read.

Now, if a child wants to flip through a book and look at pictures, of course that's
a great idea. Tell themselves their own story.

As long as you do not, or they do not think that I'm actually reading these
words, or we don't say

look at the pictures and read the words when they're really not reading the words.

Okay? And then as kids get older, they don't have pictures

in their books. So then they're really stuck, which is one of the

reasons, there's actually other ones that are more significant, but why third
grade is the biggest fall-apart year.

So many kids at third grade really, really struggle with reading, and you can't hide their reading struggles very much at that point and beyond. And so when you look at the pictures, it encourages you to look away from the words and discourages you from looking at the words.

So looking at the words and not at the pictures is another one of our big pieces.

Every spelling in a word is important, and for all these years that I've coached in all these thousands of classrooms, so often I hear, "What's the first sound?" Why is the first sound so important, right? What are the other ones? Chopped liver?

The last sound is just important. The middle sounds are important.

If it's a 40-letter word, all of them.

Every sound that's represented by those letters is important.

Okay? Because if we tell the kids to look at the first sound, what they do is they'll say the first sound in buh, and the word is basketball, and they say butterfly, or who knows what. Anything that starts with a buh.

And then they get in the habit of doing that, and then they become a guessing machine, which is a whole nother point that we're going to do.

So we need to let kids know, you read every word left to right all the way through. If you look at these words at the bottom, horse, horn, house, hound, hour, kids can look at any one of those words and interchangeably guess one of the other ones that kind of look like it, or they could just say something like, who knows, like hundred or

something. They'll do all kinds of stuff like that.

And if you teach kids, you know this, because you've experienced it for sure.

So every sound and spelling in a word is important, left to right all the way through.

All right. Our next point is when you come to a word that you don't know You do not look at the first sound and guess.

You do not look at the picture and guess.

You do not look at the rest of the words and guess.

You do not do anything and guess. Right? Don't guess.

We spend much more of our time, I think here, especially the older the child, undoing guessing of students, because it gets-- Even by kindergarten, it's deeply ingrained in these kids where like how did this happen so quickly?

Where it's easy, it's easy to look at a letter and just guess.

We all probably have done that before in our life.

But when you do it as a main strategy, almost never will you say the word that's actually written there, and then you have a bad habit that needs to be undone, and a lot of misreading and no idea of what's going on with what you're supposed to be reading, of course, because you're not reading the words that are there.

So,

we do have a webinar that's on our webinar page.

I highly recommend because if you teach, you have guessers.

I'm positive of that. But I share a lot of very

explicit

strategies to undo and slay that guessing monster.

So do check that out for sure. And remember, I hope you're asking questions.

I can't see what's going on in the chat over there, but I hope you're asking questions. And if you've come in since I last said it, please introduce yourself, tell us why you're here, where you're from. Let us know a little bit about you.

Okay.

Our next one. Now, this is one that I see a lot, in

all grades, interestingly. When kids are reading,

they are tapping under each word as they

go. What does that do? It makes you read like a robot. Right?

If your finger is moving smoothly, this is something that we train kids to

do a lot and often, and I'll even hold their hand and help them move

it along because they're so, again, ingrained in that

tapping thing. And I've been told by teachers is this helps them realize what is a

word, and I haven't found that to be true.

They know that there's a space between each of these words and that type of thing.

So I would recommend that you try the ice skater

finger. All right? And again, I tell kids this is what it's going to look like, and

this is what it's going to sound like.

And when I'm working with a kid or the student, because even if I'm in a class of

30 and I'm reading with a student, I'm reading right across from the one who's

reading, and if they are tapping, I will just grab their finger and say, "This is

how this feels. This is what it looks like, and this is what it feels like," to get them-- It's going to greatly increase their fluency, like unbelievably.

If you do DIBELS or Acadience or any of those that most everybody does these days, it is going to make a difference actually in your kids' fluency ability. So we start that out even in preschool to do the smooth ice skater finger.

So,

maybe try that out.

We teach patterns, not rules. The human brain is from birth, all right,

is set up to learn patterns. A little one-year-old,

okay, my little grandson, Christopher, he's almost 11 months old.

He knows that his little tiny greyhound dog is a dog, and that

his cousin's great big

labradoodle dog, golden labradoodle, yeah, is a dog.

They don't look anything alike, right?

But they have the same patterns and features, and they know that that's a dog.

All right? They say, "Ruff, ruff," and dog and all that kind of good stuff.

They understand the patterns of how that works.

So patterns work well with how the brain works.

Rules, unless a rule happens 100% of the time, it's not a rule.

All right? It's a tendency or a pattern.

So we don't ever talk rules,

because really nothing in English is a rule.

Nothing hap-- Some things are close to it, but nothing happens every single time because our language was borrowed from so many different places.

So we want to align with how the

brain learns best. The other thing with rules, especially if you're talking about phonics rules or syllable rules, is they're not consistent.

I read an article recently, in the last few weeks actually, that said one of the syllable rules, I don't really know syllable rules, so I don't know which one it is, but one of the syllable rules only works 19.8% of the time.

That's horrible. Right? So we're going to spend a whole lot of valuable instructional time teaching kids these rules and learning them, and also their cognitive space, all that cognition to be able to learn those rules, and then you can only apply it not even two times out of 10. Right? So we want to

really, again, be effective and efficient in what we give to our kids

so that they are not confused and so that they can

apply what they've learned. We don't want to just be, "You can only use it with these words, these 19.8% of words or 50% of words." We want you to

have a strategy that you can use with all words. Right?

To be able to read, write, and spell all words.

All right. This is a fun one, and I've been learning a lot about this, and the cool thing about it is I realize that our instruction with EBLI has

been doing this all along for the last 20 years. So that's really, really fun.

And it is scaffold instruction versus teaching to mastery before moving on, and kind of it's called interleaving. So instead of teaching, let's say we've got beginning readers, instead of teaching c, c, c, C says c, or any of that kind of stuff, and all week long teaching c and c at the beginning, or that type of thing, and trying to get something so that all your kids know c by the end of that week, what we do instead, this is a great example of this, is we would teach c, m, t, and a.

I think those are the-- Maybe. Yeah, those four.

Those four we teach in the second week, I guess, of kindergarten or preschool.

And we teach all of them at the same time, all right, in the context of word, not in isolation, but that's a different point.

So we teach them in the context of words. Now, we're going to do it for this week.

We're going to do explicit instruction. We're going to do handwriting with it.

We're going to write some words, am and at and cat and that kind of stuff, and mat and all. And then we are not going to make sure that all of you know those four sounds before we move on to another set of sounds. The next week, we're going to add four more.

So now you have these first four that you learned, but you also have four more, so you have eight sounds. We're not ditching these.

We're not leaving them behind and saying you're never going to see those again, so you're never going to know that this is c or t or a.

Now we're going to make words with these eight sounds.

And then the next week, we may add four more. Now you have 12 sounds.

So you don't have to teach to mastery because you-- I mean, we're going to get to mastery. I'm not saying you don't want it to be mastery, because we definitely need to get there. But we don't need to get to mastery before you move on.

It's kind of like basketball. You don't dribble and dribble and dribble and dribble until you're a perfect dribbler before you ever pass the ball, or before you ever shoot the ball, or before you ever walk as you dribble or whatever.

Or we don't do a bicep curl or bicep curls before we work any other muscles in the body. We need to interleave this, and that's how learning works best And

I've learned a lot, and I think I shared with you guys last time this book, this

"Make It Stick" book. I love this book.

It's written by three cognitive psychologists, and it goes against most of what

we thought learning was and how kids learned.

So that one's an

important one, and these are quotes, basically, not totally quoted.

I paraphrase a little bit, so I don't have quote marks around them.

But this is from the "Make It Stick." So what is interleaved practice?

The practice of two or more subjects or skills is a more potent alternative to massed practice, which is like cramming or drilling.

Those are two examples of that. And research shows unequivocally, that's a pretty powerful word, right? That mastery and long-term retention, so we are going for

mastery eventually, but not in this moment, right?

Before we move to something else. Mastery and long-term retention are much better if you interleave practice than if you mass it, so if you do massed practice. So thinking about that, and I highly recommend you get that book, "Make It Stick," because it's pretty grand.

And this is, again, one of their quotes.

"When learners commit errors and are given corrective feedback, the errors are not learned." This is so important.

And the opposite is true. If learners commit errors and they are not given correct feedback, the errors are learned. So every time we let our kids learn something inaccurately or incorrectly, and it's not fixed, it's going to happen for everybody sometimes, right?

But if that's a regular practice, they are not going to be able to learn that information, or they're going to actually learn it incorrectly because they're going to think those errors are the correct way.

So this is a quote from that book that I think is really, really powerful that we need to think about when we're teaching kids, and we're very mindful of that and always have been.

Teach correct handwriting formation. We're very obsessed with handwriting.

And this is a quote from an article on handwriting. "Minimal time is spent teaching skills for handwriting, even in primary grades, despite a growing body of research

indicating that the omission of physical instruction of handwriting is setting the stage for academic failure for many children." And I would say especially,

literacy failure. Okay? And a whole lot of other things.

We teach Peterson handwriting, and we've shared that all over the place with everybody. We have a handwriting webinar that we've done. I highly recommend it.

But the importance of top to bottom, left to right and the correct production of handwriting. Sometimes it's hard.

Teaching reading and handwriting and writing is a challenge at first.

It's like anything worthwhile is a challenge at first, right?

Because we're new at it. And that's another thing that "Make It Stick" talks about. Struggle is important as long as, again, in the end, they have the corrective thing that they need to do.

But we don't want to think, "Oh my gosh, the kids are struggling, we've got to make it easier." We want that struggle because it's going to accelerate learning.

Same with handwriting, okay?

Teaching speech to print. I already touched on this a little bit, but because reading is

from the words we say to the letters and print that represent them, we need to start first with the speech and then to the print.

We don't want to say buh, buh, buh, B says buh, right?

Because, again, B doesn't say anything, but going from the print to the speech doesn't allow us to interleave the instruction of spelling

and reading at the same time also. So we want to be able to do both of those at once, and we want to have it accelerated.

This is one little tweak that everybody could make tomorrow.

Instead of saying to your kids, "What does this say?"

And almost all of us, as adults and especially as teachers, do this.

What does that say? What does that say?

If you're looking at a C or a P or a W or anything, what does that say?

And again, when you're thinking of beginning emerging readers that are four and five and six years old, they're very literal, and they're like,

"Wait a minute. Is it saying something? I'm not hearing anything." Right?

It's not saying anything. They're right. It's not saying anything.

We're doing the saying. So the one little tweak is what sound do you say for this letter or these letters? That's one little tweak that you can do

immediately. And again, here's reiterating that with the quote that Emily has from her most recent radio documentary.

So we use our eyes to read, but the starting point to reading is sound.

Really important.

I hope you're asking questions, by the way. Reminder of that.

Minimizing teaching skills in isolation, okay?

We want to do as much of integrating our instruction as possible to accelerate the learning.

And an example of how we teach is we never, ever teach a letter in isolation, not even if we're teaching a three-year-old.

We always teach in the context of a word.

And the reason we do that is because it makes it meaningful and it makes it relevant. A doesn't mean much to a four or five or six-year-old, right? Or to, but if you are making the word at and you do a and then t and put it together as at, it's meaningful and relevant in that connection to this

letter here represents a, and this letter here represents t, is going to happen a whole lot faster.

So there's so many things where we want to do that integrated instruction and not silos or islands, okay, all over the place.

We don't want all those island teaching.

I've actually got a blog coming up on island teaching.

The more we can integrate, the faster the instruction and the acceleration of your kids' proficiency is going to be. Okay?

All right. So that's a good one.

This is a fun one. I think we can all get behind this one, right?

Read out loud to children of all ages.

Now, what you want to do is your highest-- If you're a fourth grade teacher, let's say the highest reader in your class, you want to get a novel.

Now, we don't want to just read articles.

We want to get a novel that's higher than what they could read independently, that highest reader in your class.

What you're going to do here is you're going to continue to stretch all of the

kids. Now, none of them would really be able to read that accurately, what you're going to be reading to them, but it's also going to have richer vocabulary, more information. You're going to get more background knowledge into your kids.

Every single teacher, it would behoove them to have read aloud time every single day With your kids. All right?

So reading aloud to them, 15 minutes after recess or after lunch or whatever, it's going to really move your kids.

And then when

they're able to

independently read at those levels, their

comprehension and all of that is just going to spiral up. Okay?

We always like spiraling up.

So, reading out loud is a very exciting, wonderful thing to do for your kids. Oh, that was good.

And I still have three minutes left, so I'm doing grand.

So questions on any of those, I'm going to answer those in just a second.

And I just want to--

I put these in all of our webinars to talk about because people always ask us about our Able training, which we train teachers from preschool teachers to high school teachers, and people who teach adults, too.

And classroom teachers is the majority, probably 70% to 80% of the teachers we train, and remediation teachers are the rest of what we train. So we have online teacher training and student lessons all

together. So if you're interested in that, you can get those on the Able website.

You click on Able for You and for Educators, and you come to this page

and you can learn more about that if you're interested.

And then these next slides just show some of our documents that we use.

These are part of the teacher training documents where you give the steps of everything we do, and then the why of every step you do.

We want for you to be able to ask us why are we doing what we're

doing, and for you to have a very concrete answer that is going to

attach to moving your students higher and higher as

far as reading, writing, and spelling.

And then these are just some pictures from

the teacher training, and these are some pictures from the student instruction,

where you have videos where I teach your class at first, videos where I'm in a

classroom so you can see it in action, some of the documents.

So,

there's more on our website if you're interested at all in our teacher training

stuff or homeschool parents who teach.

I do want to talk about this. I'm very excited. I love this picture, too.

I've been sharing in our webinars about

this literacy documentary that's going to be happening within

probably in about a year. It's been growing and growing and growing.

We have about 60 people, some of the top researchers

in education, in cognitive

psychology, in neurology. Some people that if you're aware of anything literacy-wise, you will know these people for sure, that are all going to be participating. They're all over the country.

Our documentary producer and director will be going around the country to videotape them. Our goal is to increase the awareness of what needs to happen in literacy to get us to 95% to 100% of our students being proficient in reading, writing, and spelling. Okay?

So where we are now, what the things are that need to happen to move us to that other place, and how that can happen.

We are interested in creating a literacy movement, okay, with this documentary and beyond.

And John Corcoran and I, as you can see at the top, his story is actually going to-- "The Teacher Who Couldn't Read" is his book.

His story is going to be kind of the outline of this, and then it's

become this

monumental, amazing thing that I'm so terribly excited about and honored to be a part of consulting with and connecting with these people who are going to be in it.

So Alyssa is going to share a link that has our fundraising information page.

It's information, like you can click on the-- I recommend all of you click on the

one-minute video about the producer and director.

It's called the sizzle reel, which I never knew what that meant, but it's unbelievable. And then you can look at the press release if you want to donate some money, \$5, \$20. Not any dollars, that's fine, too.

But you can do it there, and we would love it if you would share the link to that page if you feel so compelled on your own social media and stuff. We can see this as changing the face of literacy, and we're really excited about it.

And we'll keep you posted. Filming is going to start.

We scheduled our first times today, actually.

It's going to start in New York City in May, so we're really, really pumped about that. So that's a little update on that, and that beautiful little picture with those beautiful little children.

Action steps. If you want action steps, what can we do to help advance literacy?

Put your suggestions if you have some, like, "I have this great..." Even if you're thinking, "I have a great idea for this documentary, let me tell you this," share it in the chat, okay?

We would love to hear it.

Comment on our foundational reading blog. We love it when you comment on those.

That's always fun, too. You can share the link to this webinar on your social media pages or anything else that we do that you find is worthwhile, and you can share the documentary information if you feel so compelled.

So

the more networking, interacting, sharing, all of that kind of stuff that we all can do. It's so exciting because our little chalkboard thing about the 12 things I just talked about here was shared almost 500 times on Facebook. So we really love that because it's getting information out to the world. So this is good. Our next webinar, Thursday, April 29th. Alyssa will put the link in the chat, and that's going to be on phonemic awareness, and it's actually going to be not just about it, but the process to actually teach it. So if you have a whiteboard and a marker, bring that when you come to that, so you can practice as a student and also as teaching it. And we're going to show you the process that we have used for years and years that's tremendously effective and efficient with teaching this to the little kids, of course. We only teach it with older kids if like past middle of first grade, if they are struggling readers or sub literate, and they need remediation. So that is that. And now we get to go to questions and answers. So I am going to-- and also you will be getting the recording tomorrow as well as all the links that I talk about and any other resources that we may discuss, too. So watch for that email. And also answers to questions that I didn't get to on here. So I will quit sharing my screen

And we can see. So Alyssa, do we have any questions? I hope we have questions.

We do.

First from Jen. Would you correct inventive spelling in

kindergarten when they are just writing down the sounds they hear?

Yes. We know that all kindergarten and emerging readers and writers are going to do inventive spelling, right, when they're on their own.

So what we are going to do, Jen and everybody, is what we do in the Edley-- It's quite extensive process.

We start out with dictated, okay? And when I say dictated, we're going to have a short sentence like, "A cat ran," or something like that.

And we're going to say, "Uh," and then we're going to show them, we're going to model, they're going to do one spelling.

We're going to show them about a finger space before the next letter.

We're going to do everything to show them actually how to write a sentence, which is really cool because even high schoolers don't know how to do that.

So we're going to be really explicit at first, and then we're going to fade away to where we may dictate a word, and they write the word, then we show the corrections. They write the word, we show the corrections.

They're all going to be writing the same one.

They're thrilled about doing it, number one.

It's the writing to text or to lesson match.

When we do an explicit instruction, we do reading to match and writing to match, okay? So this is how we're going to teach our kids the writing process.

I highly,

strongly recommend that if you're a preschool teacher or a kindergarten teacher, that you do not send kids off and ask them to write and write and write.

Now, if they're drawing a picture and they're putting some labels or they're doing a little bit of writing on their own, awesome.

We really encourage them to write on a whiteboard if they're doing that independently, especially the labeling thing.

Like I was in a three and four-year-old preschool and it was around Thanksgiving time, and the kids were doing a picture and writing words.

One

child did their hand and did a turkey and put T-R-E.

And I said, "Oh my gosh, that's so amazing. You've got your T, ER.

This is your ER spelling. I write the ER above." They change it.

The student changes it there. That's important, but that's a whole other webinar.

And then what's your next sound here? Now we have TER. Now then there's key.

What's the first sound in key? K. This is your K. Go ahead and write it there.

And this is not a typical E spelling, but this is your E spelling.

I love how you heard all those sounds.

So I hear so often that, oh my gosh, we're going to squelch these kids' creativity and all that kind of stuff. That's not true.

What you do when you have kids practice writing wrong is they get better at misspelling if it's not corrected.

Now remember, if they do that misspelling and it's corrected,

they aren't going to remember the error. They're going to remember the correction.

If you do that misspelling and it's not corrected, they're going to remember the error. They're going to be like my daughter, and they're going to be spelling was W-U-Z for two years even after their reading's been remediated.

Okay? It takes a lot, lot longer to remediate spelling than it does reading, because spelling is a lot more challenging than reading. So I cannot emphasize enough.

I am not saying they're never going to inventive spell.

That means when they're-- That sound is symbol, we call that a logical spelling.

If you spelled turkey T-R-K-E, you have a logical spelling for every one of those sounds. You want to celebrate that, but you also want to show that child on a whiteboard, not a piece of paper, that's very important by the way, what the fix is and how they fix it, and you celebrate it.

So it's not about, "Look at you being wrong at five years old and you can't spell."

No, that's not it. I am your teacher and just like if they said one plus one is seven, we would say, "Oh, we have one and we have another one.

How many is two? This is how you make that two. It's two.

That's the answer." That's our job is to guide and to teach these kids. What we find with inventive spelling, just like my daughter's stuff, and I pulled it out like six times in the last week, sitting right here in the top of my drawer.

My daughter's inventive spelling in second grade, and I don't know if you can see it or you can't see it, it doesn't matter really, but you wouldn't be able to read

it. Well, teachers can read it. It's about dogs. Look at the picture.

You can see it's about dogs. You can't read it.

The words are so horrifically misspelled that you can't read it.

She's in second grade. Is she going to wake up one day in third grade and be able to spell was and their and all these time and once and town and one and all those? No, she's not.

She's going to be in eighth grade and 10th grade and 12th grade, and then she's going to be an adult who's misspelling.

Many, many, many, the majority, actually, of adults are not strong spellers because your spelling is an indicator of-- If you're not spelling accurately, you're reading below your potential.

So this is almost for me being a plea, and this is why I'm real emotional about spelling too, is right here. Even though it was 1997, still pretty emotional about it because I still get that feeling of looking at that back in 1997, sitting there on the wall outside her second-grade room. When is this going to get fixed?

Third-grade teachers, are you spending all your time on fixing that spelling?

Of course you're not. Now they're spelling five paragraphs, writing five paragraphs, and they have 80 misspellings. So what do we do?

Nobody has the capacity to fix 30, 25,
20 kids'

papers that all have between 20 and 80 misspellings on them.

It's not even humanly possible unless you don't want to have a life.

So you can't fix that, plus they've been doing it wrong for so long.

So my plea to you is get them writing on a whiteboard.

Control the writing at first. Don't go off and ask them to write on their own.

If you want their story, which is really what we want with writing, have them dictate. Just like you're going to read out loud to your kids, have them dictate their story to you, to a parent, to an older grade buddy.

Let them write their story and let the kids illustrate it.

Those are their words. It's just you've written them for them transitionally, just like you carry your child until they can walk.

You're not going to say, "You know what?

You need to walk and I want you to walk." No, we've got to give those scaffolds and those handholdings until they have been taught and had experience and practice to do it themselves.

So that's a big one and there's a lot of differing opinions, I guess. And the research that says yes, these kids accessing those sounds of the inventive spelling, I am perfectly fine with the inventive spelling as long as you fix it.

Now will you miss a few just like we miss a few words and kids are misreading?

Yeah. But not as a practice to go and write and write and write and never be able to get under your eyes what the actual correct spelling is.

Because you will find, and many of you on this call I'm sure the same way, you can read

All kinds of words that you can't spell very well. Okay?

And so that spelling is a much more challenging skill.

So it's so crucial, and I feel like everybody on my team, when we were doing in-person trainings until just a couple of years ago, they always wanted to be around when I got on the spelling thing because I cannot contain myself with this. The emotion won't stay down on this topic and how much kids are suffering and want to communicate, but they're going to write "The dog ran" in 10th grade. They're not going to write some flowery, beautiful, expressive stuff that they could speak.

And if they did, you wouldn't be able to read it.

The whole point of writing is so you can read it.

If you can't read what they wrote, it's a worthless cause, right?

So, thank you for asking that, and I do get really, "Ah!" on it.

But

it really is a plea to please help them.

They will be excited about it. You won't have kids crying when writing comes up. You won't have kids running to the bathroom, putting their head down, they have a stomachache, blah, blah.

Every time I'm in a classroom and that's the way that writing's done, I see that. And every teacher that I talk to, they see that with, not all their kids, but many of them have that frustration with that.

So,

hopefully that makes sense.

What else, Alyssa?

Okay. This is from Carrie Ellison, and it says, "I feel like some research points to the first sound because that's what kids are developmentally ready to look at the first sound, then first and last, then beginning, middle, and end. What is EBLI's approach to emergent readers and developing concept of word, which seems like a precursor to be able to decode?"

Yes, you're absolutely right, Carrie.

As that developing readers, emerging readers, they hear the first sound easiest, then the last sound, then the adjacent one.

Doesn't mean that they can't.

When we teach the first sound first, and we focus on the first sound, guess what they think, even if we never say it? The first sound is really important.

If I get that first sound right, I'm going to be good.

Now, I have never had,

and I think I can say never, even in preschool, where I can't

get kids to segment when I'm giving them a place to look where they listen, and

it's not letters. So when I say that, and I may even use their own

hands. So I may say to little ones, "Okay, we're going to do the word mop.

What's the first sound you hear me..." Notice what I'm pointing here.

I'm giving them a place to look because human beings are stronger visually than

they are auditorily. Okay? And when you're looking straight ahead, you're engaging

your auditory sense, so you're going to increase your auditory. Yay!

All kinds of good stuff happening.

So I'm going to say to-- well, I probably would do the word am or something like that first, or it, or whatever. So I'd say, "What's the first sound in it?" And they're going to say it and it and it and it and whatever.

So I'm going to say, "What do you hear me say right here in iiiit?" So I'm not segmenting it, but I'm really slow blending. "What do you hear me say right here?

It." And if they keep saying it, it, it, I might squeeze their finger.

"Say the sound I'm saying when I squeeze it." "It." Let's say they say it again, because guess what? Some of them will.

And this is the last line of defense, and I do it a lot with little kids and senior citizens, interestingly.

I'll say, "Say I." Because you know what I did right there?

I said, "Say I." You just said it out of your mouth, and you just segmented to that sound. Okay? And the first sound is easiest to hear.

"What's the next sound here in it?"

They say it, it, it, whatever. I say, "What sound right here?

It."

And if they keep saying it or something, who knows what, I'm going to say, "Say t."

And they say t. And then I'll say, "Now say after me, i." They say i.

"T, t, it, it." So now it's come out of their mouth,

it's gone into their neural pathways, even if it was parroting.

We do a lot of parroting with little ones at first.

So if I'm doing the word mop, what's the first sound in mop?

They're going to say m, if we've taught them to segment, and then they're going to say p. Because that's developmentally appropriate.

So the beautiful thing with CVC words is the middle sound is a vowel.

The vowels are the volume. You can hold them until you faint. All right?

So they can really, really hear. So what's the next sound here?

Ma.

And they are going to say a. Okay? And if they don't, you do it again until you almost faint. And if they still don't, you say, "Say a." All right, now tell me the sounds in mop. What's our first sound?

M,

a, p. And if they don't, they still say that p.

Let's say they say m, p. Now say, "You know what? You're so right.

There's a p right here, but there's another sound right here.

What sound here in ma?"

Isn't that irritating? But I have held it for probably 15 seconds before.

And they get it. So I never, ever, one time in

25 years, not once, have done the first sound and then the rest of the word, ever.

So the research shows that,

and a lot of this comes from the fact that I was just ignorant or naive or

something. That's just what I did, and it worked, so I just kept doing it, and it

worked even better. And then teachers were replicating it, and everybody was doing

it. So what does it do? I have never yet found a teacher that said,

"Oh, I have so much extra time. Can you give me some more things to do so I could

fill it in? Some more stuff?" No, you guys run out of time all the time. So what is my job is to free up time for you so you do have extra time to do other things and to move your kids further and faster and all that kind of good stuff.

So could you do a whole bunch of songs and dances about a bunch of things?

Of course you can. But typically in a school day, there's not all this extra free time

to do that. So if we can narrow down, I'm going to talk a lot about that and the phonemic awareness thing, too, because an awful lot of time is used on that, that could be done a lot more efficiently.

Definitely got to be done, really important, but

I'm positive that it's not necessary

because I've never done it, and I've taught many

kids and adults

who have had an awful lot of other instruction, both in

school and in remediation and in private

tutoring and all, that didn't move them to where they needed to be, and when

they worked with us, it did. Okay? So sometimes I think that the

instruction that we do, the effectiveness of it is because

I didn't know anything else. I didn't have any other stuff that was...

I was a nurse, for goodness sakes. I learned this stuff. This worked really well.

My kid learned to read in three hours.

This worked So we don't need to add on some extra stuff to make it

take longer. Right? So I would not do the beginning sound, then the last.

Now, though that research is right, they do hear that first sound easiest, and then so this is the deal. If they say "Mmm," and then they say "At," this is the cool thing there. This is what I do. At is two sounds.

Guess what happens? They can hear the first sound first.

What's the first sound in at? A. Cool.

We just made that the first sound. No big deal. Okay?

So we have all kinds of tips and tricks

to get this out of their mouth and make them successful with it, and to move them really far and really fast. Okay? Which is really fun. Hopefully, that makes sense.

All right, Alyssa, anything else?

I'll go a little bit over if you guys want to stay, otherwise we'll have it on the recording too. Yeah.

From Kimberly McLean, she said: "I have been trained to have students say each sound as they write to help them retain sound-letter patterns.

I'm currently taking Letters and OG, and there's an emphasis of saying letter names to help them retain the spelling of a word.

I'm strong in my opinion that students need to say sounds as they write.

What are your thoughts? Is there any research to support saying sounds over letter names when spelling?"

Tons, Kimberly. I love you. You would love Evelyn because I would never, ever have a child say the letter name as they write.

Why would you say W

when you're writing a W? That has nothing to do with the sound that goes with it. So I don't know, and there is that correlation research. It's not causation. Is somebody getting their master's degree or your doctorate or something? I have a whole list of things I want researched. Because I know what they will do and what they can do. But saying the sounds as you write is one of the cornerstone things of Evely. All of our kids, regardless of age, the doctors I've taught, the lawyers I've taught, everybody says their sounds as they write, because that drills that information into your neural pathways. You're seeing it, you're hearing it, you're saying it, you're touching it. I would never teach a letter name while a child is learning. I never have. So, you are on the right path, and I would keep on that path, and if I were you, unless you wanted to slow down their progress, I would not do the letter name piece. Now again, is it going to kill them? No. Is it going to slow them down? Probably. Is it going to harm some of them? Probably. It's going to confuse some of them because you'll know. Check out an older child, especially if they struggle. They have such letter name interference that it really impedes them being able to decode. So, I would never do it. That's just my experience and my opinion. Okay.

Ready for another?

Yeah.

Candy Swift: "For language learners, I feel picture/word connection are important. What are your thoughts about this support?"

You are 100%.

When you have somebody who is a ELL student, they don't know the vocabulary. One of my favorite books to teach with that is "Richard Scarry's Book of Words." It's a book that I used to use with my own children in preschool. I love that book, too.

I don't know why, but all those little cartoony kind of people and stuff.

But they have, "We're in the kitchen, we're in the playground." So here's clock.

So this is what I would do. This is a clock. Okay? Now we're going to do clock.

What are the sounds in clock? C-l-ock.

Here's the spelling, say as you write. Let's talk about clock.

You have to do a lot more vocabulary with ELL.

So for sure, but I'm not saying read by looking at the picture.

Like

the clock was on the wall, and there's a picture of a clock, don't do

that, like they used to do in those highlight magazines. No.

But talk about the clock and then apply it

into the context of the saying as you write and the spelling stuff, and

then

say it to them in a sentence, or then you tell me a sentence. Okay?

The best way to learn, making mistakes, the one that nobody really likes too much, but it's a good one. We encourage making mistakes.

Teaching somebody else and discovery.

So getting them to discover, getting them to teach it to you, you modeling, having them tell you a sentence with clock in it, all those types of things to get that vocabulary really moving.

That's a huge interleaving and intertwined instruction because we're teaching sound to symbol, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, writing, all kinds of stuff.

The more things you can teach at once, especially if you've taught the information explicitly, the better. So yes, get those pictures with those ELL

kids. You have to. But that's different than looking at the picture to read the words. Okay? I just want to be clear about that.

Okay. This says, I'm assuming this is a name altogether.

Isa Linko? "Why show fixes for spelling on a whiteboard instead of paper?"

Oh, that's a great question. Because it's less traumatic for the children, and it's a lot easier for the adult. Okay? You can do a fix with a whiteboard marker right above. This is the spelling for A right here.

You erase the letter A there, they put in the A-I, boom, done.

And so kids cannot stand

at all, and you all know this if you're a teacher, even if you're a parent, they do not like their stuff all marked up. They do not like their stuff all crossed off.

They do not like their paper messed up. They don't like that.

So I say our whiteboard is our sloppy copy.

Now at first, we just write on the whiteboard, but then what we do, they write on the whiteboard, they do their fixes, they transfer it to paper. So it's a process.

It's just like if I asked you guys to run a marathon, raise your hand if you could do it. The only ones who are going to raise their hand have already run a marathon, right? I could not run a marathon. You could not run a marathon if you'd not done it. We have to train. It's a process. We have to get there.

There's a lot of steps along the way.

Do not ask kids to write, which reading is one of the most challenging things that we can do as humans.

Writing is even about twice as hard.

So we're asking them to sit down as a five-year-old and write.

That would be like me saying to you guys, "Hop in that airplane right there and please fly me to California because I need to go there."

Not a good plan. I don't know how to do it.

It's not possible. It won't go well.

Now, maybe there's a few people that could make it happen, and they could fly that airplane and land us safely, and we'd get there.

I wouldn't be willing to risk it, but there are a few kids that can do fairly well. Some kids do teach themselves to read.

It's pretty rare, and they're probably not to their highest potential, too.

So why would we do that? No, let's teach them what they need to know so that they can do it well and accurately, so they can get us in that

airplane safely off the ground and back onto the ground to

California. Right? Writing is a lot harder than flying an

airplane. Learning to write is a lot harder.

The whole writing process, the whole spelling of the words, so much of it.

So this is what we want. In my house visual you guys saw, reading and

writing, they're the people that are going to live in the house.

We want to live in the house. I've got a bathroom remodel going on right now.

It's driving me crazy because it's been four weeks, and I'm like, "Oh my God, I

want my bathroom back, please. It's in my bedroom."

However, I'm not saying, "Could you please forgo the pipes in the wall there so I

could get in the bathroom quicker?" Or, "Don't put the shower on doors because we

kind of need those." So I have to be patient enough to let the

process unfold to get there. Then I'm going to be really excited about it.

We get impatient. We want them to read, and we want them to write.

I want you to fly the plane. We have to go through the process to get to it.

I want my bathroom done. I have to go through the process to get to it. Okay?

So please be mindful

as far as that goes.

All right. What else, Alyssa? We'll go through-

Okay. From Karen Pellegrino,

"Why do you not teach the syllabication rules?

Can you explain how students know where to divide

the words?"

Not in five minutes

or 10 or three hours, really. The EBLI instruction is a

scaffolded process that teaches phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, handwriting, writing, and spelling, and it does it in a way that

builds on each other. So we start with one-syllable words.

We start with CVC words and CCVC, of course, with the little kids, and then we build on all of that. We move to multi-syllable words.

So it's a whole process of that. Why don't I teach multi-syllable

rules? First of all, I didn't even know there was such a thing,

really. Except for some things that I read about it, it didn't make sense to me.

Now, I figure if it doesn't make sense to me,

I probably can't teach it for sure, and most likely for sure, if I

don't know how to teach it, I'm going to mumble through something, and the kids aren't going to be able to figure it out because I don't even know what I'm talking

about. Same with that bossy R or controlled R or whatever it's called. I don't even know what you're talking about.

How do you teach that to me so that I know that here, this is

ear, bear, it's ear, right? Earn, it's

earn. It's three different sounds there for E-A-R.

How are you going to teach that to me when you tell me it's bossy R?

I don't know how to do that. So I don't understand it myself, so I know I can't

teach it to anybody. So I never even pursued the syllable rules because as I was

researching reading, they made no sense to me whatsoever, and I figured there must be a better way. I'm hoping there's a better way, and then there was.

So how I teach the syllable stuff is how the words fall out of your mouth.

So physical. Okay? We teach it both with reading and with

spelling. Now, I typically teach it spelling first, but we also have it where

they're reading like I showed you some of those words we were talking about.

It's a process that's way too complex for me to be able to

explain it, and it's also one that is very

hands-on, so the teachers are actually doing it, and I do a lot of

it in our trainings. I teach your kids so that the teachers get

exposure, and the

kids get experience with it, so that when the teacher's teaching it, and they're

still at that sensorimotor level... That's another thing.

You go try to teach EBLI without having any instruction like we ask kids to read

and write. Not possible. You just can't do it.

You've got to have the process. You've got to be allowed to be at that sensorimotor

level and be slow and clunky at it, and then to build on it.

So I don't teach those rules because I don't know them, I don't teach those rules

because I've never needed to, and I don't teach those rules because we've gotten

faster, greater results than I've ever heard of

with rules. And I wouldn't do it because they're not

consistent. I wouldn't do that to kids.

When we tell kids in a classroom that this is the rule, you don't

throw stuff at the teacher or whatever, you don't hit the kid next to you.

We don't say, "This is a rule. Now, the exceptions are Tuesday from 10:00 to 12:00, and Friday from 1:00 to 3:00," or whatever.

We don't say, "Here's the rules, and here's the exceptions, so you have to remember the rules, then you have to remember the exceptions, and you have to remember the time of the exceptions, and when we do the exceptions." How are you supposed to do that, and you're seven or five or whatever?

If it doesn't make sense to me, I think that I have a benefit because I don't have a background in education. I have more of a scientific background as a neonatal intensive care nurse, so I don't have any things that are in my head that I had to undo. Just like kids who guess, they know that guessing isn't working for them. They know that they're reading poorly because they guess.

They guess so well because they're so automatic at it because they've done it so many times, it just happens. It's just like us breathing, almost.

So they have to bring into their consciousness to change it.

Unfortunately for you dear teachers, you have the same problem, bless your hearts. You've been doing stuff this whole way,

and then I'm saying, "Do this." And you're like, "What?" Even if I think maybe this makes sense, and I might-- It's not going to be like tomorrow, you're just going to do that, and then you're going to do it every time.

It's not going to happen. That's not how humans learn.

It doesn't matter if you're 40 or four. That's not how humans learn.

It's a process that you go through type of thing, and when you have

something that's a habit that you want to shift to a different habit,
you have this neural pathway that has a rut in it.

And so you have to fill up that rut while you're actually making these connections
for this other neural pathway to make the rut there. Okay?

So it's not a boom, let's just do this in a few minutes type of thing.

Does that make sense? All right, one more question, Alyssa.

Do we have any questions? Do we have a lot of questions?

There are a bunch, but-

Yeah. I can deal with them. Okay.

Okay.

One says, this is Lisa

Glavchik. "I'm from Ohio, teach second, and lost about
how to go about teaching this way as I move from a whole language
mythology."

Okay.

Methodology.

Bless your heart, Lisa, and thank you for being here anyway, too.

And you know what? We're all learning.

None of us are not learning, and if we're not learning, it's dead. We're dead.

That's it. If we're not open to learning and continuing to
learning, it's time to be six feet under, right?

So Lisa, bless your heart because you, again, have
all of these things that you know and you've learned and you've done.

So how do we do this

In a way, so how do you teach this way?

I would say to start, really, is to educate yourself.

And I'm going to share my screen really quickly because I want to show you a couple things. Hopefully, my website is pulled up here somewhere.

Usually, I have 25,000 things. Okay, how do I get out of here?

Go away.

Okay. There we go.

There's a couple things I would like for you to do.

First, the number one thing I'd like for you to do is be really easy on yourself and excited for yourself that you know that you're going to be doing some new learning, and be open to start doing a little bit of changing. What I would say is go to our webinars right here. You're in second grade.

Let me look at this so I can give you some recommendations here that would be the best stuff.

The pretend reading might be good.

The guessing one is going to be a good one kind of just to start with.

Where is it? Slay the Guessing Monster.

I think any Ebly people, if you have some stuff, because my brain starts going tired here. If you have some stuff to put in there. The thing I really want you to do is over here.

Okay, I just got it. It came to my head. Come on, Ebly, for you. All right.

When you go over here, Lisa, Ebly Online Student Lessons, until June, these are lessons that I did when schools closed down last March for 100 to 125 kindergartners. I did one for first graders, second graders.

I want you to do either this one, maybe even this one, but there's 16 lessons, there's 45 minutes long.

You can turn them on and have me teach your kids.

They need whiteboards and markers, and you can kind of facilitate.

You don't have to know what I'm doing or how I'm doing it, but this will give you an idea. It's free.

All of these kids that did this, they were from all over the world, and most of them didn't even know what Ebly was.

So it's from the beginning. I'm teaching them.

I can do Ebly in my sleep, so you don't have to be at that sensory motor level stuff. This would be a great way for you to get an idea. Okay?

The other thing I want you to do is go over here to Resources.

There's two things that I want you to do. This is your homework, all right?

One of them is this Teaching Reading.

It is

At a Loss for Words by Emily Hanford. Listen.

Do the listening piece, don't read it.

I mean, you can read it after you listen, but listen first, and at the end, there's about 50 some references. If you want to deep dive, you can go there,

but if you're feeling overwhelmed, don't. Just listen to that.

The other thing that I would like for you to do, under Resources, is go right here where it says The Science of Reading.

This is my favorite, and plus I love these people in Tennessee.

They did this Science of Reading document.

So it's going to give you kind of a

foundation of why would I be even motivated to do the work of

changing what I'm doing, okay? It's a good question to ask yourself and

educate yourself. And it takes a little bit of time, but not a lot.

This is less than 20 pages long with the text, and you can see there's charts,

there's not too much text on it. They do such a beautiful job, and then there's

references at the end, too, about what do we need to do and how do we

need to do it? And if you email me, nora@ebly.com,

when my brain is fresh tomorrow and I haven't been here since 7:00 in the morning,

I can give you some other

suggestions that won't overwhelm you, because if you're overwhelmed, you're

going to stop just like any sane human would do.

Okay? So

just start thinking about sound

and

doing step-by-sounds. Watch those videos that I'm doing, and get a whiteboard

yourself and do them with your students.

That, I think, is going to be the least traumatic way, the

way for you to really
get a whole lot of experience without all of the
time and energy and cognitive load that it's going to take for you
as you're shifting. And also, I would say join The Science of Reading
Facebook page. You have to be a discerning consumer, for
sure, because it's got
almost 80,000 educators on there, and most of them are new, too.
Sometimes it can be a little bit overwhelming.
So do that if you would want to, but
it's easy to get down a rabbit hole
there. So maybe start these other things.
Another thing, write this down if you will.
Google "Sink or Swim: The Appearance of Reading," Lindsay Kemeny,
it's a blog by her. And
it's a teacher who used to teach balanced literacy, and her son was
dyslexic, and then she moved to the science of reading stuff.
So that also is another one. So, just some things.
Those are my three things that I usually recommend to people, the At a Loss for
Words, The Science of Reading from Tennessee, and the Sink or Swim.
So those would be good places to start.
And then find a support group,
and a clan that there's an awful lot of people
that are like you, that are new to this, that are overwhelmed, that are

a little bit like, "Whoa."

So that's really, really common. So just be mindful of that, too.

And thank you for being here. I really appreciate that a lot.

All right. Melissa, are we good? I've kept you guys almost 20 minutes over.

My apologies. And thank you for being here, and thank you

for letting me do what I love to do best, which is to share what I know and to

teach and to learn from you guys and all that good stuff, too.

So hopefully I'll see you next month with a phonemic awareness one.

I'm actually going to teach, like I said ... Lisa, be sure you come to that.

I'm going to actually teach you exactly, well, for your struggling readers anyway,

second grade. But

just what you can do for your kids, and it'll be good practice, too.

So have a good evening, and it's almost

April. Showers bringing May flowers.

That's exciting, too, and thank you for spending your evening with me.

I appreciate it a whole bunch, and I will look at all of your questions,

and I will-

Thank you.

Yeah. Who was that? Let me see who that child was.

Me.

Oh, hi. Hey. What are you doing awake?

What time is it in Malaysia?

8:00 in the morning?

Is it morning there? Yes, I'm so excited to see you.

How's your reading going? This is a little guy that was on my lessons last March, and his sister, who would come on our third-grade lessons at midnight. Huh. Are you doing a good reading job?

Yes.

Yeah? Very good. Keep up the good work, sweetheart.

I'm so glad to see you. Thank you for saying hi.

What? You're welcome. You're welcome, but

I haven't played the Ebly game in a long time.

Oh, you haven't. Well, maybe you're done with them, you think?

No, I just done

all the games on one of it.

Did you do the one with the space, the apps?

Did you do the Ebly Space or the Ebly Island?

Ebly Island.

Oh. You could do Ebly Space. How old are you?

Are you fi-

Ebly Space.

You have to get on to Ebly Space. I bet you're ready. Tell me how old you are now.

What?

How old are you?

Six.

Six. Oh, you're ready for Ebly Space.

Go for it, and have your mom send me a message of how it's going, okay?

Can I show you? Okay. Say bye-bye. Come on. Bye-bye.

Oh, look at you. Keep up the good job.

All right, thanks guys. I'll see you next month, everybody.

Thanks so much for joining.