

You're just hanging out waiting. If you'd tell us where you're at,
and what brought you here tonight.

Why did you want to come and hear me talk about pretend reading?

So, I always love the chat is when-- I don't pay attention to it as I'm going,

Alyssa will pay attention to that,

and Shannon, but I always go and read them.

So I appreciate feeling connected with all of you,

so share away. I like that part.

Ashley and Ann, all kinds of fun. John Corcoran's on here.

There's Molly,

Andrea, Susan, all kinds of fun people.

And Suzanne.

Beautiful. Thank you, guys. See some of you

signing on in there. We got about one more minute, and we are going to

officially get going.

Which is fun.

And thank you, by the way, for sharing your evening with me.

I appreciate that a bunch.

Hey, Jen.

How are you all?

All my happy faces here.

All right. I am going to

get started. So if you're just popping on, do share your name.

Well, you've got your name over there, but share where you're from
and why you're here. What is it? Are you a teacher?

Are you a parent? Are you a grandparent?

Are you just interested in literacy? Why are you interested in pretend reading?

Because that's always of interest to me.

And I'm really happy that you're here. I'm Nora Shabazzi.

I am the founder and president of EBLI, which is Evidence-Based Literacy

Instruction. It is a system that is effective and

efficient, and based on what the research says you need to do to teach anyone to
read to their highest potential. And we train teachers, and we

have lessons, and we really

do a lot really to make teachers' lives easier and makes kids' life easier, to
really accelerate their learning in reading, writing, and spelling.

So, that is what we put our focus on, and

what we're tremendously passionate about.

Our byline is to teach the world to read, and we're really very serious about it.

So it's pretty exciting stuff. I also own a reading

center here in Flushing. That's where I'm at right now, our EBLI headquarters.

We have clients that we see here that are

from all over the country, actually all over the world.

But we see some in person, some online.

That's a small percentage of what we do.

Mostly what we do is we train teachers, classroom teachers, remediation teachers,

and help them

get all their kids highly literate.

So that is my tremendous passion. My background is actually in nursing. I was a neonatal intensive care nurse, for those of you who don't know me, for about a decade, until the late '90s, when my middle daughter was a struggling reader.

Very good at math, 90th percentile in math on the Iowa test, and a year below grade level in reading

when she was in second grade. So that's what brought me to this wonderful world of being a literacy-obsessed champion, I guess.

So I love to share what I know, what we do, all of that kind of good stuff. So tonight, we're going to be talking about pretend reading. It's a topic that's near and dear to my heart because, as you'll hear, my daughter was a pretend reader.

And we see lots of pretend readers that come to our reading center, and I know any of you in education see this a good bit too, so we're going to talk a bunch about that.

And we have some surprises for you, too.

So I'm going to go ahead and share my screen and get my PowerPoint up here, and we will get going.

All right.

Here we go. All right. So our topic tonight is pretend reading.

How does a child get good grades but read poorly?

We just had Shannon,

somebody on our EBLI team, had a client that we have that really could've graduated long ago, but his dad wants him to keep coming, and he comes every other week.

And

he was frustrated because he said, "Why am I coming here if I get all As?" And even when he's not reading to his potential, and he's definitely not spelling to his potential, and he's getting a little bit frustrated. So she was just sharing with me today some of that conversation that she had with him, which goes along the lines of this. So what we're going to be up to tonight is we're going to talk about what is pretend reading. How do you know if a child or a student of yours is pretend reading? Because they're pretty tricky about it.

Even the little ones, but especially the older ones.

And you get to experience-- I love doing this because when I do present at conferences and stuff, a lot of times what I'm going to do with you guys to experience pretend reading is something that I do there, and it's really one of my favorite activities to do.

And how do we start to undo these pretend reading habits so that your kids are really reading and not pretend reading. And then we're going to have questions and answers, okay? So if you're new and you're just jumping on, I see a bunch of people

still coming on. Thank you for being here.

Be sure you put in the chat where you're from

and what brought you here to us tonight. And thank you for being here.

So tonight, we have something that we don't typically do.

We are going to give out five free EBLI apps.

We have three different apps that we do, and so we're going to give five people a

choice of one of our apps. And how you win this is that

you just ask a question. Now, not like, "How's the weather in Michigan?" Or

something like that. A question about what I'm presenting, okay?

And what we're talking about in the chat.

And we're going to stop

that at 7:45, and Shannon is going to

gather all those names, and she is going to share with

Alyssa who the winners are. And then we'll have you guys

email us, and we'll get you information about our different apps, so you can choose

which one, and we can

get that to you. So we're pretty excited about that.

All right.

So what is pretend reading?

Pretend reading is when kids appear to be adept readers,

but really they're not. I think of Colleen, my middle daughter, who

was a struggling reader, and she played, I always call it the Ice

Cream Man Truck song.

I think it's Scott Joplin. She could play that like she was a maestro.

At the piano recital, she was like the queen bee,

phenomenal piano player. The child could play no other song.

She couldn't read music. She didn't know it. She'd memorized that song.

She also would memorize with reading, you'll hear in a minute.

So she could play that really, really well, but every year it was the same song,

and that was her song that she memorized, and she was very good at that one song.

But it's the same thing with the books.

One time I testified at a Senate subcommittee hearing in Lansing

about reading, and when I came up to where this

was happening, in the capital, there was a little first grader

reading with her teacher, and I was kind of talking to him and I said,

"What is she doing?" "Well, we've been working on this book for a couple of

weeks, and she's read it and read it so that she can read it in front of

the subcommittee hearing people fluently." And I'm like,

"Huh." So basically, not even basically, what she's done is

she's memorized it. So pretend readers can look

like they're reading, and they can read all the words accurately and all of that

kind of good stuff, but

it's typically more of a memorization thing.

With Colleen, one of her very favorite tricks ever was to

read

a book and look at the ceiling, and her favorite book to do that with, she's going

to have a baby, actually, she's due on Tuesday, and her very favorite book is "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" And I just bought it for her little baby boy to be. But we would go to this restaurant, and they had that book in the little book basket, and she would look at the ceiling, "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? I see a whatever. Look at me." She'd turn the page.

She knew exactly who was coming, what was going on, never looked at the book a single time. That is not reading, okay?

We would pull out those same words, even the same sentences that were in the book, and she could not read those, okay? She couldn't read them accurately, and she certainly couldn't read anything that wasn't something that she'd already memorized.

So you want to be mindful of your kids and what they're doing, and we'll talk about how you know if they're pretend reading or not, too.

So
this is another--

Oops, somebody's muted. Can you mute everybody, Alyssa?

Thank you. Another thing with pretend reading, what happens is your kids will rely on the pictures to figure out the words, and this is actually, I have this set of books right here. This is a Level A, and what these books are like, "I like to eat a rectangle, and I like to eat a square, and I like to eat a triangle and a

circle," and it was all these shapes.

But this is a very beginning kindergarten book, Level A, okay?

So the kid, these little very beginners in kindergarten would have to

memorize, "I like to eat A." Now, I was thinking they might look at this and

say piece of pizza, or I don't know, graham c*****r or

whatever, but it's about shapes. So then they're supposed to say, "Rectangle." Now,

we all know that a kindergartner that's just at the beginning of kindergarten is

not going to be able to read the word rectangle. All right?

Even reading the word it, and, an, and cat are challenging for those kids because

they haven't been taught that yet.

But when we try to bypass that code and get them to

look like real readers, what we inadvertently do is

we

help them create inefficient strategies that are really hard to

break. All right? Looking at the picture, guessing the word, and they'll say all

kinds of stuff with these types of books. Colleen used to do that, too.

She would just say whatever popped to mind or look at the picture and say a totally

different word because, of course, she wasn't able to read those words.

So we, at our center, and also we encourage

our EBLI-trained teachers to cover up the picture.

We read the words, not the picture.

So have the kids read the word, then we'll uncover the picture to see, did they do

a good job with this illustration for what we read

in the book. Okay? So that picture thing oftentimes

lets these kids get away with making you think that they're really

reading, when really they're not.

They're relying on those pictures.

Also, like Colleen did, reading the books without looking at the words.

If they're looking away from the words, if they're looking at your face, if they're

looking up at the ceiling, that's not reading, okay?

Basically, it's a speech is what it is. Okay?

So those are some of the main things that you will see.

I've had parents tell us, too, that for parent-teacher conferences,

their kids will come with them, and they will read a book, and the teachers say,

"Yeah, they've been practicing that for a week or two or three weeks," to have

it appear that they're actually reading that book and turning the pages at the

right places when indeed they really are not.

So that's some pretend reading stuff.

Again, more people coming in, I see.

Please be sure to put your name and why you're here.

Also, we're going to have some free app giveaways at the end at

7:45, so you get those by asking questions in the

chat. At 7:45, Alyssa's going to be feeding me the questions, and I'll answer them

all in one fell swoop.

So some other traits of pretend reading are kids that substitute a word that

has a similar meaning,

or they will substitute a word that starts with the same letter, but it has no meaning that's similar at all.

So backpack for book bag, similar meaning, right?

Horse for pony, similar meaning, but they don't even start with the same letter and not the same meaning. And reading is talk written down.

So somebody is talking to you, even though they're not there with you, most likely, when you're reading their stuff. So we have to read what they're saying to us in their words, okay? Just like when we talk to somebody, they say their stuff in their words. So we want to read the words accurately as they are written on the page, okay? And this is another thing. This was my Colleen.

She's the sweetest human being still, except for when I tried to get her to read books that she hadn't memorized already.

She would throw them across-- She'd turn into this little crazy child.

She'd throw the books across the room. She would have nothing to do with it.

She'd have a stomach ache. She'd cry.

And so we're like, "Ugh, we're not going to be reading any new, unfamiliar books." Because she didn't have what she needed to apply the code and be able to get through those books, and read the words accurately, and then understand them.

So watch for those things. "I don't know that word." We hear that at our reading center all the time.

Most of the kids and adults that we work with here are struggling readers.

Sometimes we'll do ACT prep and that type of thing, but the majority are kids who

are struggling and are subliterate.

So we hear a lot, "I don't know that word." Kids have

this mindset that, oh, we're supposed to know all these words, and if we don't

know, we haven't memorized them yet, then there's no way that we can know that word

until we memorize it. And the problem with this is the average human

can memorize about 2,000 to 3,000 words.

That takes you to about a middle of second grade into third-grade reading level.

If you have a good memory,

you may get a little bit higher than that, but not much more than a fourth or

fifth-grade level before you plateau, and you're not going to really go any

further because you can't pour any more into your brain to memorize those words.

And by the time we're in high school or adults, you're supposed to have basically

20,000 to 80,000 words, so we say about 50,000 words in your reading

vocabulary. So if you can only memorize 5,000, we see where the problem comes,

right? So that leaves 45,000 words on average that you

either have to say, "I don't know," or you have to guess, or you have to avoid.

So those reading issues become more and more

profound as kids get older, okay? And even into

adulthood. So we want to

really

be mindful and pay attention to that "I don't know the word." Guessing.

Oh, guessing. I have a lot of gray hair under here, and it's from

all the trying to undo that guessing monster.

Guessing is a horrific strategy that's easy.

It's easy to look at the first sound and try to guess if you're a reader,

but it's not at all effective. All right?

Very rarely do you guess a word and get it correct.

All right? But it's a habit that gets really deeply ingrained really quickly,

and it's also a challenge to undo. So that's why with our very beginning

readers, let's don't even go with the guessing stuff.

And a lot of instruction will actually say to the

kids, "Look at the first sound and guess." So we don't want to do that because very

rarely does it end up

with what you need to read. And then, of course, comprehension is shot too.

I gave a couple of examples here. Said for and, we see that

all the time. All the time. Kids do it. Now we've got a couple of the same letters.

It's a real high-frequency word, even though it's not the same number of letters.

And of course, it makes no sense when you say the word said instead of the word

and. We know they're not comprehending, but it's a really common

mistake to make, which is why, of course, we always teach all of our sight words,

too, by sound and not memorizing them as whole words either.

And then the more common one with a guess is typically they'll say the first sound

and say any word that starts with that sound. Okay?

And very rarely is it the word that it actually is.

So blueberry for basketball is an example of that.

All right? So watching out for that.

So what happens with our kids when they get in these upper elementary grades or high school or adults? They start to change how they deal with this.

They become aware that they are

not getting this. And often kids think they're the only ones, which is

so interesting because only 35% of our fourth graders are proficient

in reading on the national test in the United States, so they certainly are not the

only ones, but that's the perception a lot of times.

So then they start to go undercover and they hide, and they have

all kinds of ways that they can avoid reading.

So they avoid assignments that require reading.

They're going to do the make a diorama or, I don't know, act out a play or

do a video or something instead of reading. Okay?

And a lot of things. I went to a credit recovery,

I don't know, workshop day. I was invited to that from

this

secondary school principals organization.

And what they talked about is we have eight different ways that kids can get these

credits that they need to recover because they haven't passed their classes.

And the guy, and I was right in the front row, and he said, "This is the great

thing. We know they can't read, so seven out of the eight things that they need to

do to do this on the computer don't require any reading at all." So we

know that that's going on with these kids.

But again, how do we get these kids highly literate if we then avoid reading?

And the kids figure that out even a lot quicker, I think, than a lot of times the adults do with that. Lying and cheating, and I know John Corcoran is on here, and I've got his book over here, "The Teacher Who Couldn't Read." Same with Nelson Lauver.

Kids have to resort to lying and cheating because they don't know what to do for 30 hours a week in school, when they're being asked to do something that they don't know how to do, and they don't know what to do about it. All right?

So there's a lot of that that happens, even though they don't want to lie and cheat. They don't really see when they get in the older grades, you'll see a lot of that happens. They get things read to them, and sometimes that even happens, if they're in remediation or special ed or whatever.

That's one of the things that we do is we read the content to the kids. Again, gets them the content, but doesn't help them be able to figure out-- it's giving them a fish instead of teaching them how to fish.

Behavior problems, this is a big one.

You see a lot of behavior problems start to happen, because especially when reading comes around, if a child that's a struggler and subliterate thinks that they're going to be called on to read, they would much rather knock the kid next to them and have to go to the principal's office or get yelled at and have to go sit in the corner or

whatever, than that's preferable to being called on

and humiliating themselves. So that's something that we see a lot.

And then we have a lot, of course, where parents and friends will help out

these older kids, too. But again, none of those things move

them to where they then become highly literate.

So that's where that problem is.

So, I want for you guys to have the experience of what

pretend reading kind of feels like.

And I want you to pay attention to how you feel when we're doing this. All right?

And I'm going to have you use some of the strategies that are really common,

and commonly taught to kids. I want you to look at the picture, I

want you to look at the first sound and see what you think might make sense, okay,

so using your context clues. And you're going to have, I think

there's four words in this first little passage here, and there's a

really spooky clown picture, so I apologize about that.

But there's four words, and I want you to put in the

chat what you think, based on that first sound,

okay, what you think the words might be. All right?

So I want you to be sure and do that. And before I go there too, those of you guys

that keep coming in, I love that there's so many people that keep popping in.

I want you to please introduce yourself, where you're from, why you're

here, and ask any questions that you have so that you

can be part of our drawing for the free Edly apps.

So ask questions that you have about what I'm talking about here.

All right, so here is our pretend reading.

Nasty clown, apologize for him. So, this is what you're going to do.

I want you to read this. The first letter is the same as what's really in the word, and I want you to read this and write in the chat what you think these words are. Okay?

So there's four words that you may not know in this passage, and I want you to write what you think those are in the chat.

So I'm going to give you a minute to do that.

Okay. I'm going to give you a second to pop in the chat

and write what you think those words are.

Now, typically, we want these kids to go really quick, right? Because we're basically wanting them to get the comprehension of it, so we don't want them to stop and...

I like that. This is my favorite part because I love to see what you guys are saying. But we don't want to stop and try to dilly-dally around the words or whatever.

So typically, it's just like we want you to get through, get the context, and figure out what you think is going on. Okay?

So go ahead and put in the chat what you think those words that are unfamiliar to you are.

And I'm just taking a peek at them.

All right. Ooh, some good stuff here.

Fuzzy, funny outfit, scary and silly, a white
mask, scary strong, frivolous. I like
them.

Silly and stupid, frivolous, fuzzy gown, silly and scary.

Nice job, guys. Way to go. All right.

Great. Okay.

Beautiful. Thank you for all of you who participated, and you can still continue to
do that. But now I want to teach you-- I've created a code.

I made up a code here with these words, and now I'm going to teach you the code so
that you can actually decipher it.

Just like if you were in

the CIA, they have a code, and then they teach you the code, and then you can
figure out the code, so you can decipher it. Same idea here.

All right. So, whoopsie. Here's our code.

So, here is your sentence, and here is our code.

The first sound is the same as what you would have in English.

So this word starts with a /f/, this one starts with a /a/, well, that letter,

I should say, that one or this one. So all those letters at the very beginning are
the same as what you would have in the actual word.

And here is what you do with the remaining letters.

You use the letters that come before it in the alphabet.

So if it's a letter B, that's actually the code for the letter A.

So for example, down here, the word pen would be written with the /p/ because that's the same as here, and then the /a/ is going to be an F because that's the letter that comes after this, /a/, right, the S before that. And the O is going to be the N because it's N and then O. All right? So that is your code.

The letters after the first one are the letter that comes right before them in the alphabet.

Okay, so that's the code, and I'm going to have you try again knowing that code. You've got to go to the letter that's right before these in the alphabet and see if you can figure out those

words. What are those words? And we'll check out and see if you have different thoughts on that.

Okay.

Yep, and there you go.

We've got some decoding. Sam is decoding, isn't he? Yep, good job, Sam.

You can figure it out. Now, it's going to take you a little bit longer, though, because you actually have to apply the code.

And at first, it takes a lot longer, so don't worry about that.

That's

completely normal whenever we are learning something new, and especially a code.

Especially the English code, which is really crazy.

My code's a lot easier than English, by the way.

So, very good. Ashley's coming on.

Rhonda's got her code going. Good job, you guys.

Molly's decoding

my nice little new language that I shared with you. Beautiful job.

Way to go, Michelle.

Thank you, guys. I love it when you participate. It makes my day.

All right, so this is a simple code.

This is a code that's like on the back of the cereal box. All right?

And I used to love those codes, too. I'm a code kind of person.

So,

you're going to figure it out. So with doing that, what you've got

here, we have it's a funky outfit,

which made him look scary and sweaty. Okay?

So because the letters, you're just looking at the letter that comes right before

these letters in the alphabet. So that's how you're dealing with our code.

All right, so now we have a cute picture,

and the whole sentence is going to be coded in

the Nora language. So I want you to see, those of you especially who

did the decoding and were like, some of you might be like, "Oh, this is making me a

little uncomfortable," and that's okay if you don't want to

write your stuff or whatever, but do write it down on paper and see how you figure

it out. So this next one with this cute little kitty,

I want you to see about decoding the whole thing. All right?

So again, if it's a letter C The

actual letter it is in the word is going to be a B. All right?

So you go for the letter that's directly before it in the alphabet for the code.

All right, so here we go. You get to show off here.

Go ahead and decode this sentence with that cute

little adorable cat with two eyes I made up for the crazy

clown that looks really like not good, did it.

So remember, the first letter is the same as the letter in the real word, and every

other letter is the letter after the letter that really it is.

So what do you think about this? Once you've decoded it, go

ahead.

This takes a few minutes because it's a good bit more

decoding to happen.

Go ahead and put in the chat

what you think, what's going on

with our sentence.

Hey. All right. They're coming in. Look at there.

Ashley, and I don't know who Gray M is, but good job,

Gray M.

Molly. Look at that. I want you guys to pay attention.

Andrea, thank you. Pay attention to how much quicker this went.

All right? The first one was like, wah, we're just flinging. Right?

And then after you learn the code, okay, and now you guys are going like, boom,

ba-boom, ba-boom, ba-boom, ba-boom. It's just coming in like crazy in the chat.

And, Ann, all of you are accurate. Isn't that something? All right.

It took you a minute. It's going to take you a minute.

Now, if I were to continue to do this slide after slide, and we did this for the

whole webinar, by the end, you would be pretty automatic

decoders because this is a simple code. You'd be like, "I know what's going on.

I can do this." All right? So what this sentence actually is, is

the prissy cat has very unusual eyes.

All right? The prissy cat has very unusual eyes.

And it does, and it's very cute, and I kind of want that kitty cat.

So that is a simple code, not English.

If you look at our pretend reading blog, you can see that English is

a very complex code. So this is why we can't ask our

kids to have this code in their hand

and then figure it out on their own.

Really even, adults can't do that.

Nobody can really do that to their height.

Now, some people, interestingly, they figure out the code without any instruction.

It's not a very high percentage of kids, but some kids do

that, but that is not the norm. So, in my next

month's webinar, it's going to talk about why this is absolutely

crucial that we deliver the code information to the

kids in a way that's effective and efficient and can move them quickly so that they

can decipher it and read about the prissy cat and

her unusual eyes. All right? So that is

how it feels for your kids when they're looking at words like this.

You think of a kindergartner or even a fourth grader, or a 10th grader, or a

50-year-old who hasn't been taught the code and doesn't know how to read, and this

is what looking at a book or print looks like to

them. All right? It's like, "What's going on?"

And then they do that first letter thing a lot and then guess.

So we don't want to do that to them because it does not lead, it

rarely leads to success. Okay? So if you have questions about that, remember,

put them in the chat, and I will answer them at the end, and you also will go into

the drawing for the free Able apps. Okay?

So there's our simple code.

All right. So English, as I said, is

one of the most complex codes there are,

because in English, one letter can spell a sound, right, like a C in cat, but

also four letters can, or two or three. So that makes it a challenge.

There are also about 40 sounds, 37 to 44.

People are saying more 44 these days, which

I would say I agree.

And almost every single sound could be spelled in a whole bunch of different ways

in English. All right? And we'll talk about why that is.

And oftentimes, you look at the exact same letter, and different sounds

can go with it. So like the letter A, for example, there's nine sounds that can go with letter A. So this is a code that's been borrowed from a lot of people who use different codes, and so we have kind of a conglomeration of a whole bunch of things that I'm going to talk about very explicitly in reading month next month.

We're on the almost eve of March's reading month. So we'll be talking about that next month in our webinar about these concepts about English that make it even more challenging than reading Spanish or Italian, or a lot of other languages. Okay?

So how are you going to know if your child is pretend reading?

This is the number one way, and you could tell in a skinny minute.

Give your child a book that they're not familiar with.

Don't give them the ones where they look at the picture.

Give them a nice trade book, like one of these that are pictured on the front covers are pictured here, like Hop On Pop.

Pre-kindergarten, that's one that kindergartners should be able to read if they've been taught how to read and been taught the code.

Green Eggs and Ham, a little bit further along, and then Frog and Toad and Magic Tree House, one of my faves. I still have every single one of them because my youngest daughter was obsessed with Magic Tree House.

So give them something to read that they're not familiar with, and ask them to read it to you out loud. And if they're misreading the words, if they have to look at

the picture and make up their own whole own story,
if they are like I am, if they throw the book like Colleen did,
it's going to give you
some really good information that this child doesn't know how
to
decipher this code that we have. All right?
So that's some good information
for you to have, for sure.
Okay. So here's some things that you can do.
Now, really, the remedy for pretend
reading is reading instruction. Reading instruction that gives the
foundational information that all kids need, and adults, and anybody
need to have to be able to decipher the English alphabetic code.
So, that really has to happen, and I can't tell you that in an hour for sure.
But there are some things that you can do that will help to
decrease this situation, okay, with your kids.
First, cover the picture. Put a sticky note, put a
index card, depending on how big the book is, over the picture and say, "We're
going to read the words, then we'll check out the picture," okay?
Always make it be in a respectful, positive manner, because a
lot of times, especially if your child struggles or your students struggle with
reading, a lot of anxiety comes from that.
Okay? So, being very light

and light-hearted about it. But covering up that picture, because a picture's worth a thousand words, literally. I could show you guys all this picture that's up here, and well-behaved women rarely make history is what it says.

But it looks like some flappers dancing,

and all of you would have a different sentence if you didn't see the words on that.

Okay? So a picture is worth a thousand words, and we've got to cover it up because we read the words, not the picture.

This guessing master, we do have an Ebley webinar, a free webinar of course,

on the guessing monster. There's videos in it of me actually

working with kids and showing you the strategies that we use to

un-guess them. This is a process. This does not happen in a

moment. It doesn't happen in a day. It doesn't happen in a month.

Depends on, well, the younger the kids are, the

easier this is going to be. The older they are and the more they've depended on

this strategy, the more of a challenge it's going to be.

At our center, we typically work with kids six to 24

hours, and we say it'd probably be half of that if they

weren't guessing all the time. I mean, they just so automatically look at that

first sound and fling, just like we did with that scary,

creepy clown and those words in there.

So guessing is simple. Learning to read and learning to teach

reading, teaching reading, it takes effort.

This is a huge, crazy code. It doesn't take a ton of effort, actually, if

you know what to do and how to go about doing that.

But it definitely takes work for a five and six and seven-year-old to decipher this code, just like it took work for you guys to figure out with that clown stuff. So we got to get rid of that guessing monster because it's easy, it's the path of least resistance, but it's also the path to the wrong place.

We don't want to go there.

Now this one makes sense, like come on, Nora, seriously.

Be sure the child is looking at the words on the page.

Now, if you guys teach you know this, and even parents if you have a struggling reader or anything, you'll see the kids all the time, they're looking at it and they're not sure of a word, they look at you.

The number of times I've said to kids, "Are those words on my face?" If I had a dime for that, I could probably go on a really nice vacation for every time that has happened, because they look up.

Sometimes we actually put a visor on kids and hold it down, and we play our point game and all those kinds of things.

But to keep them, that habit is so automatic because they're like, "I know I don't know that word, and I'm looking at your face to see if my guess was anywhere near close or whatever." But then it takes their eyes away from the print, and almost never do they get the word right.

Even if they knew the word, they look up and they say some crazy thing.

Or a lot of times they look at him like, "Are the words flying around up there?"

They look up in the sky. I'm like, "Not there." But also when you're looking up,

you're going visual and trying to visualize it in your head, which of course, totally going to slow down reading and your comprehension's going to be shot.

So it doesn't work well for any part of reading. All right?

So keep your eyes on the words. Okay?

And we focus on reading the words versus rereading repeatedly and memorizing books. So we do a thing where the kids read through the words, and if they make mistakes, we give them feedback and error correction and all that so that they have it come correctly out of their mouth, and then we read it back to them, nice and smooth and fluently like we normally read.

And then they read it again, okay? We call that read-read-back-read-again that we do in our instruction. So doing that

and then having them move on, okay?

And then we may reread a whole paragraph or whatever.

But we don't reread books or passages or anything repeatedly, because when you're doing that a few times and working on fluency, if they're doing stuff that's at their independent level and they can do that, they can practice the fluency.

But when you're working, if you're a teacher and you're working with kids, you want to have the instruction be more challenging so that they can increase their ability level, and with code that they're not sure of, and you can help them through and all that type of thing.

So we don't want them to read all week long.

Like Colleen used to read

in second grade, in first grade also, actually.

She was supposedly the best reader in the class because she could memorize.

They would read the book on a tape, the tape would read it to them, then the teacher would read it to them, and then they would read it all together and they'd all choral read, and then they would read it with a partner, and then they'd read it at home. I mean, they must have read the book,

it was a Basil series, so they read the story probably 25 times in a week.

She was like, "I don't need to bring my book home.

I can read the story to you without the book." Okay? Again, not reading.

So you need to be mindful about that.

When you are starting out with emerging readers, they need to have decodable text.

We are not going to have them read, "I see a rectangle," or, "I'm going to eat a rectangle," or whatever. That is not okay,

because that code, it's like asking

a baby who's just standing and starting to take steps to walk. Hold my hand and walk with me.

That's too big of a leap. They can't do that yet. We never would say to a...

I actually was holding my grandson, he's almost 10 months old.

His fingers, and he actually took a step this week when he was with me, and

I was so excited. He was like, "What is wrong with you, Grammy?

Why are you going crazy here?" But that's so fun.

I didn't say, "What is wrong with you? And you need to walk fluently.

Why are you not walking fluently? That's what we do. You need to run.

Go." We don't do that in any other thing

ever except for reading. Read fluently.

It's the hardest thing that you do as humans.

It's not natural at all, like walking and talking.

Those are a lot easier than that. So we do that all the time.

So we really need to rethink What we're doing there, and we need to give our kids

practice in being able to decode those simpler words, and the cat

sat on the

mat, or the cat sat on the mat, or whatever it may be.

Adults say those are so boring. Well, they're so boring to us when we can read.

They are not boring to kindergartners or new readers.

That is not boring to them. That is just like to me when you teach me how to use

this computer, not boring, thank you.

In technology, people are like, "Cuckoo, what's wrong with her?

She's so slow at this." Right? It doesn't make sense because they're automatic and

they know it, but I don't. Okay? Same with reading.

We've got to give these kids instruction and practice so that they can

be accurate. If we're not accurately reading words, we're not going to understand

what somebody's saying to us in print. Okay?

So we're going to teach them how to do that, both to read and to spell. Okay?

Reading and spelling, two sides of the same coin.

We teach them interchangeably and you're going to increase their spelling.

We'll talk more about this. You increase your kids' spelling, you're going to

increase their reading twice as much.

Now, not memorizing a string of letter names, but I go, I digress.

I shouldn't go there too, because I could go on that for a long time.

That's a whole other webinar. But we want to get them to go by sound and accurate spelling too.

And then

motivating reinforcement. We want to

praise what they're doing that is going well and right and

decrease the focus on the stuff that is not so much. All right?

And I just did a blog on that too, so you can check that out.

Okay, so those are some things that you can do to really try to turn that tide of, it looks like I'm reading, but really I'm not.

Okay? These are some examples of decodable books. All right?

So Ted Had a Pet Hen. I don't know why it has writing on Ted's Pet Hen, but

Peg Had a Pet Pig. Now, is this titillating great literature?

No. But either is I Ate a Triangle. Okay?

Neither of those are great literature.

This one is actually going to start them at the taking a step, and then another step, and then another step, and then more and more steps, and move them to where they can walk and run. Where the other one is going to cause a lot of tripping and falling and then a roadblock where they can't really move any further, okay, with that memorization.

So these kinds of decodable books, these are Bob Books.

If you're going to get Bob Books, beware and make sure they are the decodable ones, because they also have leveled ones and all kinds of ones.

But decodable books are pretty easy to come by.

And you see that we like these too, the Noregatos ones.

They have cute fun pictures. A lot of times we'll let the kids color these pictures in the Bob Books too.

So those are that. So,

instruction ideas for emerging readers.

If some of you guys were on here when I was talking to Rhonda, she has a niece that is in fifth grade that's doing our second and older free lessons.

I did these about almost a year ago now.

With the whole COVID thing, it was March.

For kindergarten kids, first-grade kids, and second grade and above.

So they're still on our website. They're still free. Ebly.com.

Go there. If you know nothing about Ebly, or you're like, "I don't know what she's talking about, teach by sound," these are me for 45 minutes,

16 different lessons, teaching whether you have a kindergarten child or first or second and older. Let me teach them. Okay?

Let me show them how this whole code works. All right?

So those are free. These ones down here are actually paid. They're \$5 a lesson.

When we got done doing these, because I bit off way more than I could chew when I started this in the spring, and parents were really begging us to

please do some more in the summer. So I did 10 more lessons down here.

So they're a continuation in each grade level of the other ones.

But these include geography and also some background

knowledge. I learned so much in these level two lessons,

because we studied animals and different things that the kids wanted to look at.

And also, we have free read-alouds.

Always wanting you to read aloud to your students.

I just shared on our Facebook page a really great article about why it's so

important to read aloud every grade level,

every age and ability level. Okay?

Read something aloud, a novel aloud to kids, that is above what they

would be able to read independently.

Whether they're the best reader in eighth grade or whether they're a new reader in

kindergarten. So reading, that's a very good use of

time, and instructional time for your kids is reading out loud.

But these ones are, Hannah read these, both of these books.

This one is so fascinating. I love this one too.

But there's, I don't know, six or eight different sessions of her reading

these stories out loud. Those are also free for you.

Okay? This book right here, this is what I used to teach Colleen,

and I had a teacher say to me that it made her very angry when I said

this next thing here, but it's the truth.

I had studied and researched reading for six months. A little over the top.

If you only know me from this webinar so far, you probably think I might

be a little over the top sometimes, which is true, when it comes to literacy.

But I had researched for six months.

I had gone to conferences, I had bought programs, I

had gone into schools and observed programs.

I had read so many books, so many articles.

I was trying to think about where did I get all those articles?

It was kind of pre-internet time, 25 years ago.

But then I was told about this book by a former professor at

Michigan State, and I taught my daughter in three hours. Okay?

And I actually became a trainer in phonographics, and that's what I did.

I trained teachers in this for four years before I created Ebly.

So if you are like, "I want to try my hand," I would say

littler, kindergarten, maybe first-grade kids, really, for this one.

It's focused on the phonics. It does have phonemic awareness in it, too.

But it tells you why you're doing what you're doing and just what you can do.

So I would, for 17 bucks, if you're a parent, for sure, this

is very much worth it. It's intended for one-on-one instruction,

but it's going to give you a lot of great information as well as how do I

even go about

teaching my kids by speech to print first instead of

letters and isolation and that type of thing. It's phenomenal.

I'm very, very thankful for this book, and it really led

me onto this path. So check it out.

Questions to ask. Now, this is a parent. You can ask yourself the questions.

You can ask the teacher the questions.

The teachers, you can ask yourself the questions.

You can ask your administrators, your colleagues.

What kind of things do we need to be talking about so that we can make

sure That we can have these kids doing

authentically reading and not pretend reading.

So here's a couple of questions here.

Can the child accurately read a sentence that's pulled out of a book that it

appears they can read? Very simple thing to do.

If they can read "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?" Take a sentence out of

the middle of it, I don't know where, and write it on a piece of paper, on a

whiteboard, and ask your child to read it.

If they cannot read it, you are going to find that they are not really

reading it. They're memorizing. So that's a really quick, easy thing that you can

do. Does the child misread words in an unfamiliar book or text?

If you have them, I ask every teacher always, as well as parents,

have your child read out loud to you some.

If they're not reading out loud to you, you don't know how they read.

So if they're saying said for and, and basketball for blueberry, we know that

they're not going to comprehend what they're reading because you can't comprehend

about a blueberry when you're reading the word basketball and all that.

So see what they do there. Are they resisting reading?

Are they throwing the book across the room?

That's a pretty good indicator right there. Are they, "Oh, I have a stomach ache.

Oh, I can't read. I can't..."

One of our Abley team said they had a little second grader

who said, "I can't see the words."

That's a new one. I don't think we'd had that before, but she panicked on the book

thing, and she's like, "I can't see the words." And I'm like, "That's pretty

clever." Kids are clever, by the way.

Do they understand and comprehend when they read an unfamiliar book or text?

So how do we know if they comprehend? Ask them questions about it.

If they start talking about basketballs when what they're reading about was

blueberries, they're not comprehending.

The whole point of reading is comprehending.

Can they comprehend-- This is a great question right here.

Can a child comprehend when you read something to them, and they can tell you all

about it, but not when they read it to themselves? Okay.

If they can comprehend if they're read to, but they can't comprehend when they're

reading, they do not have a comprehension problem.

What they have is a reading problem. They're not reading the words on the page.

Okay? So that's a really great question to

ask yourself or ask of others, too. Do they depend on the pictures?

Watch out for that picture thing and see.

If they're

all over the place, their heads are going to be woo, it's like ping pong and Mexican jumping bean, and it's going to mess up tracking and all kinds of things when they're looking everywhere but at the book. So we don't want that. Or do they look up at the sky or at your face when they're reading? So all of these things are things you can ask yourself and look for, or you can ask whoever is working with your child or teaching your child or reading with your child. Okay? Those are some great questions to ask.

All right. So this is just, I talk about our Abley teacher training.

We train teachers K3 classrooms, K12 to adult remediation, fourth grade and above classrooms, so basically anybody who wants to teach reading really fast and accelerate, and really effectively. So not just fast like, "Let's get through it," but move our kids fast so they can get to reading books and comprehend what they're reading, and they can get to writing where you can actually read what they wrote instead of having so much misspellings and all that type of thing.

So we do offer these trainings that also include student lessons.

They're very comprehensive. They teach all the five essential components of reading. They also teach handwriting, spelling, and writing intertwined explicitly in a way that is based on what the research says you need to do to teach anyone to reach their highest potential. So if you're interested in that, you can check out our website or ask us questions or whatever. These next couple slides, you're welcome to look

at it, when you get the recording tomorrow, just shows some of the pieces of our training and how we do, because we do a lot of embedded coaching, a lot of gradual release for the teachers, where we do the teaching at first through videos, and the teachers facilitate, and then we release. Just like how we teach anybody, right?

How you learn the best is a lot of explicit instruction at first, gradually releasing to independence, when you're learning something new, just like learning how to read. Okay, so this slide talks about that, too, as far as our student instruction stuff. So take a peek at that if you would like. Okay.

So

our last webinar, people said, "Well, you really should have some action steps.

What can we do? What can we do to help you teach the world to read?

What can we do to help promote

literacy for all?"

Which is always a great question. So I'm like, okay, I'm going to put together some things that you can do. So the first thing that I have here, put suggestions in the chat. Our team here, it's like, you guys, give me your ideas about whatever it is that we're doing because eight minds are a whole lot better than one, right? And if we've got, I don't know how many people are on here, so 50, 60, 80, I can't see because I have my glass on. 87.

Minds are a whole lot better than one, so what do you think we need to do?

I've been working really diligently for the last four to five months with

John Corcoran, who I think is still on here, as well as a documentary team.

The producers won 22 Emmys. And we are working on this literacy documentary of how do we lift up literacy for all so that we can get to that 95% proficient number. How do we do that?

And a lot of great minds are coming together to answer that question in this documentary. So we all have great ideas.

So if you share those, we would greatly appreciate that.

And also it would help me, too, when I'm doing my future webinars to see how I can best help you in any ways that I can.

Do comment on our blog. If you haven't read the Pretend Reading blog, do read that, and get a conversation going. I love conversations going, which is why I was kind of bribing you, like put a-- If you haven't had a question in the chat yet, oh, it's almost supposed to be stopping.

I'm going to give you two more minutes.

So if you haven't had a question about what you want clarification on here or what you want me to elaborate on, stick that in the chat, and we'll give two minutes, and Shannon will pick our winners, and Alyssa will tell me about that when we do our question and answer.

So comment on that blog. Share our webinar.

Our webinar link after tonight, it goes to where anybody can click on it and get this webinar as a recording. We put it on our website now. But share it.

Do the hashtag pretend reading. Tag other people

that you know, your friends or colleagues or whoever that might benefit from being part of this discussion and thinking about some of the things that we're talking about on here. And then next month we have, for March is Reading Month, it's all on foundational reading instruction.

I've got a two-part blog series, and then I'm going to do a webinar March 25th that is ... combines the two. It's really good.

My problem is, is that I kind of have too much stuff, and I always go too long, because I have a hard time holding myself back.

So I'm trying really hard to shorten things up and all of that, but this one is going to be my very favorite, because it's what I'm the most passionate about.

And,

so, I hope you can join that. And also, we are going to be with March is Reading Month, we have Booker, our Ebly bird.

You can see him back there, he's hanging out underneath Dream back there.

And we actually have

Booker is life-size also, and he's going to be coming out a lot in March to be doing some fun stuff for March is Reading Month.

So watch for him too on our social media and stuff.

Okay. So this just tells you. Alyssa's putting links when I

talk about stuff, she's so awesome and she puts the links in the chat, so you can

find them there. Also, when we send the recording tomorrow, the links will be in that recording too, so that you can, or in the whatever part, stuff that comes, email that comes with the recording so that you can get to all of the things that I talk about. I try not to go too off topic because then poor Alyssa's looking for links all over the place.

But we really want to give you access to the resources that I talk about. Okay?

So, foundational reading is next month in March, and then in April, another one of my very favorite topics, accelerating phonemic awareness acquisitions in students.

So how do we speed up our phonemic awareness instruction?

And I do want to say,

this amazing

professor actually, Tiffany, is doing a phonemic awareness

webinar on the third, and Alyssa will

put that in the

chat too. If my grandbaby isn't here and I'm not on my way to Illinois,

I'm going to be on that with her at the end, too.

So,

that's going to be... I said, "Oh my gosh, this is so cool, Tiffany," because it's

a perfect lead-in for me to teach you how do we teach

phonemic awareness in a way so that we don't have to do it for every

single day of the whole entire school year, and we can speed it up so our kids get

it. So that's going to be April. So lots of good stuff to look forward to.

Okay. So now, our apps. We do have these

Ebly Island, Ebly Space, Ebly Sight Words Made Easy.

So depending on who you are and what your age of kids are, when

we talk about the five winners, these will be the apps that you choose

from. But we will send you a link to those, too.

They're \$4.99 if you're not the winner and you're interested in getting them.

A lot of our schools, and even not Ebly schools, will buy

them in bulk. If you buy 20 or more, they end up being \$2.49, and you put a

whole bunch of kids on the same app.

But this is student instruction to move those kids.

Ebly Island, very beginning emerging student instruction.

Ebly Space is a continuation of that.

And then Sight Words Made Easy teaches your high frequency words and your

homophones by sound. Also some writing and all kinds of good stuff.

So there's good stuff in there.

Okay.

So that just says what I just said. And now I'm only five

minutes over, yay.

I will come back here

and we will ask, Alyssa can help me out and tell me who's asked some questions and

what they may be.

Hey, Nora.

Yeah.

It's Hannah.

Hi.

I'm so sorry to interrupt. Hi.

Hi.

I just wanted to share a quick thought because there's so, so many amazing questions on here.

And rather than maybe having to do a rapid-fire Q&A, which you could for sure, maybe we could include a document with answers to all of them. Because so many of them, you know how Shannon's got all the questions, that maybe we could put those answers in there.

There's just, you can definitely try to get to as many as you can, but there's more than-

I can talk faster than I can type, but okay. Yeah. That's a thought. Yeah.

We have 33 questions so far. 33.

It would be like an hour. Yeah. It would be a long Q&A, so.

Okay. Well, we don't want to make you guys stay for an hour, so okay.

I would stay for an hour, but we don't want to make you do that. Okay.

Well, let's say we'll answer questions till 8:15.

I know we usually say an hour. I can never make it to an hour.

I don't know why I even say that. I should say 8:15 anyway, so I'm not doing that. So all right, Alyssa, go ahead and give me some of the ones that you think I can give the-

Okay. This

is from Michael Stone. This says, "Wondering about what you would suggest for those students who during independent reading time in school are just pretend reading. I don't always have time to get to all of them."

Yeah. No, and you don't. So, what you have to do if you're talking about the younger ones, you've got to do some skill things.

One thing that is a great thing to do at any age is have your kids listen to books on tape. Epic does that, and it's free for teachers.

But not just listening to it, but even if it's Hop On Pop.

So the kids are following along with their finger underneath the word smoothly, no tapping, nice and smooth, so that they're listening to the word and looking.

That's going to be definitely a bigger step in the right direction than having them hang out with a book upside down, and we know that they're, or chat with their friend in the hallway type of thing. So that is one thing.

But thinking, one of my very favorite things that's really going to help reading, quite frankly, is putting together puzzles.

I've had this conversation a lot lately. Have a piece of felt.

If you've got little kindergarten kids, do a 100-piece puzzle.

Teach them explicitly. You have to model whenever we teach them something new.

Teach them how. This is what we do. We find all the edge pieces, we put them here, then we're going to put those together.

Then we find the pieces that are the same color, that type of thing.

Simultaneous processing is going from segmenting to putting it all together.

Puzzle putting together is huge, and not just the little 20-piece puzzles, but give them a challenge. Right? Raise the bar.

That is a great thing to be doing independently, and also to have the kids to do collaborating. You have a group of four kids there in this puzzle thing.

The good thing about felt is you can roll it up and bring it out again so puzzle pieces aren't flying all over the place.

So think about things that you can do that are meaningful and that are going to be really not just engaging, but actually lift them up with their learning instead of just busywork. So, hopefully that helps. Did I answer that, Alyssa?

I think so.

Okay.

Okay. Michelle Firus or Firus, her question is, "How long will it take to break down these bad habits once they've reached fourth or fifth grade levels?"

Here's the great news that I love about fourth and fifth and 10th and 12th grade.

Sometimes the emotional trauma gets too much, really, about those higher grades and adult. But for fourth and fifth grade, developmentally they are at such a high spot that you can get a lot into, but also they're so wise that they see, "Oh, if I do it this way, it's so much easier, and I can see the progress."

And this is the interesting thing about students and humans and everybody in general, is that they're all different. Isn't that fun?

But so some of our kids, we can undo their

guessing fairly quickly. That's not the norm, unfortunately.

But some of them, they will. We play the point game.

You have to bring it into their conscious attention, okay?

Because what they do is it's subconscious.

They're doing it just like I eat a piece of candy. I don't even think about it.

Wow, look at there. I just ate more calories and I wasn't even thinking.

I wasn't even conscious about it.

So it's subconscious, so you have to bring into their

awareness,

"You just guessed that word. I'm going to cover it up." Not just saying, "Don't

guess," but covering up the word and uncovering it

as they go through it, those types of things.

So giving them some supports

transitionally so that they don't do that.

Now, as far as an amount of time, now we've had kids that it's

like, "Oh my gosh."

The good news is they, this isn't good news, but what happens is, is

they guess a lot at first, and it wanes over time.

But it is a process. It's not a quick

thing, and the older they are, they're the more into those

neural path-- It's like your neural connection, your neural pathways.

There's a connection the first time you do it.

It's kind of hard when you do it the first time. Second time's a little easier.

So if you're guessing, that neural pathway pretty soon is like a super highway.

I can do that so fast, boom. So now we've got this rut in our neural pathways that we need to fill in and create a new neural pathway connection.

A neural connection, I should say.

So it takes some time, and it also depends on the motivation of the kids. So you have to work on motivating them and

letting them know why. They're like, "Why are you torturing me?

Just let me guess the word or move on." You have to let them know, "Here is the deal. If you continue to do that, you won't understand what you read, and

everything in school and in life is going to be more of a challenge." So

being really open with

your kids and respectful, especially those older ones.

But what we find is the older kids make tremendous, usually they're at about a second or third-grade level, too, if they're struggling, and they make tremendous

progress really fast because they're at a different developmental level.

And I wish I could answer you, to say, "It's going to be this amount of time, and they're going to be done," because I don't have that answer.

But

it takes persistence on a part of the teacher, but the more the kids are successful, the more that they are mindful, and the more you play the point game, that kind of thing, the more they'll be mindful to not do that

or do it less until it's gone.

All right, what else have we got?

Okay.

Let's

give our winners before, do you have them?

I might need... Oh, I might have. We are looking for five?

Do you want me to tell them right now?

Yep.

Okay. I see Ulissa Baltazar.

And if you haven't sent your information to Shannon, if you can

private message her your email address, then we will

email you to get you the codes. And then Michael Stone is number two.

Michelle Furus is number three.

Oh.

Let me see here, down a little further.

I have Chrissy Turner.

Okay.

And Danielle Stark.

Cool. Well, congratulations, all you guys.

Shannon, will you type those into our chat just so that they know that?

They're probably chatting with you guys, too, so you know what you're doing.

I should not get in your business, so do what you're doing. My bad.

So congratulations, everybody. We'll send you the info in our
at page, and you can look at and see which one would be the best for me to get.

So congratulations. That's exciting. All right, Alyssa, what else have we got?

Okay, so there are two questions from different people about leveled books.

The first one is Darlene. It says, "I notice you

have

to not use leveled books. Why?" And then the other one that was similar, it

says from Suzanne, "How do you measure progress since you

don't use leveled books?"

Oh, man, you guys. That's a whole nother webinar, too.

Okay, so here's the deal. If you're doing leveled books with level A through D,

you cannot teach those books with kids, and your little kindergarten

kids, without them guessing and looking at the pictures. It's not possible.

You just can't read rectangle and triangle without looking at the pictures.

So what we tell our-- Because the vast majority of the schools across the country

where we train teachers, they're using F&P and the leveled

assessments, the running records and such.

So we tell them, "Don't fret about it," because they may stay at a A or a

B even through Christmas and into the spring, but if you're really teaching

them how to read, they're going to be past that E in kindergarten by the time you

hit the spring. So once you get to E, and you've actually given those kids that

foundation, and they've started to be able to truly read, they can read those

leveled books. So with the older grades, I don't have so much

heartburn about the leveled books if they can really read them.

But what you'll find with the leveled books and those assessments, kids will stay

stuck sometimes for years at the same number or letter,

depending on what you're doing. So they'll be stuck

there and stuck there. What we find with able

kids in a kindergarten classroom, they're typically at about

J or K on average by the end of kindergarten.

And in first grade, they're at a M or N on average at the

end of kindergarten. So when kids can truly read,

it doesn't matter really which assessment.

So A to D, I do have a problem with.

You've got to truly It's not going to go well, and you're going to

create those habits that are not going to be

efficient for them, and it's going to create bad

habits that are hard to undo.

And we, again, every day get to see that. So you don't want to do that piece.

So as far as the assessments, and we know that most people, again,

in kindergarten, just like my grandson,

I'm going to evaluate how many steps he takes.

Everybody tells me, "Oh my gosh, he's holding my hand, took one step." Okay.

Pretty soon he's going to be done holding your hands and taking one step.

We're going to talk about that. I'm not talking about how we walk to the park or

letting him hold my hand. We're not there yet.

So in kindergarten, really what you need to be assessing is the skills.

You need to be assessing can they segment, can they blend, are they reading words accurately?

CBM measures, Acadience, DIBELS, easyCBM, those types of things.

Every school that we're in does different stuff as far as assessment.

The good news is, is if you're truly teaching kids how to read, it doesn't matter what assessment it is, the kids are going to blow it away. Okay?

So as far as why I don't care for the leveled readers, why I don't care for the instruction in leveled readers is it creates, out of the gate, bad habits that often, what do I want to say, hinders children from progressing with reading and creates a lot of bad habits. So

that is what the issue is with those, and that is

why. So what assessments do you do instead? There's gazillions.

Go on to the Science of Reading, What I Wish I Learned in College

Facebook page. Go on there and

ask those questions because you'll get 5,000 answers,

because there's countless ones and a lot of free things. easyCBM is free.

The

San Diego Quick Reading Assessment is free.

There's so many that are free that can give you

information that helps drive your instruction.

And what we want is we want a level, or we want their comprehension.

Again, my grandson Christopher cannot walk yet.

I'm not going to be assessing his walking. He is working on that.

So we are not going to assess kids' comprehension in kindergarten until we know that they can really read.

So,

lots of assessments. There's a gazillion, and many of them are free.

So, the Science of Reading page, again, grown to 75,000 people in just about 15 months. So, a lot of people wanting to shift this and wanting to learn.

So there's a lot of people that are interested in helping on there, too.

So, that is good.

So hopefully I-

Okay

... covered all that. Did I get it, Alyssa?

I think you did. I don't want to interrupt you.

Okay. Next from Chrissy Turner, "Any suggestions on how to explain to parents the importance of giving their child time to sound out unfamiliar words instead of providing the word immediately?"

Yeah.

Well, the number one thing I would do, this is what I really would do for parents or for educators, either way, anybody who's...

I would say Google "At a Loss for Words" by Emily Hanford.

That's going to be top on my list. It's a radio documentary.

Listen to it while you're making dinner. Ask your parents to listen to it.

It's going to tell them exactly why, without question. Okay?

Educating yourself. There's another document called "The Science of Reading."

Pretty straightforward. We actually have it on our website under resources, and the title is "The Science of Reading." So if you go to [able.com](https://www.able.com/resources) resources, the science of reading, it's about 20 pages long. It's from Tennessee.

Love that. It's one of my favorite documents because it tells you not just about, people always say, "Oh, the science of reading is phonics" or people are only talking about phonics. Not a good plan. No.

Phonics is where the biggest holes are for teachers and for kids, quite frankly.

But there's so much more to reading than that, and even phonics and phonemic awareness. But this document

lays it all out with different quotes and different charts, and it's just phenomenal. So I would say that's another thing, and it's very easily digestible. Go to the EBLI

Facebook page. I put articles on there.

Sometimes I forget to put them, but there's a lot of articles on there that are going to help you,

give you resources for yourself, for parents, for whoever.

There's another one, I would Google this, too.

It's called "Sink or Swim: The Appearance of Reading."

Love that article. Lindsey Kemeny is a teacher who was a balanced literacy teacher, and her son was diagnosed as dyslexic, and she's like, "How am I teaching all these years, and I didn't even know there was a science of reading, or there's how to teach reading?" But she talks about her kids walking across the bottom of the swimming pool, moving their arms in swimming lessons, which kids do that. It's fake swimming, right?

And matches that really to the pretend reading. Phenomenal blog.

I would get that to the parents, too. Those are my three top favorites.

I could go on for about 150, but those are the three top.

That's my recommendation for that.

Yeah.

Okay.

I added two links to those. I didn't catch the other one, but trying.

Okay. Thank you.

Okay.

This is from Danielle Stark. It says, "I struggle with fluency being an area that students are evaluated on. I tell them it's more important for them to comprehend the text. Am I right in thinking this?"

Yeah, fluency. Fluency is an important bridge from the decoding piece to the comprehension piece.

But fluency and fast is not what it's all about.

Now, 25 years ago, 24, 22 years ago, when

I first started training teachers,

no teacher that I ever trained had ever heard of fluency.

Isn't that crazy to even think? They'd never heard of it.

We did all kinds of fun fluency stuff with our kids.

But we quit doing it because then they started everybody started testing on fluency, and

progress monitoring. Kids had so much anxiety with that timer and all of that.

And then kids think, "Uh-oh, here comes the timer one more time every week, go fast. Ignore punctuation, go like a crazy person."

Fluency is

Are you reading like you talk? We don't talk like this, and this is some people say

I talk like that, like I don't stop at punctuation or any of that kind of stuff,

but we don't talk like that. We talk, and if you

actually talk, it's the prosody, I think that's how you say that word,

where are you reading like you talk?

Interestingly, if you do that, you will actually read faster and comprehend better than if you just go like a crazy see if you can be Speed Racer.

We have, even without saying that explicitly to kids, we have

implied that in a whole country with the kids goes as fast as

they can so they'll quit being pulled on Friday to be shown and

timed again to show how much they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing. So I would be mindful about that fluency and

understand if you're listening to kids read out loud, you do

not have to time them, you do not have to running record them, you do not have to do all that. You can listen to them read and know what's going on.

You're misreading this, you're misreading that. You're ignoring punctuation.

Then model for them what they need to do.

We don't need to make this complicated.

We need to give them what they need to do, and we need to model so that they know.

Instead of saying, "Quit going so fast, quit ignoring punctuation." They're like,

"I don't know what you're talking about.

I'm supposed to go fast because I got to do this." So that fluency is the bridge

from the decoding to the comprehension, and tell your kids that

reading is talk written down. And don't obsess, because what happens with

the fluency? Now then people are training fluency like crazy, and let's time them

and do this and read this 14 times and all that kind of stuff.

And guess what it doesn't do? It doesn't move the needle, does it?

We all know it doesn't because it hasn't for 25 years anyway that I've been around here. So why are we going to keep doing that?

So we have to look at what isn't working and what do we need to do differently.

Okay? And there's so much. Gosh, in the last three years, I was hanging out here like, "Oh my gosh, there's nobody that's even talking about this." Now there's a lot of people talking about it. Okay?

Looking at what does the research show and how do we make that bridge into practice with kids?

All right, Alyssa, what else?

Okay.

Deb Ploshchitz, maybe, says, "What is the most effective tool you have for breaking that guessing monster?"

The point game. Watch the guessing monster, whatever that's called, webinar.

The point game,

when I go into coach in schools, when I used to go into coach in schools, when I could go into schools,

and I've been in thousands and thousands of classrooms.

Schools love to meet me at the door and tell me about the worst classroom that they have in the whole entire school, and let's see what you can do with them.

It's like a fun parlor game thing that they do.

And I don't have behavior problems.

In almost any classroom I go into, I've never seen the kids before, but I don't have behavior problems because, first of all, I let them know very much what the expectations are. Okay?

And if I'm going to read in a small group or even a whole class, these are the rules. Okay? The only person who's reading is the one I'm reading with.

The rest of you are going to follow along, and you're going to read in your head, okay? Not out loud. You're not going to help them with a word if they struggle.

I'm the only helper, okay?

If you shout out, I get a point. I have a little whiteboard that I carry around, okay? If you guess a word, I get a point.

Now, I'm not like the crazy woman at it type of thing.

If they try to self-correct or that type of thing,

I give them a lot of points. I give probably 100 points to

every one point that I get,

because that positive reinforcement is going to get you a whole lot further.

But the point game to me, it doesn't even make sense to me why it's

so powerful, but it has saved my life in every situation possible, which is

really fun. So the point game is the number one thing.

Covering up the word, when I'm reading in a small group, whole class, doesn't

matter. I am basically reading one-on-one, and the rest of them are following

along. I talk about, "Oh, what was going on with that Terracotta Army?

How crazy that they buried them,

full size army men, and that was kind of weird." And then we talk when I'm going

to the next student. So it's very interactive, and

you have to ...

What do I want to say? You don't have the student that

struggles through one sentence read a paragraph, and so you balance

out when you're doing that whole class.

But I do mostly reading in small group, to be perfectly honest.

But giving them corrections, helping them move forward, and helping everybody gain

something out of it is really important, too.

But the guessing monster,

you've got to work at it. It's work. I'm not going to lie.

It is work, but it's worth it, but you have to be consistent, and you can't say, "Well, I think I'm going to ignore that guess," and, "Oh, well, let's wait till we're at the end of the sentence." No. They guess, we stop, we figure it out. We give them what they need. Like the book "Make It Stick," which I absolutely love, is about cognitive psychologists talking about how we learn best. And what they say is struggle that is corrected is going to lead to the greatest gains, not just in reading, they talk about all kinds of learning. But so we want our kids to struggle, but not like, "Oh, well, you've guessed that word eight times and you haven't got it. Bummer. You're not going to get..." No, you have to give them the information to help them switch to where they can be successful, and then they've moved from that struggle and the error to the correction type of thing. So there's a lot of different facets of all of it, but the guessing monster, the point game is my number one thing. It's a long answer to a short question, sorry. What else, Alyssa?

Okay. This is from Michelle.

We have five more minutes.

"Also, I've had training with you.

Are there sessions we can sign up, pay for to get coaching?

I remember when my district paid for you to come to my school for this, but now that I'm in a new district, I really could use you again to bounce off ideas and get support. Are you available in this manner?"

Yes. We are. I've been doing virtual coaching, of course, in the last year, but

yes.

Michelle, are you

EDSO trained or in-person training? Do we know that?

I do not know that. Maybe she could put it in the chat.

Yeah. Could you tell us that?

Sure.

Yeah. So if she can tell us that, because we have coaching calls for, oh, in person. You know what I would say, Michelle?

Is I would ask your school if you could do the

EDSO. We do it as a refresher. It's \$450 for a

teacher to do it, and it's

worth like a whole lot more than that.

And it has

The in-person is like we shove the fire hose down your throat, and we turn it on

full throttle for three days. And EDZIL is spread out over

time, so it's a nice trickle, and there's so much more to it, of

course, that you can do over weeks and months than you could do in

a three-day time. So if your school is open to that,

I would highly recommend that you get the EDZIL, because the

coaching is actually built right into that, too.

But we do coaching also if

that's something you prefer. It's more expensive than the EDZIL, though.

So I would recommend the EDZIL.

What else, Alyssa?

Okay. Desmond-

And also the EDZIL, we have monthly coaching calls where I do an hour,

Hannah and I do. Mm-hmm.

Desmond Rogstad. Are you okay with students reading highly motivating novels that are above their reading skill level, or does that only perpetuate their guessing?

With me, or with us, or with you, or whoever's teaching them, we always put the text that our kids are going to read, we never have kids read text that they can read independently with us.

Their time with you is gold-plated time.

So we're going to raise the bar where they're going to make those mistakes, where we can provide the mistakes for them.

So then now they're up to here, and then we can raise it up to there.

So I do not recommend that kids go to...

And it depends. If we're talking little kids, it depends on where they are in the spectrum type of thing, and how much code they know and how much they're still guessing.

But mostly, I would say no,

not wise, because what they're going to do is skip stuff and just not do it.

They're going to skip over words and try to get stuff out of it when it's too challenging for them. But when you move them far and fast, very quickly they can get to that text that they're

interested in that's more challenging, too.

Yeah.

Okay. Anna Torazan. "I have a question I would love if

Nora could answer, but doesn't have to do with the webinar." She said, "Question.

When students write a sentence, like a summary sentence after they read a story

with a tutor, do they need to say each sound as they write the sentence?

Seems like that would slow them down.

How does she do that?"

Yeah. We want them to slow down, depending on where you are at in their

instruction. Now, if

they're spelling everything right and they're writing and they've

got their multi-syllable words good, then they can do the whole syllables.

Now, if they're misspelling, if they're leaving spellings out, if they're adding

spellings in, if they're mixing stuff around, they're not saying the sounds as they

go, you slow them back down. So it's that gradual release.

At first, they say the sounds for everything.

Then pretty soon, when they're getting accurate, like the one syllable words and

stuff, you say as you write those multi-syllable words. Okay?

So it depends, and if you're doing a summary sentence in tutoring, you can hear and

see what they're doing. It's very apparent almost immediately whether

they're just going from memory and throwing some stuff down, or they're using the

skills that they know and maybe saying the sounds in their head, that type of

thing. So

they're not going to say every single sound as they go for their whole life, but they are going to do it until it's automatic.

We're going for accuracy and automaticity. Accuracy and automaticity.

In reading, in spelling and writing, it's much more challenging. Okay?

Do we have a capital letter at the beginning? Do we have a period at the end?

Let's go there. Can we start there? But also doing that correct.

So that correct spelling, it depends on where they are and what

they're doing with it. Okay? If they misspell, I erase the word, and they go back and say every sound as they go. So

at this point in the year, if you've been teaching all year, they should be becoming more accurate and more independent, too. Okay.

Yeah. Good question.

Do you want more?

Let's do one more. Yeah.

Okay. What do you do to change the habits of fluent readers that substitute guesses for words they don't know, and then read on even though it doesn't make sense, and they lose their comprehension and never monitor themselves? They hate slowing down because they seem to think good reading is about fluency and pace. Any quick ways to get them to switch to using the code?

Yep, and it's going to really tick them off.

So there you have it, but this is what I do.

And I say to them, "You're in control." That's another thing I say to kids all the time, "You're in control of the point game."

You're in control of the points you get, you're in the control of the points that I get, okay? I have no control of this at all." How weird is that?

And then I also blame my marker or my pencil or that kind of thing.

But this is what I do. If they're guessers or flingers, I take, not usually an angel card, but I take a

bookmark or a

piece of paper, whatever is around, I take, and I cover up the word, and

I pull across.

Oh, you can't see what I'm doing. I pull across like this,

okay? One word at a time. They will literally take my hand and

try to push it away. And I'm like, "Hmm, if you read this whole sentence and you don't guess any words, I'll take this card away.

However, if you guess again, I'm putting it back." So they're in control of what I'm going to do, and what's going to happen there.

Again, it brings it into their consciousness. Let's stop doing that.

It's not working. Okay? We know it's not working.

So how do I help them? You have to do this work where you're sitting right there with them. Again, whether it's a whole class, small group or one-on-one.

You have to do that stuff. And it's not forever.

That's the good news. If you're teaching them, you can't just do that and not teach them the code and how to read it accurately, okay?

Because that's not going to go quite so well.

But you can do that because as you're teaching them how to read accurately, they

get better and better at that, and then they'll do less and less

guessing because they don't have to guess as much anymore. Right?

So that's cool. Okay, I'm going to do one more question because I keep thinking 33 questions I have to type out the answers to, and I know me, and I always type way more than probably you want to hear.

So one more.

All right. Now I've got to be ready here. Okay.

Just today, one of my students needed help spelling laughed and daughter in the same sentence. Would you introduce these, the A-U-G-H, separately based on sound?

Yep. What I would do is if this child spelled laughed L-A-F-T,

let's say, okay? I'd say, "Oh my gosh, you've got your sounds.

That's exciting." And I would put the A-U and say, "This is your /æ/., go U."

I always have kids write on a whiteboard, too, if they're spelling like that.

"And then this is your /f/." Because they did that.

I love it when the kids' actual

what they do drives the instruction, and with writing, it drives the instruction a lot. We do a lot of stuff before that, too.

And then I'd say, "And this is your /f/." Okay? And then what was the other word?

Laugh and tough?

Laugh and daughter.

Daughter. Okay. So daughter, I'm going to say, now here, this is a four-letter spelling for A.

If you're teaching by sounds and the kids know that one, two, three, or four letters can spell a sound, and we're using the same process, you read and spell left to right in order, we don't have to do all of those gyrations and tricks and stories and doodads, and work for you and work for them, and it takes forever, and everybody's confused because they're like, "I don't get what I'm supposed to do here, and when do I do that, and when do I not do that? And well, I don't know. Is this a rule, or is this like, it doesn't happen here, but it happened there. Well, how is this going?" So keep it simple, but really, simple doesn't mean easy, per se, but giving the kids what they need to do with that. So I, even in kindergarten, quite frankly, I usually start with kindergartners, draw a picture, and write one word on your whiteboard, and then we show them the correct spellings. But in the meantime, we've been doing some dictated sentences and some gradual release with all that, too. So it's not just a go write a page and let me fix the 45 misspellings there, because it's too overwhelming for you and for them. So there's a lot of stuff with that. Let's see.

Okay. I think that probably I should let you guys go, huh?

This is like my

ah. About 6:45, I was like, "I am

going to die." I've been up since 3:40 this morning, and I literally got up and

started working at 3:40. And so I was telling Alyssa and Shannon, I'm like,

"I don't think I'm going to be able to stay awake." But then you guys come and ask

me questions, and I get to talk about literacy stuff, and now I'm probably going to

be awake until 3:00 this morning still. So very fun.

I appreciate the energy that I get from you guys, and I

will... Thank you, Hannah.

Spend, if I'm up till 3:00, I'll be answering the other questions, so that'll be

good.

So thank you guys for

being here and for spending some time of your precious

evening time here with us. And thanks to all of

our Abley team that is always here to help behind the scenes so I don't have to

look over there, what's going on in the chat, and all that good stuff.

And we hope to see you guys next month.

Share this blog, talk about stuff.

Let's teach the world to read together. All right?

We appreciate you guys, and hopefully I'll see you all next month, too.

All right?

Hey, Laura?

Yeah. Oops.

Hey, Laura.

Yeah.

The "Make It Stick" book, a couple people are asking about that quote you talked about fixing a struggle and it being the greatest correction.

What was that quote you used?

Yeah, you know what? Hold on. We just had a photo shoot today for a couple of hours, and I threw all my stuff in my office, which is really messy.

Hold on a second. I'll be right back.

Oh, shoot. I thought it was going to be quick, and look what I did.

No. How many copies? You guys know how many copies of that book.

Shannon, do you know where, do you have that book in your office?

You had just given a quote about-

Yeah, I do. I don't want to say it's in the webinar-

Oh, my God. Okay

... as the real quote, but-

Okay

... it is...

Struggle that is corrected.

Yes. Struggle that is corrected. Oof. Now my brain is going.

I know. Mine's at home, my book's at-

Hold on. Hold on a second. I'm going to look at my other webinar so I can cheat, do my little cheat sheet.

Pretend reading. What's this one?

That is pretend reading, shoot.

You know what? Alyssa, will you make a note, and can we put that in the thing tomorrow? I don't know.

Now my brain's going to go away. So I don't want to quote wrong, and I don't know where my books are. So there you have that.

But I will... Thank you, Molly, for sharing that. There I have a brain fart.

But we'll put it in for the recording tomorrow. Okay.

So Alyssa and Hannah, if you will mark that down, too.

Anything else that I should know about before we go? Okay. Well, have a wonderful evening, everybody. Thanks for joining me, and hopefully I will see you in March.

Happy reading month to be. Next time I see you, I'm going to be the grandmother of two, so that's pretty exciting. And have a wonderful evening.

Hmm.