

Welcome to our Sight Words by Sound webinar. I'm just so excited.

It's so fun to see all of you coming on here and

from all over the world. I just saw Annie, Australia was a name, and I'm assuming that's Annie from Australia, she's from Australia.

So people from all over the world. We're going to have quite a party tonight.

So,

I'm glad you're here.

And so Molly and I are very much looking forward to talking to you, sharing with you, learning with you.

And I'm going to have Molly say hi in just a second, but I just wanted to let you know she had surgery

two days ago. So she'll have a dressing on

her neck from where they went in

to do her surgery. But she is gung ho and happy to be here.

Molly, are you

here? Can you say hi?

I'm here. Can you hear me?

Yep. I can hear you. There you go. You look pretty good.

Hanging in there.

Very good.

All my post-surgery glory, here I am.

There you go, showing off Michigan on your sweatshirt. I like it.

So I'm going to introduce Molly, and tell you a little bit more about her and about

me. But first I wanted to just ask a few things and share a little bit. If you would, share in the chat, if you're not real familiar with Zoom, you can go down to the bottom and click where it says Chat there, and tell us who you are. Well, we know who you are from your name, but where you're from, how you heard about this webinar, EBLI, or whatever. So that would be great, too.

Also, we have most of our EBLI team are going to be on tonight, and they will identify themselves. So if you have questions, there will be several people who will be answering. Also, there will be probably several people on who are trained in EBLI.

So some of the things that I'm talking about with sight word instruction that in theory, you're like, "Hmm, I wonder how that works in practice." These EBLI experts that have been teaching EBLI in their classroom or in remediation or however, they will be able to answer questions, too. And also, Hannah is going to be our moderator.

She's going to be checking out your questions over in the chat.

So if you're thinking, "I have this burning question about sight words and how the heck do they deal with this?" Or,

"This I find a problem with my students," or with my own children, or whatever question you may have, she's going to be looking through those, and we'll pause

intermittently, and then she'll come on and ask the questions.

So you want to say hi, Hannah?

Yeah, sure. Hi, everybody. It's so good to see you.

I'm excited to be here and very much looking forward to tonight.

So I look forward to seeing your questions and sharing them.

Yeah. So Hannah will be monitoring that and giving them to us, but also other people obviously interact together on the chat and answer each other's questions and everybody will just join in on this group party. So that would be great.

So first off, I wanted to introduce myself and tell you who I am and all that good stuff, and then talk a little bit about Molly, and before we get going with my little PowerPoint.

So I am the creator of EBLI, the founder of EBLI, and I also own a reading center in Michigan.

EBLI stands for Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction, and what it is, is it's a system of strategies and activities and skills and concepts and information based on what the research says you need to do to teach anyone to read to their highest potential.

So mostly what we do is we train teachers.

We love classroom teachers, but also we do remediation teachers in any grade level, from preschool up through adults, senior citizens even. And our reading center has kind of been our learning lab for the last 20 years, where people come from all over the country.

We pretty much recommend that-- Sometimes people say, "I want to bring my

four-year-old." We're like, "Let's wait till they're at least five."

And all the way up to 80-year-olds. We've had many people who are 80 something.

And I came to be a literacy warrior from a very atypical path. I think many people have done that, too.

But, I was a neonatal intensive care nurse for 10 years, and I had a daughter, my second daughter, who was phenomenal at math, very bright child, all that good stuff, but a struggling reader. And so I researched reading.

We had moved from overseas back to Michigan, and I wasn't working as a nurse.

I was still at home with my youngest, and researched reading really over the top, I would say. She had been taught a pure phonics program and did great with one-letter spellings, but then when it got to the more unusual stuff that happens in English, she's just like, "This isn't making any sense here."

And I ended up teaching her in about three hours.

And then I taught friends' kids just in my house and ended up led me to kind of accidentally opening a reading center and training teachers even before I opened the reading center. So some people will say, "Well, what was your plan or your business plan?" I'm like, "Never had one." Still kind of don't.

But

really going for making life easier for teachers and especially to help them make life easier for kids by helping them be their highest potential in literacy.

So I'm very, very, very passionate about teaching teachers and about teaching kids, and about making sure that we get 95% to 100% of our kids reading, writing, and spelling to their highest potential. So I'm really pretty obsessed about that whole topic. And Molly, coming to us, Molly actually graduated from Michigan State University. I'm a Michigan fan, so we kind of have rivals when it's football time. And she worked in an interior design company for several years until she had her daughter, Claire, over seven years ago. And then she wanted to stay home with her, and so she actually started to come and work for us here at EBLI as our financial director. Which is a really fancy term to say she pays our bills and keeps all that stuff straight, and I appreciate it tremendously because that is not my forte. So she runs all that, comes in a couple times a month Mostly works from home, so that she's there with her kids, which is pretty cool too. And she is also the daughter of my sister, so she's my niece, kind of all in the family. Another interesting tidbit is that she was my first ever ACT prep client. I never thought we did ACT prep, but she'd taken the ACT several times and had gotten a

25 on it and needed a 26 to get more money at the college she was looking at. And she said, "Aunt Nora, will this work for ACT?" And I'm like, "Let's try it out." So she came over, and I taught her for about an hour and a half, one session. And she'd taken the ACT several times before that, and her score went from a 25 to a 28.

So we don't really advertise, quite honestly, that we do ACT.

We don't really advertise much at all of anything, I guess.

But a lot of people come to us, especially in the springtime for ACT and SAT, because literally in less than two hours, we can make really atypical gains on ACT, and we've done that with group too.

So Molly was my accidental experiment there, too.

I'm going to share a little bit more about her journey with literacy, how she happened to be on At a Loss for Words with Emily Hanford, and that type of thing in just a few minutes.

But Molly, do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Not really. I'm super excited to be here.

Equally as nervous, I think. But I've been trying to figure out where my place is in this literacy journey.

I've been watching the wonderful women at EBLI work for eight years now, and as still a little bit of a struggling reader, it's hard to find where I can help.

And I'm hoping that today, sharing some stuff with you

guys and answering anything I can, can maybe shed some light, and that can be my role in this. So I'm excited.

Very good. And I'm excited that you're here.

So what I'm going to do now is I'm going to share my screen, and then we'll get to the PowerPoint and move on. And again, remember to keep on sharing your

questions, your comments, your whatever. Sharing with each other type of thing.

So again, Sight Words by Sound. We're going to talk about the term sight words here in just a little bit too, with Ms. Molly.

And first of all, I want to thank Lindsay.

I'm not sure if she's on yet or not, but Lindsay Kemeny, she is the author of "The Learning Spark" blog.

And if you have not ever seen that, I highly recommend that you

Google that, and we'll share

to

her blog too

in our newsletter. And she is a mom, and she taught traditionally balanced literacy. She's a kindergarten teacher.

And a few years back, her sweet daughter-- her son, sorry, Nathan, if he's watching.

Nora.

Her son, Nathan, was-

I'm so sorry to interrupt.

Yes.

This is just a tech glitch we had for about the first eight minutes of the webinar that we were capped at 100 participants, but I real quick chatted with Zoom, and we are upgraded now.

So if anybody is hearing from anyone that wasn't able to get on, tell them to try again. They should be able to get on now. And I'll send a quick email too.

But just-

Okay

... FYI for those questions.

All right. Very good.

Very good.

Thank you. Okay. So Lindsay, her son, Nathan, was diagnosed a couple of years ago with dyslexia, and that led her to the journey to looking at the science of reading, and she started this blog.

Her one blog that she did, it's called "Sink or Swim: The Appearance of Reading." I absolutely love that blog, and I use it a lot.

I actually use it in our teacher training, and I use it to introduce people who are like, "What is the science of reading?" She and so many educators are like, "I never even knew there was such a thing." Research and science that showed how we should go about teaching people how to read. But this summer, I actually taught Nathan for a few hours through Zoom, which I've never taught a student online before like

that, and it wasn't my favorite thing, but Nathan was definitely a favorite person.

I adored him. And he actually has doubled his fluency rate from last year to this year. I think he's in fourth grade now.

And Lindsay has become an accidental literacy advocate also.

So she is doing EBLI, it's called ETSL.

It's EBLI Training and Student Lessons for kindergarten, first, second, and third-grade classroom teachers.

She's going through that right now with her kindergarten kids.

And she had written this blog, which is what was the impetus for this whole webinar, because she wrote this blog about our sight word process that we have in the EBLI training.

And I thought it would really be great to share some of the nuances and really getting down in the weeds and down in the dirt about a lot of specific things that make a huge difference with teaching sight words or really with teaching any words.

So thank you to Lindsay, if she is here and even if she's not here, for writing that blog and for sharing it and for sparking me to have this webinar.

So then I wanted to talk a little bit about At a Loss for Words.

If you're not familiar with this or you have not listened to this

radio documentary, I highly recommend that you do that.

If you're on here, you're interested in literacy, of course.

Emily Hanford is a

journalist from American Public Media, and for the last three years, she

has been researching reading and how reading is taught and

really deep dive. And so back

in last wintertime, she'd send out a

lot of things through social media asking questions, "Hey, what about this or this

or this?" And, "Email me with answers to these questions if you have them."

So I emailed her back on several sets of questions,

and a lot of stuff that she was asking about was really about

the research and about where that happens in the classroom and how that

kind of looks. And I had a thought, like, "Why don't we..."

Why don't I invite her? I was a little nervous about it, but why don't I invite her

to come here to Michigan? We were having a training the end of January

this past year, and she could talk to all

kinds of teachers and parents and students and

administrators,

and see what's really going on in the trenches.

Because a lot of times there's all this great stuff in theory, and that sounds

good, we read it here or learn about it there, but how do we actually

use it and teach it to the kids? That is where my

greatest passion is, is providing that bridge from what the research says we need

to do to actually doing it with the kids in a way that's really effective and efficient. Those are kind of our two big words that we deal with at Edli. Being really effective, it works really well, and being really efficient, it works really fast. So I got my courage and I emailed her, and I said, "Hey, why don't you..." I invited her, and this training was in two weeks from the time I invited her. And she emailed me back and she said, "I'd love to do that." So she flew in on a Monday morning in a blizzard. We got about a foot of snow that day, and it was a week of a polar vortex where it was 20-something below zero.

But she, I swear, is a bionic woman.

She would interview people starting at 7:00 in the morning.

She taped the entire three-day Edli in-person training that we did. She interviewed people at lunch, at breaks, afterwards. She came to the center afterwards and interviewed people.

And she was interested. She asked me if I knew any adults who had struggled with reading, and I said, "I know a lot of them." And of course, Molly was one because Molly was in honors classes. From first grade to sixth grade, she was with a cohort, I think, of 12 kids, you can correct me if I'm wrong, Molly, that stayed in the whole district, there was four schools. Those 12 kids went first through sixth grade together in the gifted and talented program because her scores were so high, but she was a struggling reader, and she had to work really hard to be

able to figure out reading, and she wasn't sure what was going on with all these--

What were all these other people doing that are also really brilliant, but they

were mostly all very good readers, too,

in this class. So she had a lot of angst and anxiety around

reading. And then when it came to things like taking the ACT where she was timed,

her score is much lower than what her ability is because she couldn't read

fast enough or well enough and that type of thing.

And a lot of the reasons that

this was a problem, along with everything in general, of course, when you

aren't taught how the English alphabetic code works, is the sight

words, and they're high-frequency words, those words that happen commonly, and so

many of them look alike. So she was one person that I asked

if she would be interviewed with Emily, and they talked

on

the record for four hours. So Emily was really

fascinated with her story because it's a very fascinating story.

She's college-educated.

So many people in your world are

not great readers, and even her parents didn't know that this

was really a struggle. And I didn't either until this came up to the degree

that it really was for her. So it's this heart-wrenching thing

that stays with people,

and it impacts so many things in their lives.

And we're going to talk about that when we get to the specifics about what we do and what we don't do, and how this has impacted Molly and how it still impacts her today,

as a 30-something mother and wife.

And so there's a lot of trauma

and drama that happens with that, and that is happening right before your

eyes. It's in plain sight, and most of us really don't know

about that because kids who struggle with reading grow up, of course, to be adults

that struggle with reading, too. And Emily, no one of

the other, I think, 30, probably, people that she interviewed were not on the

podcast. So I don't know how she did what she did.

For that whole year, that all she did is she focused on

studying reading and how reading is taught.

It was the first time she said that APM had ever allowed that to

happen. So she, to me, is a hero. She

doesn't have any

skin in the game as far as like, "I want you to do this," or, "I don't want you to

do that," or, "I'm selling this," or any of that.

She's truly doing this passionate mission work

from

a place of, like, "Wow, is this..." She didn't have any idea three or four years

ago that this was even a thing. So if you haven't read or listened to

"At a Loss for Word," I recommend that you listen to it, but you will hear Molly's

story at the beginning. And really all of what Emily talks about after, with the research and all of her investigating is based off Molly's story. And also Claire, you'll hear Claire, Molly's seven-year-old daughter in there, too.

So

it was really that whole week in January was cra-- Several of the teachers came, and it was horrible weather, and then half of them didn't come for the rest of the training. And it was just all this chaos, and Emily was just this calm, cool, collected, focused, "I'm going to get information." And I had asked her what she was actually going to write her documentary on, and she said, "I don't know.

I'm investigating. And it will come to light the more that I hear from more people." So anyway, "At a Loss for Words," read it, listen to it, share it. It's really, really grand.

Okay. So this is Molly and Claire and Max.

Claire is seven, and she'll be eight in May, and Max just turned six on New Year's Eve. And

all three of them have a story already, and I suppose still with Molly, with sight words.

So with Molly's situation with sight words, when she was in sixth grade, I was just at the beginning and in my obsessive research piece. I don't think I'd taught Colleen yet, but I'm not positive.

And my daughter, interestingly, looks a lot like Molly and had a lot of the same traits as far as her reading stuff and a lot of other traits, too, which is her brilliance, all kinds of creativity, all that good stuff.

But in sixth grade, the teachers told my sister and her husband, Molly's mom and dad, that Molly had a learning disability where she couldn't read the little words. And so my sister asked me about that.

And I'm like, "I'm no..."

pro on this or anything, but our expert, "I don't really know what they're talking about. I've never heard anything like that with anything that I've seen." And of course, I haven't since. But she would guess a lot of sight words.

A lot of people who struggle with reading guess the high-frequency words, the sight words, because so many of them look alike.

What and want and went and when, thought and though and through and tough.

So you're looking at those, especially in context, and you're like, "Wah.

How is that working? What do I do with that?"

And so Molly, would you share a little bit about your experience and all what you remember even from school time, but up through your life as far as how that works and how that's looked?

Well, I guess as far as sight words, I know you haven't really discussed the different definitions of it yet, but to me, everything was a sight word, I suppose.

That was really my only
strategy to reading any word was if I'd seen it before
or seen it enough,
I memorized it and knew what it was.
I didn't really have any other
tricks up my sleeve really for reading a word.
And I think
for me, it wasn't that I received the wrong instruction or poor
instruction or really any instruction,
because of the situation I was in. Almost everyone around me
was above grade level reading. They were all doing it, so we just kind of moved
on, and I had to
jump in and figure it out because I didn't want to
stop and point out, "Oh, hey,
I don't know how to do that. I don't know what you guys are doing or how you're
doing that." So,
I just started memorizing. Can you still hear me, yeah?
Yep, I just changed this to see why.
So I just started memorizing the words.
And, so I guess my
story with sight words is I know that the idea of
memorizing, it's only going to get you so far and
even if it's a handful of words,

it's so hard in that split second to pull those words from
your memory, and I would stumble over the smaller words
actually much more often than the larger words because they were a little bit
more unique in their picture I guess, in what they looked like.
And, in context too, those larger words that have a bit more meaning
and stuff are easier to pick out, all those smaller words that
just are talking about someone's presence or the he or she or the
connecting words,
they're not quick. You can't tell exactly which one it's going to be in context,
and you don't want to stop and figure it out because that's embarrassing.
So you just pick one real quick, and you cross your fingers, and you hope that it's
the right one and that no one notices if it isn't.
And, so that was kind of my story, and I
didn't know how others were doing it, but it was very apparent to
me that they weren't doing it how I was doing it.
They weren't
getting that flustered look in their eye when they saw those words.
They could read the larger words that they'd never seen before.
So I didn't know what they were doing, but I definitely knew it wasn't
the strategy that I was using. So that was kind of my
take all through school is I just kept looking like everyone else and hoping
no one figured it out and doing the best I could to recall as
many words as I could.

Did your teachers ever-- I've never asked you this question.

Did your teachers ever suspect, any of your teachers, besides the sixth-grade teacher that noticed you had the sight word issue?

No. They knew I was a horrible speller, and that was something we talked about a lot. I did awful on my spelling, but I think

I, for the most part, could fool everyone on the reading part because I could get the gist of it. It was the effort that it took.

Yeah.

I hated it because it was so taxing, and

I hated reading out loud. So they might have caught on with the reading out loud because I came up with a lot of ridiculous excuses to why I couldn't read out loud. I forgot my glasses.

I had to go to the bathroom always when it was my turn to read.

But other than that, no one ever specifically came up to me and asked me about reading issues. Spelling, yes, that was obvious.

I failed almost every spelling test I think in third and fourth grade.

But other than that, I don't think so.

Okay. Now, you shared this story with me about you paying recently with your charge card, and I want to be sure that you get that in here. So, and also, all of you who are listening, if you have questions, be

sure to put them in the chat because I know Molly would be happy to answer them and all. But I think it's just really fascinating to see what happens when we're trying to do that taxing stuff with our brain and figure this out. The exhausting-ness of it is just really interesting to think about.

Why you hate it because it's just like torture, right?

It is, and

especially after

talking with Emily, I've tried to be much more conscious

of looking at how I do things and how I read and seeing how

I'm now knowing how you're supposed to have been taught to read the difference, and

I'm pretty sure no one's stopping at the word "was," and that's one of the ones for me that was so difficult to recall all the time.

And I'd say the word over and over and over.

I had no other way to bring that word up besides hoping somewhere in my mind that I could bring up the picture of that word.

It never occurred to me that, well, at least I know it starts with a W. No.

I don't know why, and I don't know but it didn't.

It's a lot of words.

Yeah, and that probably sounds ridiculous to people that reading came a little bit more easy to, but that was one of the words I always, and still sometimes

skip a beat before I can write it down. So the recall's a big thing.

But, as far as recently, I was sharing with Nora just to kind of give her a little bit more insight to how the idea of memorizing these words and a lot of sight words look so similar and what happens. So I was checking out my hair place, and my hair lady has my card on file, so she handed me the tablet, and I saw my card number at the top, and I went to push the little blue button, and I looked at it, and real quick, I started to panic because I thought, "Does that say change? Does it want me to change my payment method, or giving me the option to change my payment method, or does that say charge as if I'm saying yes, go ahead and charge that?" And very quickly, I stopped, I paused in my conversation and kind of started to freak out. I didn't want to change my card. I wanted to charge it, but I wasn't sure in that instant if the word I was looking at was change or charge. They're so similar. They're one letter difference. And immediately I panicked and thought, "Oh, my gosh, if I push it and it was the wrong thing, I'm going to have to come up with some excuse." And then I took a deep breath and looked at the word, and ch, R, or, oh, there's an R, there's a er. It's charge. Charge.

And a little bit of relief. I was confident again that I knew what that word is, but that kind of thing happens and as I explain it, it sounds like it took me 30 seconds. It didn't. It happens in an instant, but it happens

all the time to where I doubt what word it is, and my first instinct is still to see a word as a whole, because that is how I started seeing words, and it was the only way I was successful without being taught, and so it's just so ingrained in me now. And even though I know now the correct process, it's so hard, and it's just automatic.

Yeah.

So-

Switching what you were doing for 30 years is a bit of a task when you've made it a habit that deep.

The more years you're doing it, the more deeply ingrained it is, for sure.

So that makes sense.

Yeah. And it's little things like those that I, and I get embarrassed, and I get flustered, and then I take a deep breath and realize, now I know how to do this. But-

Yeah

...

those habits are so hard to break, which is, sight words is the first thing you teach a child. It's a thing we're doing in pre-K and kindergarten, and my fear is that it's going to be really impossible to break those habits, because I

know how hard it is and how detrimental it can be 33 years

later, so.

Yeah. And I'm going to talk about that, because that was the other thing I wanted to talk about on that slide with you and Claire and Max is Claire and Max's experience so far. Max is in kindergarten.

Claire is in second grade. Claire came and worked with me for a few hours before she started kindergarten,

doing EBLI stuff. She learned a segment. She knew a lot of her sound to symbol.

She could blend. She was at a good start, and Molly didn't want to keep

doing-- She wanted to put her in kindergarten and have her do what they taught her to do and not have her have conflicting messages, which was

very cool and good to do. So she did, and

by first grade, October of first grade, she was

behind and below, and she was a big guesser, and she was struggling and all of that type of thing.

So Molly brought her back to me in October of first grade,

and we worked and then by the time, I don't know how many, I think about 24

hours of time that we worked, and she was up above by the end of

first grade, she was at a

second-grade level. But still, getting Claire to quit guessing and

especially, she'd say, "That's a sight word. That's it.

You got to say that automatic. You got to say it fast. You can't stop.

You can't slow down." So she's very bright and brilliant

like her mother, and she clings on to what it is that

she's learned and that she's doing, and she likes the logic of it, and so

to get her to undo that guessing was a

huge, huge, huge challenge for me.

And I've taught thousands of kids, and she just really had it deeply

ingrained already. And she's

shifting that, and I know I was just talking to Molly about it as we were

discussing this,

doing this webinar, and how once in a while she'll still do it, especially if she's

trying to go fast because first, in kindergarten, first grade, she's trying to

go really fast, and then it's like, oh, now she's guessing and all this.

They want to slow her down. So getting those mixed messages.

So she had the sight words by memorization and all of that

type of thing. And then Max, and I'm going to have you talk about that in a second,

Molly. And then Max, who is in kindergarten,

came for more time because Molly was like, "We don't want that to

happen with him." And he had worked with Hannah for many, many

sessions, doing a beautiful job. His segmenting is phenomenal and

pristine, and he's reading the little, I think, Frog and

Toad and those kinds of books, and doing a great job.

And then we got into kindergarten, especially with, he's been learning

M-I, mi, and saying it as he writes and doing all that type of thing.

And then they have the sight word my on their ring that Molly is going to share

with you, and he's just learning M-Y, my, and he's like, "What's going on?" So now he's very confused.

Because they want him to have these words in kindergarten automatically and doing them without thinking type of thing.

So can you talk about their experiences a little bit, Molly?

Yeah. So I think Claire actually was

December of kindergarten, so she'd been in school

for three or four months when their first report card came home just after

Christmas break, and she was in pretty much the lowest reading level

you could be in. And, I remember thinking going into kindergarten, I felt

confident stopping her EBLI and allowing her to

have her teacher be her authority figure and her

key or her expert or whatever.

And I didn't want to intervene, and I remember thinking, "Oh, she's got a really good base." I felt really good about it.

But by the time that report card came home in December,

she was in the lowest level, and I noticed at home that she was

just flinging. Everything was flinging and guessing quickly and

saying whatever word started with an H, whatever she could think of,

she'd throw out. It didn't even have to make sense as long as it was quick and

automatic. And I told her teachers at home, paper said, "Let me know if

you have any concerns." So I sent it back and said, "I'm really concerned that she

has gone in three months way backwards." And her teacher contacted me and said she'd agreed, that she thought she had gone backwards too, but she wasn't sure why.

And so I explained to her what we had been doing before that was working, and she agreed to try to use the language I used at home with her.

And I think we kind of stalled it. She didn't really go up or down from there. She just kind of stayed level in kindergarten.

And like you said, when she got to first grade, she was below reading level. And I think she's super stubborn like her mother, but she wanted to

please her teacher. She wanted to do what the teacher was saying, and it happened to conflict with what we were doing at home and what I believe is the best way to teach reading.

And so it was so hard. It was an uphill battle from the very beginning, and we would fight over sight word stuff all the time. I was telling Nora the other day that one of the things I remember is she would say, "my," and it was "may" in this book.

And

I'd say, "That's not the word. Read the word, know left to right, sound it out."

And she'd say, "Oh, I don't have to. I know it.

It's a sight word, it's my." And of course, I got to gloat and say, "See, that's why sight word-- We don't learn sight words like that." Like a 12-year-old is really going to care. But we had to

experience that many, many times before I could get her to even open up and realize that we needed to slow down and sound words out. And once she got to the point that she realized she saw herself succeeding doing it that way, she was on board. Because, like I said, she really wanted to succeed. Just the sight words are so much more gratifying immediately because you memorize them and right then you can say them and your teacher's like, "Great, you got them." But then when you get in a book, she couldn't produce them correctly or accurately. They weren't in order or they weren't isolated or whatever. So, it took a long time, but she now is doing really well with that. And actually, today we just discussed, she's in second grade. She came home and she said, "Mom, I only moved up one reading level, because I can't move on to the next reading level because I'm too slow. I didn't get enough words in whatever time." And I told her to ignore that because now we are finally slowing down, and she is reading and sounding out every word, and it's taking more time than they want, so they tell her she's not fluid enough. But, again, it's that delicate balance. Now I've got to say, "It's okay." I don't want to say, "They don't know what

they're talking about." But-

... I do have to say, "It's okay. Let's not worry about that.

I want you to keep going. You're doing great." So it's been a constant

struggle, but I think with her in second grade, we're finally to where we need to

be after two and a half difficult years,

that really started with that

flinging in fast and know it on sight, and you have three seconds and go.

And expecting them to be able to read a book

perfectly when there was difficult words in it.

Yeah. And I do want to clarify one thing too.

Claire, it's not that she sounds out every word. She reads what she's reading.

When she gets to a word she's unsure, she'll stop and sound it out.

And I know that in the fall, when she was tested, her teacher dinged her and

put her actually down a level because she sounded out some words.

Which is, of course, what she should be doing with the words that she's not

familiar with. But it's not like she sounds out every single thing, but she does

everything when she comes to an unfamiliar word, just like we all do.

But there's fewer and fewer of them now.

Well, and what you and I talked about earlier is perhaps in second

grade, this isn't necessarily where they want her to be.

She should maybe be more fluent,

which would've totally been possible had we

not had so much difficulty in kindergarten and first grade.

This is where she is at in the reading process because she didn't get any of that decoding instruction in first grade, or kindergarten, very little in first grade.

So she is in the appropriate spot now in her reading journey, but I would assume probably,

I know she could've been had we started earlier, and maybe should be at a different place. So that's what they're looking at when they listen to-

And we're okay with it. Yeah. We got her accurate.

I just wanted to-

What?

Sorry, Nora. I just wanted to jump in for a quick second because I think this is relevant as you guys are discussing this now.

Rachel said to Molly, "Maybe you should say they don't know what they're talking about as far as the teachers of Claire." And I thought the two of you might want to address that with Ms. Claire's, A, with her personality- ...

and B, with kind of the fine line you tread with all of that.

Absolutely. So,

I totally believe in being respectful, and I

hope that everyone here, and teachers know that when I say that I don't agree with their teaching in this reading, I love all of

the teachers at my children's school. I am very hands-on. I'm there all the time.

I appreciate them. They are phenomenal people.

I just happen to think they

haven't heard this stuff, the science and the reading that everyone else is now grasping onto. They're just not there yet.

So it's so important for me,

to let my daughter to know to be respectful.

I don't want her to say, "You have no idea what you're talking about," or, "My mom said you're wrong."

So that's super difficult for me to

still teach her to be respectful and appreciative of her teacher,

and yet me maybe disagree with the way she's learning to read.

It's totally been a struggle.

Yeah. Well, and Claire does like to do what she wanted to

do what her teacher said, or teacher said-- And the day that she finally said, "Oh, this works better." Oh my gosh. Because it was hard.

Right

about when Emily got here is when it started to turn around, actually.

That was about 10 or 11 sessions. I'm like, "Oh my gosh." Because she just gas fling, "My teacher said to do this, and this is..." And then one time she said to me, "You know, there's a lot of kids in my class that could use Ebley."

And I'm like, "I bet there are, Claire." Because she's very perceptive about-

Pretty much everything. But yeah, she was a good guesser too.

Okay. So let me see. I'm going to share my screen again and see

where we...

Let me get back here.

And then Max again went from doing the sounds to doing the letter names to being confused, and now I think he's got the word my, right, Molly?

Yeah. Yes.

Yeah.

My is one we now for sure have. But

I've had the same struggle with him and part of it, I think, being is the kids don't want to learn from their mom, so that's really difficult too.

But

when I feel like we gain a lot with him and I feel really great, he goes back to school the next day and goes right back to stomping out letter names and so it's like one step forward, two steps back. So

we're still kind of at a loss and I'm not sure.

I think probably this summer we'll kind of go hot and heavy with it hopefully.

But

that's so

much easier. That's fun and he's yelling out letter names and he's stomping things. And when we work and sound out, it's hard and it's taxing and he's like , "I want to go back to stomping and yelling." And so it's difficult.

And it would be such a different thing if they were doing it in their classroom. If they were doing it in their classroom and you could reinforce it at home. And we see the same thing at our reading center is where we're teaching them in one hour a week and then they go back to 30 hours a week of school getting look at the picture and guess the word and memorize and all that, stamp out the letters and all those types of things.

So that's a challenge to try to overcome those bad habits as they're being made or after they're being made too.

And I think to that same point, sometimes they're getting both even in the classroom.

Yes.

I have seen some-

A great point ... phonics or decoding instruction, but then you're also doing these sight words and they're just-- I can see for my kids they're confused.

They're getting both. They don't know when to sound out, when do they have three seconds to say the word, when can they sound out each sound. And they're also five and six years old, so it's difficult to infer, to put that together. So I think not even is it difficult having some instruction at home and a different instruction in class, but within their class, they're utterly confused it

seems like to me. They're getting both and-

Yeah. Very isolated instruction and different things and all this different-- It's kind of like having several puzzles that are different puzzles and you're trying to put them together as all the same picture when it's like there's all these different puzzles and this isn't working.

And I mean, even when people a lot of times are teaching by sound, because I know that they have a lot of the balanced literacy stuff and the guess and look at the picture and the level texts and those types of things.

But even sound-based stuff will go to the sight words and where they've been doing sounds for everything else and then they go to the sight words and W-A-S, was, and the kids are like.

That disconnect. Trying to be consistent so that you're putting your kids on the same horse and keeping them on that horse will fly. The kids then will fly. Like in our Ebly classrooms, I think teachers on here, maybe you could share if you're an Ebly teacher how that works when you're teaching all of the words in the same manner instead of saying, "This horse for these kinds of words and this horse for these kinds of words and this horse for these kinds of words." So you have to figure out what kind of word and which horse to get on, which strategy to use for it.

So yeah, that's

a big struggle for sure

and causing a lot of confusion. So trying to help teachers,

that's where we're going to next, you guys.

To help teachers to

figure out what can we do where we can streamline, and instead of making more work for ourself and doing more things, streamlining to be more effective and more efficient.

And really knowing that

our philosophy with Ebly and what we're always looking at is less is more.

We don't need more tools in our toolbox.

We need better tools and a smaller toolbox that are going to get all the jobs done that we need, whatever the essential components of reading or writing or spelling or handwriting, all of those things and being as streamlined and efficient as possible.

So that's what we want to do with sight words and of course with all words.

So all right. Now I'm going back again here.

Okay. So I want to talk about the term sight words and

high-frequency words. We use, like for this webinar, I used the

term sight words because that is more commonly known as a language of education, a language that parents know. Okay?

We have the sight words ring or the sight words list or the sight words stuff that we're supposed to be doing. And in instruction, so many programs have sight words as part of their

terminology, basically. So in our app and in this, we

call it sight words so people can relate to that language.

But really what we call all of these words are high-frequency words

because they're words that happen frequently. Right?

That definition is pretty obvious as

far as high-frequency words. We don't really look at those words any different than

any other words. Okay? And the term sight words, this comes from David Kilpatrick,

who I love. A wonderful, brilliant man who has done a lot to

change the face of literacy along with Emily Hanford, which is exciting.

But he talks about in his book, "Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and

Overcoming Reading Difficulties." Again, if you haven't read that book, get it.

It's phenomenal.

But his three different definitions, the first one is what Molly was talking about,

like basically memorizing every single word like we did with D**k and Jane back in

the day, which is what I had when I was

in school. We had the D**k and Jane books.

But so it's basically the whole word memorize everything term.

The second one is the one that most people think of as sight words, and they're

irregular words that cannot adequately, with another Y there, sorry, be

sounded out. Okay? Now I'm going to talk a little bit differently about them than

that somewhat, but basically they're those words that we say they

have unusual spellings, they

... that first for sounds and how do we get the kids to read them?

This is what we're talking about, changing that term from sight word to high

frequency word. So from this slide on, unless I'm talking about our apps or whatever, I'm going to be referring to these as high frequency words.

So words that happen a lot in books, those connector words, those words that they look a lot alike, that type of thing, and they have unusual spellings.

Now, a sight word, and this is what David talks about in his book, is one that can be instantly recognized. Now, that doesn't mean memorized.

It means that you have read that word, you've gone through it and said the sounds and read that word enough times so now it's

automatic. Us great readers, we don't go through and say s-i-ght, sight, w-ord, word. We don't go through it.

Who would read if we did that, right? We don't do that.

And we also don't have to teach every single piece of the code to be able to do that, because there's patterns and tendencies in the English alphabetic code.

So if you give the kids a systematic, explicit instruction and structure around how to learn

a significant portion of the code, they apply it through reading to everything that they do.

So what he's talking is called orthographic mapping, really, where you're mapping the letters to the sound, and you do it automatically without even thinking. So it's like when you learn to drive, you're thinking about every single thing, ten and two, and it takes you a half hour to get a mile, right?

When kids are learning to drive. I can drive five hours and not even have a conscious thought about driving because it's just automatic.

However, if there's a detour or an accident, then I get back to that sensorimotor level where I have to pay attention. Okay?

So what we're talking about is a sight word is one of those that we have sounded out accurately, okay, and figured it out accurately enough, so now it's in our automatically in our bank so that when we read it, we can do it automatically. So that is what the term is sight word, and it's becoming more common, and people are learning more about that.

But traditionally, the sight word was meant to just talk about those words that happen a lot and have spellings that are not as common. Okay?

So when I'm talking about high frequency words from now on, those are that sight word definition of number two is what I'm speaking of.

Oopsie. So high frequency words. So here's some things about instruction in high frequency words. Okay?

Now, this is just a small portion, of course, of all instruction, but with Ebley, we teach it the exact same way as we teach every single word.

We don't have different, we don't have to make up a story or a rule or anything about any of them. Okay?

So all words can be sounded out. People say, "We can't sound that out." Well, if we can speak it, it can be sounded out, because if we're speaking it, it's made up of sound.

So we can break it down to the sounds, and it's the spellings that are applied to it that may be what's different.

So our first question here is should students memorize high

frequency words on flashcards? Now, we trained thousands of teachers. We're in lots and lots of schools and classrooms, and typically, even with Ebley-trained teachers, I'll go into a classroom or a school. One time, it was in a lunchroom, and I saw one of those rings of flashcards, and I was like, "Should I hide it? Should I throw it away? What could I do to get rid of that ring of flashcards?" Because what's happening, and this is what Molly talks about with Clear and Max too, is you have this ring of flashcards, and your kids go through, and they memorize them, and then they're tested on them, and if they don't say them in three seconds, typically, you have to move on to the next one because you've got to do these snap words or whatever kind of words they're called.

Red words,
high frequency words, sight words, those types of words.

So they want them to just read them automatically so they can connect all these words together in sentences. Okay?

So we say absolutely no on memorizing on sight words. Okay? And the reasoning is when you memorize them as a whole, as Molly said, then they're going to get all confused, especially when you go to apply them. You're going to look at of and say for.

A lot of kids look at and and say said. Isn't that interesting?

But they're very common words, and they have some of the same letters, and they just will fling that. And, of course, they're not comprehending because it makes no sense in what they're reading. If you look at though and thought and through and

tough, they interchange those. They usually pick one of those and say it for every time that comes up because they're looking at it as a whole.

What, want, when, went. Those look almost exactly the same, too.

So when you memorize them on

flashcards, it can look okay in kindergarten, especially if your kids have a good memory. You can make it look good when we did the first however many sight words, but when you have them go into text is when it falls out, and especially when they get to about third grade and when you have-- I've read research that said about 2,000 to 3,000 words is how many that we can memorize.

And about a year ago or so, I read something that talked about how 5,000 is the max. That's the maximum number of words that any brain, no matter how brilliant you are, can manage. And that might get you to about a fourth-grade level or so.

But if you notice, most of the time when kids fall apart, it's third grade.

Sorry, third-grade teachers, but this is true.

Second grade, they get well on their way. That's where my daughter did it.

But third grade for sure. And it's because their memory is too

full, and they're putting more words in their memory,

and it's just not going to work. Like what Molly says, like p**f, is that charge or is that change? So it's not possible to do.

By the time you're going into high school, depending on the research that you read, it says anywhere from 5,000 words to-- No, 20,000 to 80,000. 20,000 to 80,000 words that you should have in your reading vocabulary, basically.

Now, if you can memorize a maximum of 5,000, that leaves you 15,000 to 75,000 that you have to memorize, okay? And then you have to try to guess, I guess, not memorize, because it's not going to work. So it gets all jumbled up, and that's why our state scores and all scores in third grade are like, "Well, we're 50%." Okay.

But then it goes down.

And that's really why. So we don't want to start with sight words or high frequency words or any words where we're memorizing them as a whole.

And Molly, can you talk about your experience with the ring thing?

The sight word ring?

Yeah. This little beauty right here. It's color-coded and everything.

So I was just in my son's kindergarten class last week, and they got to 11 on here. I'm looking.

They got to we, so that's 11. So we're several months into the year, and they're through 11 words.

And some days Max can guess most of them, and some days he can't. It depends on if I catch him at a tired moment, sometimes he only gets part of them or whatever.

But the way they do that in class is they have one girl that is the reader in the class that can read the words, and she stands up at the head of the class and holds the words up and says, "My," and then they

all say, "M-Y, my," as they're stomping.

And

they love it because they're jumping around and they're saying things and they're

all screaming. But when we come home,

and we sound it out, like I said, he does really, really great.

And we use our Edli board, and we do the sound

lines and everything. But then when I go to show him on

the flash card again, it's really interesting.

Sometimes even though we just worked on it, he can't pull that

word up, and he's trying to think of it. Should he guess?

Which one did that come after? Do we just do M that follows

we on the sight word ring? He's

completely confused still. And again,

there's 53 words on this that

they have to get through, and they're on 11

at the end of January, middle of January here.

So

it's clearly not working, but also trying to do the

instruction I know works at home is conflicting with what he's doing there, and

so it's just not working.

And we're still-

Since the beginning of kindergarten, when they all came in, that's what they've

been doing.

Yeah.

And that's interesting that there's only 11 words.

They got a lot of words to go through then before the end of the year.

Yeah. I don't know if these are her

51 words that she wants. The other sheet that I had, I think, has

25 on them that their school handed out.

There's 25 sight words that they want them to know.

But interesting enough, the words that are on the sheet that were

given out from the school as a whole don't match

a lot of the words that are on the ring either. So on that- ...

exactly sure on that. On just another.

Now I'm confused, he's confused, we're all confused.

And we're pretty much still all in the same spot as we were on day one of

kindergarten. Every day they shout out the number of days they're on, and when I

was in there last week, there was 77 days of kindergarten.

I thought, "77 days of kindergarten, and we're on

word 11." And-

Hmm

... on a good day, we get eight of them correct. So...

Wow. That's very interesting. So now we're obviously going to go on.

I'm looking at my time, I'm like, "Oh, we're going to go over an hour," and I hope

you guys are okay with that. But

for sure, we're going to go over an hour.

I'm wondering, so if you can't stay, I understand.

We will send you the recording, too.

But I think that this is an important conversation to

keep going with. And so I'm going to do that and see if there's any questions, and then we'll keep going with our other questions and try to move a little bit faster.

But Hannah, is there anything pressing or burning that you would like to ask of Molly or me?

Okay. I think that the most pressing for those who have to get off after an hour, because I know that you're going to get into the how, that's been a big question people have been asking, how to teach it.

There are some assessment questions which I think you can get into later, but I think the biggest one is Daryl and Ashley and Viviana, and I'm sure multiple people are wondering what to say to others who don't get it yet, or are obsessed with the list of high-frequency words to teach in each grade. Or even Ashley said those who are already trained in Edli are still hanging on to having to assess and teach the words by sight and how to explain it to parents, that kind of a thing.

Yeah, that's a tricky one, obviously.

I

wish I knew that answer,

for real because an

excellent Edli teacher who is doing phenomenal and loves

Edli that I was coaching a while back in their school, and I heard in her room, actually, her kids were doing W-A-S, and they clapped and they'd say was. And I went and I said to her, I'm like, "Wonder if maybe they could do the sounds with that." So I think that a lot of times there's this disconnect that these words are somehow different and special in a way that something different has to be done. So really when I say to people, because I've heard, we all have heard, I'm sure, but that certain words can't be sounded out. But when you talk about how every single word could be sounded out because it's made up of sounds, even a really weird word like, I don't know, aisle, like the aisle in a grocery store, A-I-LE. They're sounds that we put together.

So thinking of it and trying to explain it from that simple piece, I think is a real light bulb moment where you're just like, all the words can then be sounded out. We also teach by sound first, and then we match the spellings. We do what's called linguistic phonics, where you go sound, and then we don't show them the letters in the explicit instruction type of thing.

Kids understand. If they can segment, they understand that words are made up of sounds. So they can segment every single word, right?

We just say the sounds, and little kids have an easier time with that.

So I think trying to explain to the adults, if we change and combine a puzzle of a Christmas tree with a puzzle of a snow globe and try to put the pieces together over that, even if the shapes are the same, it's not going to look right together.

It's going to be awkward and hard and challenging.

And so if we're changing the instruction of how we're teaching kids things,

that's going to make it hard and awkward and challenging for them, too.

So if you guys have good suggestions or any suggestions on that,

I am all ears on that because- I've been working for over 20

years to try to... And I think that teachers, once they get into Abley and they

start to do that, we've pushed our high-frequency words right into

our lessons,

to show how that works, and I think that that helps them too.

But our kindergarten teachers are not getting to that until probably

into a couple of months, where you're going to do words more like why

and she, and those kinds of things.

And they want those to be automatically at the beginning.

So it's a whole shift of thinking, and it's

not going to happen all at once. I've learned that the hard way

because I'm impatient. I'm like, "Come on, we can do this." But it's hard to shift,

and it's hard to change. It's hard for kids to quit guessing.

It's hard for kids to quit looking at the picture, even if they

know it's not working for them. Claire would say to me, "Thank you, Aunt Nora, for

covering up the picture, because that helps me." Because she just automatically

looks at it. So it's hard, as an adult, to change the whole way

that you've done things. So I think that being mindful and

respectful about that, like, "I know that this is hard, but maybe let's try it just

with a few words." Like when I see words like it and an and a,

on sight word rings, I'm like, "Those are very easy words.

We could teach those in week two of kindergarten." We do teach those,

where they can learn those and read those, and those are no problem.

So why would we show them as a whole to memorize? So we don't want to do that.

And I don't know exactly what the right thing is to say.

I'm hoping you guys have some good suggestions.

I was just thinking, Nora, too, about how over the years, we have shifted to

where our energy goes toward those who are ready to hear it, like-

Yeah

... everybody who's on this webinar, and against fighting those who aren't ready

to hear it.

That's a very good point, Hannah. Yeah.

Because we have tried both ways, and

teachers who come to our trainings kicking and screaming, it's like they're not

ready. They're not going to be. But the ones who are ready are going to do it.

Yeah.

So we know now where to put our energy, and I think that that's really important

for teachers, too.

Yeah, and I think that that is true.

Getting people to ask you questions, that what we say to

administrators, "Please don't train all your teachers. Don't do that.

You're going to waste their time and energy and your money.

And train a small cohort and do a pilot, and see, so that you can ease people in to especially something that's so different than what they're already doing, like Abley." So that you can ease them in and respect people who are just like, "No, I don't want to hear anything that you're going to say about that." Sometimes, all the times, really, if people aren't ready to change, then we really have to respect that. That's a hard thing for me, too, because I want to say, "Let me show you," or, "Let me..." But if you're just not ready, you're just not ready.

And we don't have a lot of control over that.

And people ask me a lot of times, like, "Why don't you advertise with Abley very much?" Or, "Why don't you..." We want the people who are open and ready for this kind of instruction to be the ones that we're attracting because then they will be successful, and we will be successful in helping them, and their kids will be successful. And then other people, and we've seen it over the years, will start to say, "Hey, what are you doing?" Or, "Oh, tell me more about that." Some people dive in, other people need to put their toe in, and then just their foot, and then they need to go in really slowly. And so I think that that's an important point, Hannah. Thank you for sharing that.

Yeah. One of the biggest things that the teachers will say is like, they saw what my kids could do after I-

Yeah. Well, yeah, that-

And that-

... that is a big one, too. When you're like, "Wait a minute, your kids are here

and my kids are here, and this is not...

Maybe I need to know more about what you're doing." That's one way that it can go.

But-

Well-

... you know.

I think this is a very important one, too, in the time that we have left, and I

know that you're going to get to the, they really want to know about the how to teach sight words-

Yeah, we're going to go. We're just not going to stop at 8:00 or 8:30 probably even.

But Sarah had said this, and I think Molly, for you to address this, she's wondering how you could only get to those 11 sight words with him getting that instruction outside of school, that is the effective instruction. How is it possible that he's still struggling that much?

Yeah, and I went to type a few times and then was like, "I'm just going to wait till there's a pause."

Right.

So I think it was unclear. So the 11 sight words is how far, Sarah, they have got in school as a class as a whole. And Max sometimes can do all 11. Like I said, if he's tired and stuff, sometimes he misses them.

But in a book, like if we go to text in reading, he misses them quite often.

But as far as reading, if I sit down with Max and read through a book, he actually does a really excellent job. He's pretty good.

He knows almost all his sounds. And he does really well at blending them together.

I actually took a video and sent it to his teacher and said, "He can actually read.

He read this book. Here it is." But it takes him quite a while.

He's going to read h-

a- t, "hot." And sometimes I have to take him through that.

And the other day, he asked me, "How do you spell hotdog?" And I said, "You know how. You could spell hotdog." And he said, "No, I can't."

And I said, "Yes, you can. What's the first sound in hotdog?" "H." "Yep, what's the symbol for h?" And he went through, and he spelled each word by himself. And I said, "Look at that." And this big, bright smile on his face.

He couldn't believe it because

the disconnect comes in thinking that

reading is spitting out the word right away, seeing it on sight, and knowing

it. So he always feels discouraged when I go to a book with him or when I'm teaching him a word because it's not instant.

And in school, he's pointed to a word, and if he

can't read it instantly, they go onto the next. They give them three seconds.

So that's where the disconnect is.

He's frustrated and sad and upset when we read together, we spell words

out together here because it's a much different process, and he

thinks he's failing at it, when actually he's doing so phenomenal, and it breaks my heart that he doesn't know how phenomenal he is. And it always ends in tears.

His tears, my tears. We're just all crying.

I sometimes call me Nora, cry to her.

And so then shame on me, but I let it go for a week, two weeks sometimes because it's so emotional on both of us that I just let it go. And then, I get up the gusto to try again, and he does great, and we're doing great.

The last time we worked on sight words, I couldn't believe it.

He was- He was doing excellent. So one of the sight words was my, and he did really good, so then I said, "Well, what if we put a b before it?" So then we did by, and then we went on and on and on. I showed him all the words with those sounds that he could make, and my husband went out to get some wood and came back in, and here we both were crying.

And he's like, "What happened?" In that small amount of time that he went out to get wood and came back in, it just all fell apart.

He got frustrated, and it wasn't automatic, and it wasn't like they're supposed to be in school. And so that's the disconnect.

The instant gratification, the three seconds, the know it by seeing it, and then the work that he puts in when we're at home.

And, I keep telling him, "You shouldn't read instantly.

You're not there yet." So, I didn't explain that very well before, so hopefully that makes a little bit more sense and gives some insight into why we go back and forth and why I feel like we're not really gaining what we should be gaining.

Okay, I'm going back to the screen, and I'm going to go a little bit faster, you guys.

Do my best there. Thank you, Molly.

Okay. Can high-frequency words be sounded out?

And I already addressed that. Every single word can be sounded out.

If you're speaking a word, it can be sounded out, okay?

And then we'll match the spellings to it, whether they're common spellings or less common spellings. We don't have to do any fancy singing or dancing or

explaining about this is this, and that is that, or this is this kind of a letter, or any of that.

We say the sounds, and the letters are symbols to represent it. That's it. Okay?

So there is not a word that can't be sounded out. Okay?

And that's really important to know.

And again, I'm showing you this little tiny piece of a whole entire process that we do with EBLI, but these points on this screen are crucial to the way that you do it. A lot of people teach sight words by sounds or high-frequency words by sound. There are people that do that, but they come up with a lot of song and dance. I watched

one that was two and a half minutes to teach the word some. Okay?

We teach the word some in 10 seconds or so, okay, with the kids.

So effective, efficient,

and not confusing, and not all this stuff that we're pouring in, especially into

little kids' brains, that are like, "Blah. What is all that about?" All right?

So yes, all words can be sounded out.

Should high-frequency words be taught differently than other words? No.

We teach all words the same. We say the sounds, we match the spellings to them.

It's pretty straightforward. Okay?

So we teach the spelling and reading at the same time, too, along with a whole lot

of other things, phonemic awareness and all that, piled into the same

activities, which is what, again, makes it so effective and efficient.

So all words are taught the same. Put your kids on the same horse,

keep them on that horse, and don't make them go

jumping from horse to horse and figuring out which horse they're supposed to be at,

okay?

Should we time the kids when assessing high-frequency word knowledge?

I think this is cruel, personally, okay?

To put kindergarten kids in front of lists of high-frequency words and

asking them to do it automatically.

And again, David Kilpatrick's book that I talked about, I was just looking at that

one. I've looked at that book for the last three years and going back

to it and talking about that, and I even wrote down here,

stable memory of spelling patterns is a phrase that he used.

So it comes from you sound the words out, you blend them together.

That process alone for a kindergartener is

huge, and they get to practice it before we expect them to

become automatic. Okay? I would never say, "I want you to do EBLI, and I'm

not going to teach you how to do it. You need to go do it automatically." Okay?

To be a

teacher, to be anything, we don't ask anybody to just automatically

do something at this high level. Something that Molly shared in the At a Loss

for Words was really poignant to me, where she said, "When I

was in Claire's classroom and listening to what they were telling the kids to

do, those were my dirty secrets." That's not what good

readers do. That's what poor readers do, readers that struggle do.

That's the things that they do. Okay?

So asking kids to read sight words and timing them in three

seconds is a--

Now, some kids can do it, okay. We all know that.

We have those high flyers that can go through it, but most of them are not going

to. And if you look at them in third grade, a lot of times, we can make them look

okay in kindergarten and get those words on the ring where we know the next word

that's coming, and they can use their memory from that, too.

But when they're actually in text and when they get to third grade, look at them in

third grade, and you will see that guessing of those sight words is just

like, "Oh my gosh, you guys. Stop." Because it's so prevalent, and it's more prevalent in struggling readers.

So, don't ask them to

three seconds or take it away. I don't think that that's a good plan at all. Do we do letter names or do we do letter sounds?

That's another thing that I was looking at some stuff because I wanted to share some more resources for you to help

with this idea of teaching these high-frequency words

by sounds. But so many are talking about the letter names or using the letter names, or like the word some that we did.

The first sound is s, and then /um/, but then this is the S, and we're going to do the /um/, and then this is a strange piece, and this is another strange piece, and this is the O, and it says the /uh/ sound, and this is the E, and it doesn't say anything. And I'm like, "Wow, I'm so confused, and I even know how to do this," right? So think of being a five or six-year-old and doing that. Or just memorize the whole word.

So when we're mixing up sounds and letter names when

we're doing instruction, it's like using-- My kids' names are

Hannah, Colleen, and Kelly. Now, if I were to say to you, "Jo's going to have a baby, and Louise got a new dog, and Therese is living in Hawaii,"

even probably my own children, but anybody who knows them, my relatives, my good friends that may know them, they'd be like, "What are you talking about?"

Those are their middle names. I'm not going to get rid of their middle names, but

their middle names are not what's really relevant in day-to-day life.

Their first names are. In reading, the letter names are not what's

relevant in being able to read. The sounds are. Okay?

Every single consonant letter name, without exception, are at least two sounds.

Okay? B, /b/, E, C, /c/, E, N, /n/,

W, /d/, /ə/, /b/, O, /y/, U. A lot of them. R, /a/, /r/.

Two sounds. Okay? So when we teach them the letter name, you're going to have

a lot of letter name confusion, especially when that memory's getting maxed out.

And we have taught- Many

people who could not read at all and a whole lot more than

that who were very low-level, low elementary level readers.

All of them knew their letter names.

If they were second grade and older, every one of them knew their letter names, but

they still couldn't read. So it's not the letter names that are helping you do the

read, it's the sounds we need to access.

The sounds

are

what's represented by the work that make up the words. Okay?

It's not the names of the letters. So we are really obsessive about

sounds. Now, will you say the letter name once in a while?

Except for obviously a vowel sound, because sometimes the vowels are the letter

names, but never the consonants. So we train ourselves and we

train our kids to go by sounds when they're reading and sounds when they're

spelling. Okay? And whether it's high-frequency words, whether it's, again, any kind of word, they're all the same.

So sounds not the letter names.

So what do you do when the students guess these high-frequency words when they're reading? Now, this happens all the time, and what we do

is we just go back and we point at it and the kids will go up and sound it.

They'll say from, for, or, or of, they'll say... That's a favorite.

So from, for, of. We'll come back and we'll point at the of, of.

Oh, then they read it. But again, it's that habit that's deeply ingrained.

It's just like the habit is deeply ingrained of teaching sight words on flashcards for teachers. The habit is deeply ingrained of guessing those sight words and just flinging out whatever. We have to go back, we have to do a lot of repetitions of doing it by sound for that to override the flinging it out by memory.

Now, if you start, our kindergarten teachers will tell you, if you start doing this process with kids in kindergarten, you don't have guessers.

It's really kind of fun. They're not going to do it.

They know the process and how to go about doing it, so we don't have to worry about that, thank goodness. So if you're saying and for said and of for from and was for saw, is it going to affect your comprehension? This is something that often is a disconnect about.

People are like, "Oh, I didn't even think about that." Of course, we don't say Jim said Jan went together

to the store or whatever. That doesn't even make sense when the word is and.

So we know when they fling in those words that that comprehension

isn't there, especially when they do it a lot.

And your

guessers will do that a lot. So we don't want them to be guessing

those words, and they're going to be guessing those words if we're teaching the

majority of our kids. Again, none of this applies to everybody because you're going

to have those high flyers that even if you don't teach them the code and you don't

teach them by sound, they're going to figure it out on their own. All right?

That's not a high percentage of them, but that is some kids that will.

But more and more

your kids who are

just much more not going to pick up on it.

And I think that

our teachers on here that you see that

with your kids, that it's getting more and more of a challenge.

Okay, Hannah, before we go to our next thing, are there any questions that I need

to address?

The biggest pressing one is they want to know the how, and specifically-

Okay

... Michael wants to know about the word one, and Mary wants

to know how many words to teach, which words to teach, how to group

the words.

The word was, of course, came up.

Okay. I think the word was-

And then another question about assessment. So kind of two things.

A, do you think that they should do regular assessment on sight words?

And B, what to do about those assessments that mark the kids wrong if

they sound them out,

versus just saying it within three seconds.

And this was an interesting one talking about,

Sandra and Sarah are wondering about if Max is

sounding out every single sound, if that's going to hinder comprehension when

he's reading. And then Sarah's wondering if maybe the book he's reading

is too difficult, that kind of a thing.

Well, and I think any of us could, because you taught him too, Hannah, but we know

with Max, he's five. Well, he just turned six.

So he's six, he's learning the code.

He's sounding out less, he's sounding out faster.

He is not doing that as much. That's what happens is you start out sounding out all

the words, and you start reading decodable books, ideally,

so that what you've been taught, hopefully, in

explicit instruction, the text matches it. There's a good idea.

Right? Instead of teaching A is A and B is B, and then reading, I

see a butterfly, I see a caterpillar,

the text does not match the instruction.

So you want this instruction so they can practice doing it, just like you're going to teach a

skill in basketball or gymnastics, and then you're going to practice that.

You aren't going to teach dribbling and then go practice, I don't know, layups or something like that. You're going to practice what you've explicitly taught.

So the way your kids do that is by doing it in reading,
and then they have to say those sounds and blend them together,
and they become more automatic with time.

But kindergartners,
unless they're taught by sound,
very,

what do I want to say? All the way through, they're not going to sit down and
say, "The cat sat on the whatever," and just be
fluent with that. It should not be expected.

But he's not sounding out every word laboriously and doing that.

He's gotten so much faster. At the very beginning, he's going to.

So is every
new learner, pretty much.

I want to interrupt you and say, I totally get what she's saying because
watching from someone who hadn't seen this process before,
I thought it was laboriously. Do you remember?

I-

Oh, yeah

... he'd walk on-

I, yep

... I said, "He's so good." I was like, "Are you sure?" Even with Claire,

it took so long, and I was like, "Are you sure she's doing good?"

Because for a while, it was every word.

And I was like-

Oh, wow

... "Oh, my goodness, I don't think she's ever going to get this.

I don't think this is working." And then all of a sudden, you have to see it

to believe it. And obviously, I didn't understand it because I wasn't taught that

way, and I never went through this process.

But all of a sudden, there's a couple words they don't sound out, and you

think, "Oh, they're memorizing those ones." Or it's like, and then all of a sudden

it's a little more, and then all of a sudden they're reading sentences.

I remember turning to Claire and saying, "Oh my gosh, you read that sentence." And

she looked at me like, "We've been reading these books for..." But she read it

without sounding anything out. So I totally understand what you're saying, Sarah,

like, oh, maybe you should go to a- It's a different book, but I didn't

understand the process until I saw it. They do.

It is so labor-intensive, and they are sounding out, in the beginning,

every single sound, and it's like-

Yeah

... "Oh my goodness, how do we even know what we're talking about anymore?" But

then all of a sudden, one day, they're reading, and they can read everything.

My second-grade daughter could really sound out almost anything if she's given the time, and it's really amazing.

So I get that-

Yeah

... being someone that didn't know that process before.

Right. Yeah, and I think that that's a good point, too, that we should expect them to sound out everything at first, and that it's cumulative. It's like you're doing this, you're doing this, and the blending, it's like with anything that you're brand new at.

Learning a new dance or something like, "Woo, I'm tripping all over my feet, and this is not going very smooth." And then pretty soon, you're getting smoother and smoother after more repetitions, and it's the same with-- Reading is the hardest thing that we do as humans. So we're asking them to do all these skills, to learn all this information, to do all this stuff, and then we just want them to do it automatically at five years old. It's not developmentally at all appropriate to do that or to ask of that.

And I think that what Molly was saying, too, it's not like he's sounding out every single word at this point in time. But at the beginning, we're having books that have two words on a page. And they're doing that, and it's laborious for us adults who are automatic readers.

It is not laborious for those kids who are learning it.

And I have a dear friend, his name's John Corcoran, and he's a author of "The

Teacher Who Couldn't Read," another book I'd put on your list if I were you.

And he didn't learn to read till he was 48 years old, and he was a high school teacher of history, actually, for 17 years, reading at about a first-grade level.

And he says-- Actually, somebody just asked me yesterday for

a video. He was taught by Pat Lindamood back in the '80s, I think it

was. And he was going through every sound and laboriously

blending them together like r-u-run,

run. And he said it was the most exciting thing, by that time he was a real estate

developer, exciting thing I'd ever done in my whole life.

And I'd show people this video, and they'd be like, "What is wrong with you?

How boring." And he said, "I was so offended." He's now in his 80s, and he says,

"I'm still offended, actually. This was so thrilling and exciting to me," and

people are like, "How boring." So our process

and perception of it where we're at is very different from these kids.

These kids know the difference of they're really reading as opposed to they're just

memorizing a book or trying to memorize some of the words and look at the picture

to get the rest of it. So,

we have to look at the difference between our perception of it and the kids'

perception and also, where they're at in the process, really.

Anything else? Oh, hi, Max. How are you?

Speaking of Max, this is-- Oh, hi, Claire and Bella.

Hi, guys. Good night.

We got a party.

Hi.

Hi, guys. Thanks for saying hi.

Um-

All right. So now the how. Yeah, go ahead, Anna.

Well, their biggest thing, yeah. They want to know-

How. Now, and I'm going to say this, too.

Many of these questions that you're asking, and I do want, if you're

Ebley-trained, hop in on this and help me out with this too.

I cannot teach you how to do all of these things that you're asking

in an hour-long, even if we were talking about the teaching part for an hour-long.

It's interesting to me, coming from a nursing background, when we would go to a conference, we never would go to a conference and think, "They're going to teach us how to," I don't know, "intubate a baby or how to whatever."

We thought we're going to go and learn more information.

We're going to go and learn more about it, okay?

They might demonstrate and that type of thing.

But as I present and have over the years at conferences and stuff, and look at the evaluations, teachers are expecting that they're going to come into that hour presentation, and they're going to learn how to do what it is that you are teaching. And I'm like, "Whoa." It wasn't even in my mind to think to try to teach them that. So I am going to show you the process, and if you teach by sound and you do this type of thing, you totally will have it, and I'll talk about all the words you're talking about.

But I can't answer all of those questions.

The sight word thing is a small piece of our entire curriculum that we teach, starting from building the foundation and then scaffolding up to more and more and more. So teaching your kids to memorize or even teaching phonics and phonics rules, and then try to teach all of the sight words by sound in this way is going to be confusing to them and to you, too.

What I'm trying to say is I'm trying to educate you and also demonstrate, okay?

That I do, we do, you do, but I'm not expecting for, I'm going to show you this couple minute video and this other one, and we're going to talk about it, and p**f, now you're able to go and teach it. Even Ebley-trained teachers that go through our entire Ebley training and get the coaching and all that goes with it, still it's a process. They're like kids learning to read.

It takes them many months, sometimes a school year, before they're automatic. In the second school year, they're like, "I'm a pro," but they're at the sensory motor level learning all of these skills and concepts and information and the error correction and how to be diagnostic and prescriptive and when do we scaffold and when do we gradually release the responsibility more to them, and how does that look?

So you're probably going to have more questions than answers, I may say.

I'm going to show you what it looks like, how it goes.

I'm going to recommend, actually, our app that's \$5.

That that can teach your kids more because teaching something is a whole lot more challenging than learning it.

So you can dabble in it, for sure, try it with your words that are simple words, like in and at, and all those types of things or whatever.

But the process is the key, and it's scaffolded, too.

So there's going to be holes in what you're like, "Well, what about this, and what about that?" And I can't tell you all of that in a short amount of time.

So that's my little disclaimer on that whole thing.

But I am going to show you what it looks like so you have an idea of it and the what and the why and the how, okay?

Claire's going to demonstrate in a second in this little quick video, our Sight Words app. I highly recommend this, especially if you have kids second grade and older. This is not one, typically, unless you're going to be with them to help the reading of the sentences, that are for our littler kids.

We have two other apps that are beginning-level instruction, and many a kid has been taught how to read by the apps.

Other ones need obviously more instruction, but I would definitely try that out.

So these are available on Android devices and phones, iPads and iPhones, and Kindle Fire And schools that buy them on an iPad get a 50% discount if they get 20 or more subscriptions. So this is what it looks like there.

So I'm going to show you Max and Claire.

I went over to their house and videotaped them doing the app,

and here's the word "my" that had been Max's nemesis, but he's got it now.

And Max has had some glitches with the sound, so I'm going to show you

Claire's and some of the words, and what we

do. Now, we purposefully group words that are a visual

nightmare, words like "what," "want," "when," and "went," and "of,"

"off," "for," and "from," and she's got "them," "then," "there," and "the," okay?

We purposely use these words that are visually challenging

to force the kids to go into auditorily

listening and going from sound to symbol instead of just looking at and memorizing

the whole word. Okay, so that's purposeful.

So you'll see what this process is, and

then I'm going to show you another one, and then we can talk about it for as long

as-- I'll stay here as long as you guys would like and answer your questions and

stuff. Well, maybe not till midnight, but for

answering and stuff, for sure.

Okay.

All right, so hopefully

our sound

is up. You know what? Let me check.

I've been turning my computer sound off because we-- Eh, hopefully this is going to

work.

Ah! Now what have I done?

Okay, let me try this again. Okay, so hopefully it'll work.

Slide. Towel down. Roll down.

Slide. Hook around.

Hook around.

A, e. Small down.

Slide. Hook around.

There, the. Towel down.

Towel down.

Slide. Hook around. Hook around.

The.

Tap the correct word. There.

The.

Them. Listen again. The.

There.

Them.

The.

Them. Listen again. The.

Them.

Them.

Then.

Pull each word to the correct box.

There.

The. The.

Them.

Then.

The. I went over there to see

them. Then we watched the movie.

Woohoo! Way to go.

All right. It worked. Yeah, and you can hear her reading and doing that kind of

stuff quietly as she's going. So I told her I would

share with you, I said to her, "Claire, I need you to make some mistakes so that

they can see what the mistakes look like." And you could see she was hovering over

the "the," and then she'd choose the different one.

But at first, she's doing 10 mistakes, and I'm like, "Let's not do 10 mistakes."

And so

that is what it looks like on the app.

Now I'm going to show you, if I could get to my right place here.

Oh, I hope I didn't get out of it. Shoot.

Let me...

Ah.

I see the Instancy tab up there.

Is it up there?

Yeah.

I can't see. Is it right underneath here where I can't-

Yep

... do it? Okay.

Well, no, it's right next to the New tab. It's the second one to the right.

There you go.

Well, I can't click on it because that thing keeps going down.

Let's get rid of this, hopefully. Okay, there it is.

Okay, we're all still here. Okay. What I'm going to do is I'm going to show you here is our instruction in teaching kids in a classroom.

This

platform that I'm showing you is actually our EDSEL.

Some people I noticed had referenced it in the chat.

It's called Abley Training and Student Lessons, I guess I talked about it at the beginning, which is for kindergarten, first, second, or third grade, we have it for that. And we have where I'm teaching in a classroom where the teachers can see that, and then we train the teachers on the activity, and then we have videos where I'm actually teaching the students.

So what I'm going to show you in here is one of the videos.

This is like in the beginning of week four, I'm going to figure out which lesson we're on here, of first grade. Okay?

So this is this instruction, and it's not the first time that they had the high-frequency word instruction, but it'll show you kind of what it looks like. So I'm going to move ahead here so you can see the process and some of the...

Okay.

I think minutes three was where I wanted to go. Okay.

So

you can see what this process looks like when we're teaching it.

What teachers do is they turn this video on, I teach their class, and they

facilitate, okay? So that's what's going to go on here.

All right. Was.

Oh, you know what? Let me go back because you guys want to know about "was." So I'm

going to go back a little bit so we can show you "was."

Say the sounds as you write "was."

That's the word "was." Let's say the sounds as we write "was." /W/.

Now write this letter, and when you do so, make sure you say the sound /uh/. Okay?

Look around slowly and say, "/uh/"

W-A-Z. Was. This guy

loves to be "a" in words. My name, Laura, it's "a." But in a whole lot of

was and what and about and around, all kinds of words, you'll see that as "ah."

Okay? Here's was. Say the sounds as you write was, three times each.

Let me hear you loud and clear. Let me hear those voices. W-A-Z.

Was.

W-A-Z.

Was. W-A-Z.

Was.

Beautiful. Erase in the middle, please.

All right.

Last word. It's confused with was, all the time, this word does. Put mines up for the sounds in saw.

I saw a bunny rabbit in my yard yesterday. True story.

Put mines up for saw.

S-aw. There's only two. Here's the word saw.

Okay, let's say those sounds as we write saw.

Let me hear your beautiful voices.

Sss. Remember, you lift up and you stop that mouth.

Now these two letters stay. Stay aw with them. Aw.

Saw. Okay. Three times each. You can get rid of that one.

Three times each. Say the sounds as you write saw. Let me hear you.

S-aw. Saw.

S-aw. Saw.

S-aw. Saw.

All right.

Erase them. Okay, so what I'm going to do here is I'm going to point to the word and have them read, and the teacher of course has to do the error correction there because I can't hear them because I'm not with them.

So I point and if they misread the word, then I just say, "Tell me the sounds," and

I guide them. For was, if they say w-a,

I just tell them, "Say a,"

and then they do was. Okay, so that is the what

the sight words... So we'll talk about that.

Let me see if I've got anything else here.

Yep, we're going to talk about questions.

You'll have our contact information at the end of this,

too,

and I'm sure you know how to get ahold of us.

So,

coming back here. So Hannah,

what questions do we have?

I think just a little bit of clarifying so that people understand that

those sight word apps have every single word that they could possibly want.

Yeah, there's a lot.

Yeah, and then

Daryl had asked if the Edzel was paid or if it was free, so how that

works. I did share the link

in the comments and told her that that was a paid subscription.

And then Annie wants to know how you teach the E in the word use.

I know Michael was wondering about the word one, and what I would say to that is

get those apps because they are-

But I'll talk about that too.

Yeah

So that they can... Use, one, and what was the other one? Was. We talked about was.

Use and one and was. Those were the three big questions.

And then the only other pressing theme of questions that came up was, again, whether you think that the teachers should be assessing on sight words regularly, what to do with those who are in schools where-

Um

... some are still assessing, and that kind of a thing.

As far as assessment, I'll talk about that real quick and then I'll talk about one and use and all those kinds of things. Some. Maybe some.

Touch it in a few seconds.

As far as assessment, I am a big one.

I love assessments like the Woodcock, diagnostic reading battery, or WJ3 we have, where they have the word identification, which are isolated words and word lists that are increasingly more challenging.

Those lists have some sight words in them, of course, and then they have some real words in, some non-high-frequency words in them, too.

So they're from easier to more challenging because there's such a strong correlation between how accurately you read words in isolation and how accurately, of course, you read in text, too.

And we do some with nonsense words, but that's a whole other story or webinar.

So assessing words like that to

see where they're at, I don't really have a problem with.

Timing them I do have a problem with, because especially little kids,

do we expect them to automatically
anything else like that, especially something that's such a high cognitive load.
If we ask them to automatically do that,
we're perpetuating or helping create
those bad habits of guessing. And I promise you that
getting them to un-guess is a whole lot harder than teaching them to read by sound.
Instead of 12 hours of instruction, we would be probably six if we didn't have all
of the un-guessing to do with our kids.
So, I don't mind the word listing at all.
But what I have a problem with is the timing, and some of them are
part of the
test or
I don't think they're scored in the same way as a Woodcock or that type of thing
where it's standardized really, but I don't know that for sure.
So it depends on the test. But if you're just asking them to read lists of words
because you need it for your report card, don't do that by time.
We're
always trying with Edly to fit in to
how do we make these things that are not effective and efficient for the kids or
the teachers to fit in. And what I would say is you're
going to know what they know with the sight words when they're reading in books.
Hopefully you
can get into the Dr. Seuss books and all those types of things.

And

you can do lists of words, which again, I don't have a problem with.

Molly, did you have something to share?

I did. So I saw that question a bunch of times up earlier.

And I think I understand they're saying they have to assess and they can't sound them out or that's wrong.

And I've seen that in my kids' class, too.

And a lot of times it's not the teacher themselves doing the assessment.

There's pair of pros or sometimes...

I've even given them before for the report card.

They have to get through 30 people.

But at least in my children's class, this was the first time Max received a report card in kindergarten. So now we're in January, I think, so probably right before break, they assessed him. I would say probably if-

They were taught by sound of these words in the beginning of the year-

Yeah

... and they're working on them for the next three months, that they will read them without-

Oh, yeah

... sounding them out by this time this year, too.

That's a good point.

You don't have to worry about it if you start it at the beginning and work through

and-

Well, if you're teaching by sound, for sure.

Yeah, if you're teaching by sound.

If you're teaching by sound. What I wouldn't have a problem with is if you see, I wonder how many they're going to get in a minute or so, I guess.

I don't know that that's really necessary, but-

I don't think it's that. I think the instructions for the teachers, actually I know because I've been told, is that they have to mark it wrong on their assessment sheet if they sound it out.

If they sound it out, too?

If they sound it out.

Yes.

Yes.

That's a big part of that.

So really what needs to change is the assessment then .

Absolutely.

You know?

I just think from what I've seen-

Yeah

... they have to be able to do it without sounding out by that time in kindergarten-

Yeah

... when these assessments need to be recorded.

Yeah. In the assessment thing, there's so many things that tie into...

I had somebody that sent me their DIBELS assessment, and the kids were in blue and green, the highest you can get with nonsense word fluency and segmenting, but in December, which is phenomenal, but their initial sound fluency, they didn't do well. Which means they knew all the sounds in the word, but they couldn't do c-a-t or r-u-n and do the...

Because they were sounding, and I said, "What they're doing is they're higher than that." They're sounding out each sound, which is a higher level phonemic awareness skill, than doing that onset rhyme thing.

So they're doing a higher level thing, and they're getting marked wrong for doing it. So analyzing this assessment that you're doing and what's the point of your assessment, if it's because we have to put it on the card, or we want to check it off, or we've always done it, what I would say is revisit that and say, "Hmm." Always the best question to ask is when you're teaching anybody anything is, "Why am I doing," especially reading, "Why am I doing what I'm doing?" And if the answer is not for the best and highest good of the kids, if that's not the answer, then reevaluate that. And ask. We have to ask hard questions. There's been a lot of hard questions going on around this whole thing.

And it's just-

That makes me think of what Anne said before.

She said the mandates need to change, and in lieu of that, they have to shut their

doors and teach.

Right.

And it's an unfortunate reality-

But it is, yeah

... at this point.

And-

I know,

but-

... fortunately, this isn't 10 years ago because the tide is turn--

Things are changing. There's more awareness, there's more

accessibility to all of this kind of stuff that is really effective and

efficient for teachers. But what needs to happen is

we have to have that shift of people understanding that buying more stuff,

buying another \$6,000 kit for the six lowest kids in a

classroom, or buying another basal series for a couple million

dollars, that's not what teaches kids to read.

Teachers teach kids to read, and that's why Evely is focused on the teacher,

because the teacher is teaching the kids to read, not the stuff.

And schools do seem to be much more willing to

pay for stuff than they are willing to pay for \$1,500

of Evely training to get the entire everything that you would ever need to

teach anybody how to read, and all of the materials and everything with it.

They're like, "Oh, that's expensive." And I'm like, "Really?"

And you just spent that \$2.5 million on that basal series that you threw the other one away because that didn't work, but we're going to try a new one?" Why are we doing what we're doing at that level, all the way down to how we're presenting instruction to kids.

Hard conversations. They really are hard conversations. It's not easy.

And many of the questions many of you are asking, if I knew the answer to those, it would be golden. I've been asking those same questions for over 20 years myself and trying, with working with all these schools that we work with, and all these teachers, and all these administrators, and how do we affect change for real?

And it's a work in progress. And there's no easy answers, I'm sorry to say. Okay, so the word "use." Okay, this is how we would teach "use."

Again, you notice that I put the lines down as placeholders for the sound.

So with Evely, we're teaching spelling and reading and segmenting and blending and all kinds of great stuff, vocabulary, at the same time.

So "use," our sounds would be u, now it's a letter name, but sometimes the vowels are a letter name, u-z. So that S-E like in choose,

okay, is a spelling for z. That E on the end, if I were to do come, c-u-m. One letter spelling for c, one letter spelling for

u, two letter m, okay, at the end. We borrowed that from the French, and the Spanish also borrow it from the French.

They put that at the end of words, and we kind of threw that on in a lot of our words, okay? So when we teach those,

magic E is what a lot of people call it.

So

g-a-m. The two-letter spelling for m is at the end.

So keeping it simple. We have simplified, so we have made reading instructions

so complicated in so many ways, but

simplifying it is not necessarily meaning it's easy, especially if you've been

doing it a different way for a long time, but making it very, very simple, trimming

off all the fat so that we're just giving the kids what they need to be able to

read. The word "one," who gave that word?

That's-

Michael.

Michael. Thank you, Michael. That's one that usually even by day three of training,

people don't come up with, but it's on a thing that we do, an activity that we do.

But one, if we won the game, that's kind of fun.

Like w-u-n. That one's pretty straightforward.

But the number one, we have a situation which doesn't happen a

lot, just a few times in English, where one letter represents two

sounds. W-n. One and once are the only words that I know where that one

letter represents two sounds. I don't think I've ever had, in all

the kids and adults and people I've taught, a student

ask about that, but I do have teachers, and it's kind of like it's not a big deal.

I'd say to the

kids, "Oh, yeah, isn't that weird?"

One letter, two sounds." Now, where I have had kids, if you do the word fox and socks, they rhyme. F-o-x. Fox is four sounds

but only three letters, so you have to have that one letter that represents two sounds. So we just write that letter and say "ks." And it's kind of a fun sound, a flat tire sound. But

so often the adults want to get into really deep, long...

In training, I really have to kind of, stop this kind of thing, because we could talk for two hours about the word fox or the word one, and it would never come up as an issue in instruction with the kids.

They don't have a problem with applying it. They just don't have a problem with it.

So for us and for me, if it's not a problem to who I'm teaching, the kids or the teacher trainees really, then it's not a problem, right?

So Nora, I think you're going to want to address this from Melissa.

So she's talking about the word eye, like, "Here's my eye."

Uh-huh.

And how, the more uncommon patterns that come up, things like O-U-G-H, I-G-H, A-W, A-U, that kind of thing happen in more than one word.

Yeah.

And that eye happens in one word or those compound words.

Yeah.

And so how can you teach that by sound?

It just seems like a memorization thing, and they can't do it by sound.

Now, well, I have an eye. I have two eyes, right?

I see out of my eyes. I am trying to think of one eye situation.

I can close one eye, I guess. I and eye, they're homophones.

So eye or I. It's a one-letter spelling or a three-letter spelling.

And eye is actually, like Molly was talking, one of those weird ones where you're telling them if you're talking about the eye, your eyeball, this is your eye spelling. So there are some that are completely weird, and unusual, but they're no big deal.

Again, because we're putting our kids on that same horse and using the same system of logic for every single word that we deal with.

Talk about an anxiety reliever, like, "Oh, cool, we have a system of logic and we're going to use it consistently.

How weird is that?" And it works, not just for reading but for spelling.

I don't know how many of you are on the Science of Reading:

What I Wish I Learned in College Facebook page, which is really phenomenal

and I learn a lot on there about a lot of things,

reading-wise. But there was 192

comments on is tire, like a tire of a

car, I guess, or I tire of listening to Nora or whatever, one syllable or

two. And some people had some thoughts and some other people had other thoughts,

but 192. And one response was, "If you're reading

it, it's one syllable, but if you're spelling it, it's two." And I'm

like, how would you ever say and explain that to a child?

There were so many explanations on the word tire, okay, and I don't really know if it matters too much if it's one or two, but if I were doing it, it would be two.

Tire, that's two syllables and the first one sounds T-I-RE.

Re like in her and teacher and all that kind of stuff.

So

I thought, look at how complex that us adults can make it in our head, or we could do T-I-RE. All right?

Match your spellings to your sounds.

Now you can read it, now you can spell it, you know what it means because we talked about it. Good, we're good to go. So again, trying to

take away all that complexity

frees up... And EBLI teachers tell me this all the time, "I cannot get over how much time I freed up from teaching EBLI." One of our kindergarten teachers has been deep into teaching science.

She's like, "I'm teaching so much science because I have so much extra time in the day because of how efficient... And my kids are further than they've ever been in the 19 years of teaching." So that's what we want.

We want that at every grade, right? We want that for everybody.

And our kids that struggle, we want to get them unstruggling and get them out of that resource or the remediation that they need.

We want to do it quick. We don't have the luxury of dawdling.

So for us, if you can do it in two seconds instead of five,

that's how we apply what we do.

Yeah, and I would say to Melissa too, she said they're not remotely reliable phonics rules, and she can't imagine a situation in which students haven't been taught.

So the thing is with EBLI is that even though it is a very much phonics-based in the sound of symbol correspondence aspect, we don't teach the rules and exceptions to rules.

We teach that one to four letters spell a sound and you read them right left to right, and all words are made up of sounds.

Yeah.

So the kids are on the same ones-

It's-

... everywhere.

Yeah. It's a little bit more complex than that-

Yeah

... but not a lot. And the thing of it is,

people say you have to teach the syllable rules.

Now I have taught thousands, probably tens of thousands if I talk about the classrooms I've taught too, of people reading. And many of the people that come to our reading center have had years and years and years of all kinds of other, whether it's whole language balance literacy type or even phonics instruction, and they're not reading.

And in a matter of hours, they

are reading after they come here. And I don't even know the syllable rule. So I'm positive that you can teach people.

The way that we do it is not,

I guess,

common, I suppose.

But it's really, really effective and really, really efficient.

And it is systematic, and it is structured, and it is explicit, and it is applicable. That's the thing.

Applying all of these things that we're going to teach into reading and writing. So we don't teach phonics rules.

My daughter, one of her biggest nemesis was the two vowels go walking and the first one does the talking, which only works 40-some percent of the time.

So then you have 60% exceptions to the rules that you have to make up some story about. And that takes forever to be able to teach all of that information we're pouring into their head where we could say, "Oh, great, guh-re ate," or head, hu-eh-du. Okay?

So those don't work with two vowels go walking, but we don't have to make any big deal about it. We just can say the sounds, match the spellings to them, teach them in a process that's systematic and scaffolded, and move them really far, really fast. In all words, obviously the high-frequency words, but all words we want to do.

Yeah. Anything else, Hannah? You guys have been a very captive audience for a very long time.

Emma's asking about the scope and sequence.

So yes, Emma, if you email info@ebli.com, I'll type this in too. Anybody who's interested to see the scope and sequence for our trainings, we can send that to you if you're interested.

You mean as far as like the kindergarten or first or second or third, that kind of thing?

Yeah.

Yeah. So I will tell you, be prepared.

When you see it, you're going to be like, "This lady, these people, they've lost their mind. There's no way on Earth that these kids can do what they're saying in this scope and sequence." You will think that.

EBLI people who have been trained tell them and all, they'll think that.

But also-

If you don't do it because you're like, "There's no way they can do this," then of course they can't because we haven't taught them. But they can do it.

And we have had anywhere from inner-city Detroit schools to very affluent schools, to everywhere in between.

In our little inner city, Detroit, I think it's in our kindergarten

ETSO, we actually have videos of them spelling butterfly and caterpillar and all that kind of stuff without seeing it, with doing this process.

What these kids are capable of and how excited they get about it will blow your mind. So we really have to just

be open with your thinking. So if we send you the

scope and sequence, just

depending on what you've done before, you'll be like, "Well, wait a minute.

Where's this, and where's this, and where's this?

And they can't do that, and they can't go that fast, and there's no way they can do

that." Our kindergarten kids are reading and spelling and writing a

lot and doing two and three syllables, and even four-syllable words,

very successfully, too, so beware.

Let me

you. So there's some kind of more simple questions where people are asking

what to do with the sight words as a homeschool parent, how to know

how to group the words, all that kind of stuff.

And what I would say to that is get the-

Get the app.

Get the app.

Spend \$5 and get the app. Now, you can also, if you're homeschooling, you have

three kids, you can put 100 kids. You can take all the kids in the neighborhood.

But they have to be on the same device, and you have to use the same device, too.

So if you're in a school, they have to have app number one or two or three, or

device, whatever they're doing. But you can put a whole bunch of kids on

one device, so obviously throughout the day they

can be doing that. But I would let us teach them on

the app. That's going to be the easiest way as far as those high-frequency

words. And truly, it has beginning, intermediate, and

higher level. I don't know. There's three different levels, and they start with the easier, simpler words like on and not and no and

one, or I don't know what are there. But in and it and is, and that kind of thing.

So they start with the simpler ones, and they move up.

And there's also in the Sight Words app, there's homophones, which deals with spelling and writing and that type of thing, too.

And let me ask you both of these two questions, one from Melissa and one from Sarah. So Melissa says, "Okay, so when you say that all words can be sounded out, do you mean that kids can be taught a sound symbol correspondence to write any word, or that a kid can apply known patterns to a word to sound out any written word to which they've never been exposed?" So that's the first one.

The second one is Sarah says, "I'm still struggling with this.

The program doesn't teach rules, yet many of these words have their own unique rules that only apply to that word.

Would it not be easier to learn rules than to try to remember the unique spellings, such as I making the long I sound? Are there any other words that use that pattern?"

So basically the not-

It's a lot for me to hold in my brain there, Hannah, at this time of the day, but okay. Could I have one piece again back? Thank you.

Yeah. We'll start with... Okay.

Can I speak to Sarah's real quick?

What? Go ahead, Molly.

Can I speak to Sarah's real quick? So as someone who, I was in the heyday of Hooked on Phonics commercials and everything, so I got all those rules. That was the one piece of teaching. We didn't do much of it, but I got a worksheet for busy work, and I remember those. And I remember how much it added to my frustration because it's like, "Okay, perfect. Finally, some piece of the puzzle. Here it is. I've got this. I've learned it. I memorized it. Awesome." And then I go to apply it, and it doesn't work. And nothing is more frustrating. I can remember thinking, "What is wrong with me here? I thought I learned this two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking." And that doesn't work. It's wrong more times than it's right, and it was so debilitating to finally think you had a piece of the puzzle that made sense, and it really just became more difficult. It was like, "Forget this. I'll go back to memorizing." And it came up time and time again, these rules that didn't always work, and so then they didn't make sense. And so then I wondered, what was I doing wrong that everyone else was doing right? So I don't think for those of us who don't get it so easily and so quickly, I don't think the rules help either. I think they just add to our frustration, or at least to mine.

And I should add, sorry, knowing you're going to talk to this, Nora, but to Sarah and Melissa and everybody else who's wondering, is that we teach patterns of the language.

Yeah. And tendencies.

And then-

We'll say, "Typically, when you see this here," or, "This spelling is going to be at the end of a word, like D-G-E and edge and fudge and that."

So we

sort and we categorize and we look at

patterns-

Patterns. Yeah

... and we keep consistent with the patterns.

We don't say, "Oh, let's sort some words and have some of them be long vowels, some be short vowels, some be oddball, and some be all these things." They're like,

"Now, how's that making any sense?" And poor Molly has that also with spelling

because as they're teaching them to memorize all these words, then they have words they're way spelling, and then they get the list and Claire's like, "What?

Why is this with this and that's with that, and what...

That doesn't make any sense."

And you guys can attest to how often do I say, when you're teaching my kids, how often do I say,

"Oh my gosh, I never knew that. No one ever pointed that out to me"

and then I feel like an idiot for not seeing it, but thought if someone

would've showed me that, like this is a tendency, so if you hear this sound, you could probably start with that.

And if that doesn't work, then you can go to this.

It's a very logical strategy that makes sense, and it works. It's not saying it's going to be this.

It's saying try this, and if that doesn't work, there's some other options.

And you know them because you've seen them, and then you get into the reading, and the more you're reading, the more-
Yeah

... those just become-

And that's the key, is putting them in the reading.

And I think that, too, there was a question with the Sarah's that I wanted to... It just had it in my head, now it's gone.

Hannah, can you remind me of her question?

Oh, the memory. So they're just going to have to memorize.

Obviously, there's some things that we're going to have to memorize here.

There's 100 and whatever spellings for about 40 sounds. We say about 40.

There's 37, 44. I saw 45 somewhere recently, I'm like, "Oh, never seen that one before." So about 40 sounds.

So you do need to know

A limited number of few hundred things as opposed to 20,000 words. A few hundred is manageable, 20,000 not. The word I, cool. That's weird.

Actually, the word I is kind of easier than a lot of things because it's strange, and things that are unique and strange stand out a lot of times.

And we have other things that we do with circling and underlining and doing stuff.

It's part of the scaffolding. We leave the word, and then when we're going to take away the word, we circle what's unusual and underline it with the number of letters and the spelling. There's a process and a purpose.

My

NICU nurse brain, okay, with how the brain works

is always

hanging out there. So every single step of every single thing that we do in EBLI

has a purpose. With every step, if you're teaching EBLI and you say, "Why do you do this thing?" I could tell you exactly why, not just even for a reading piece, but

more even cognitively, what that's going to do to help

sequencing, simultaneous processing, processing speed, memory,

attention, all those types of things. We're training them all.

It's not just these isolated, everything's on an island, and we teach it all in isolation.

You teach these things together, which is why it can go as

fast as it can go.

And some of it, quite frankly, happened because of my ignorance.

I didn't know that this wasn't supposed to be possible, or you're not supposed to do this, and we do it with kids and find that they are making seven-grade level gains in a matter of hours.

I'm not exaggerating, I guess.

That stuff happens when we can teach them and apply it, and that type of thing. So thinking of what is going on with these kids, like with Molly saying as far as the rules and all that, what's going on with them? It makes sense to us, but just because it makes sense to us doesn't mean it's not making sense to them. And if your kids are not progressing...

I just had, in our online remediation training this week, a teacher who was just like, "I have worked so hard doing everything I knew how to do for years and years and years, and they still don't make progress. So what is wrong with me? And now I see it can be so simple." And that's the whole key is to, let's keep it simple, let's be really explicit, let's be effective, let's be efficient, and let's be consistent for the sake of these kids and their sweet little brains.

And that's exactly what we're asking. So go ahead, Molly.

I think that's the other big thing, and Sarah's saying, "Well, you're basically memorizing." You are, but there is things that they have to memorize and that you just have to know, but you're not saying, "We're going to memorize these words, and you're going to say them within three seconds, and you're going to know them, and they're going to be on a ring, and they're in a different group, and they're over here, and then we're going to put you in a book, and we're going to say, 'Whoa, whoa, whoa, slow down on that word.

That's not a sight word.'" You're not separating words into two

different groups. You're not giving them that

additional task. So yeah, they're

memorizing E-Y-E as eye, but it's just

another sound. You know what I mean?

It's the same consistent thing.

Yeah.

Every word's divided up in sounds.

You're sounding out left and right, and then it doesn't confuse them, and that's

the biggest thing I've seen with my children is getting with

both, they're completely confused.

With the sight words plus adequate teaching, it's still not

working because there's that confusion.

There's the two different options, two different choices, two different categories,

and it's really affecting them in books and on their rings.

I think that this might be an important one, too, as you guys are having this

conversation. Lisa just asked about whether they can start the high-frequency

words without doing the full program, and I did answer her that if they do

the apps, of course, they can get the sight words activity kind of

standalone.

But I didn't know if you want to touch on why it's important that we don't do the

training kind of broken apart where they can just do one-

Yeah

... activity.

And a lot of people say this, "Well, I just want this part or that part."

And it's not a part kind of thing. It's a whole thing.

Obviously, you can do the apps, you can do some sight words, that type of thing, but again, if we're doing the sight words over here like this, and we're teaching multi-syllable words and all our other things like memorize those words or get them quick or do whatever you're going to do over there, then there's still that disconnect.

But certainly, in your higher kids, for sure, if you start doing my sound, they're going to be like, "Oh, this is a whole sound system. This is what this is.

This is a system, and it's a system of logic, and it makes sense." And they'll pick it up quickly, and they'll run with it.

That's a percentage of kids, not a huge percent, unfortunately, but they will.

And the other ones, it's not going to hurt them, for sure, but think of all of the different things. We had one school we worked in.

They had nine different literacy initiatives going on with nine different programs that they were teaching. I'm like, "How does the teacher do that, number one, but how do the kids...?" Because every single one has a little different bend on how they're going to do stuff. EBLI is really kind of out there.

Teachers will say, "Oh, good, I teach phonics," or, "I teach Orton-Gillingham, so this is going to be easy for me." And then we totally blow their mind and freak them out, take away their rules. I mean, we don't take them away.

We're not going to take them away. But it's too hard for them, especially if

they've been teaching it longer. It's

just like telling Claire to quit guessing. That's, yeah, great. Okay.

Maybe that's supposed to be a good thing, but this is what I've been doing.

This is what I'm used to. This is what my habit is.

It's almost easier if you've been teaching balanced literacy and memorize

the words and look at the picture because this is kind of a blank space over here

to fill in. But when you have this stuff filled in, and we're saying, "We're going

to morph this kind of like that," that can be

anxiety-provoking. And we understand that.

We're very mindful about that and open to...

And teachers do shift, and all the stuff that they've learned before, of course,

it's not like we get rid of all of that, but they, what do I want to say, refine it

in a bit of a different way to help move faster.

If we're moving faster and our kids are moving farther, that's what we want to be

doing. So

it's a delicate balancing act, but we

don't do the pieces part thing. This is

another thing that's so strange to me in education.

Teachers will get trained and stuff, and their administrator will be like, "Oh,

well, they're going to come back and teach the rest of the school," or whatever.

And I'm just like Would we ever do that to a doctor?

"Oh, he just went to a conference on how to do an

appendectomy, and now we're going to have him come back and teach everybody how to

do that" when they don't know. It's not fair to teachers, for sure. It's really not fair to kids, and it's not fair to whatever they're trying to teach. It's a way of kind of cutting corners on the money so then we could buy more stuff.

And what really needs to happen is we really need to put more focus on training our teachers, teaching our teachers, supporting our teachers, giving our teachers what they need, because our teachers are what teach the kids. It's not the stuff, a new program, some more stuff, some more worksheets. It's not going to do it. We've proven that over decades.

And we're still at 35% proficient as far as reading. So if we want a different result, we have to have a different approach. And it seems like so often we just want to keep having the same approach and hoping for a different result, which doesn't work very well.

So I don't know what to say about all that, but I think we should probably wrap up here. Is there anything else that's pressing?

Well, there's lots more questions, but I know that you're thinking about doing... I'm going to grab them all. So thinking about doing a continuation kind of a thing.

Yes. Yeah. What I would really like to do is getting teachers and getting a round table group on a thing like this where they're

sharing their own kind of experiences and challenges and how do we answer some of these questions that have been coming up over here.

What's really going on in the trenches?

Because, again, if we're all over here, and this is all great in theory, what about all those people, the

moms like Molly, the kids like Claire and Max, the teachers like all of you guys.

You guys are the ones that these decisions, and these choices, and these instructional practices,

you're who they're impacting. And we need to make your

life easier so that you can be more effective and more efficient and free up more time in your day, and we all need to be working toward that same goal.

And sometimes it's doing things, almost always it's going to be, to get a different result, we've got to change the way we're delivering what we're doing.

Which in theory, it's all lovely and easy, but in practice, it's not as much, and I get that, for sure.

And I just want to add a couple small things before we wrap up-

Okay

... is that we will send the recording tomorrow, but we'll also send the like,

"Here's your quick jump in. Here's how you can go and get just the site where it's kind of pieced through the apps. And then here's more information about the

training." Some of you are asking how long it takes, how much it costs, that kind of thing. So we'll put that information in there, too.

And then, if you

have questions that didn't get answered, please email us at info@edvley.com.

We will do our best to comb through everything, but if you still

have some kind of things niggling in your head, please let us know.

Yeah.

We'd love to answer any questions.

It's not like we want a pill or a quick fix for things and

stuff. It's a process, for sure, and having a

conversation and sharing these things like, "Wait a minute, that sounds crazy,"

and, "Why are you doing this," and, "What about this," and, "How about if we do it this way?" There's more than one right way for everything.

One

right way to split a word a lot of times, that kind of thing.

So having that flexibility and also that openness

for all of us, this is a collective of what

we're on. There's so many people who are so passionate about, "Let's get us

to 95 to 100% proficient as far as all of our kids." Let's do that.

Let's just say, "Let's do that." Okay? But how are we going to do it?

And we have to all be open and willing to collaborate, and to

connect, and to share, and to change, all of us.

We joke here at Edvley headquarters that all we do is change.

We don't know what that is otherwise, as far as doing that type of thing. But even so, it's a hard thing to do, and we understand that. But together, we can all work miracles, so thank you for that. And anything else you want to say, Molly, an aside off? I really just want to say thank you, guys, for giving me a space to share my experience, and I hope it helps just to see the other side of things.

And good luck to everyone out there-

Yeah

... on this little literacy journey that we're all on.

Very good, and thank you so much, Mal, too, for sharing and being so courageous and vulnerable and honest and all of those things, because that's what really we all have to do. We all are fearful.

Every single one of us are fearful from one angle or another, and it's just the truth. But

in a supportive and respectful and open kind of environment, I do think that we all together can work miracles, so let's do it. All right? So thank you all very, very much, and I know that it's been way longer than we expected to.

But we'll get that recording to you tomorrow and share some links.

And also, we're going to put a Facebook post up that we can continue this conversation, and that way you can ask questions, we can answer

there,

and kind of have an ongoing conversation.

So thank you very, very much, and we will keep you posted

for when we have our little round table symposium or anything else coming up.

So have a good evening, everybody.

Bye.